

On the Fulcrum

Rev. Ken Heintzelman

In my work as your pastor I have many experiences of joy and I want to share one that happened a few weeks ago.

After our celebration of life services I talked with a man who was visiting us as he is looking to be a part of a new fellowship. He has narrowed it down to two fellowships. One is very conservative, family focused, and undergirded by an elaborate belief system. The other fellowship is us. In contrast, we are liberal and we pride ourselves on stripping away as much mythology as possible. For this man, the important factor that put the two very different fellowships into consideration was consistency. He perceived that both fellowships were consistent with their message and consistent in the living out of their message. At first hearing that two such different fellowships could be under consideration at the same time seems unlikely especially if you compare theological and philosophical content, but this man was looking at process and integrity.

The incident that impressed him was what we did for Marcia Powell. Marcia was the human being that died from the Arizona sun and heat because she was being punished by being confined to a chain-link cage in the middle of the jail yard. Shadow Rock through the Festival Garden Team, the Living Our Faith Team, and advocacy work of Rev. Liana Rowe offered Marcia Powell a dignified resting place in our Festival Garden. This action is consistent with our message that every life is to be radically affirmed and "no matter who you are and where you are on life's journey you are

welcomed here". Our visitor read this story in the newspaper and our actions matched our message and he is attracted to our fellowship. This is an example of being on message.

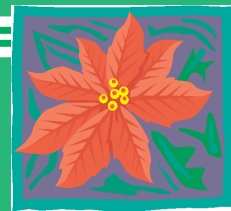
Being on message is a complicated task for us as a fellowship. It is difficult for us to state our message in quick sound bites and defending our message of inclusiveness needs to address the emotional processes of people as well as their ideologies. For example, people in our congregation who are supportive of our inclusive message may also hold a politically conservative ideology or a liberal ideology. Our people agree on the spirit of the inclusive message but there are many opinions on how to realize this message in our congregation and there is disagreement as to whether or not the political and economic implications are fair game for exploration during worship.

I celebrate our diversity. I also acknowledge that within the three "campfires of atheism, non-theism, and theism" are different levels of maturity and political ideologies. As I said earlier, being on message is a complicated task for us as a fellowship.

Think about this another way. Imagine all of us think, feel, and act the same way on everything theological and political. Anyone who is not "on the same page" gives us anxiety and we apply group pressure in order for deviant individuals to either comply or to leave. When the individual complies or leaves, the status quo of sameness is re-established and our

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'Lighten Up'
this Advent Season



Holiday Buffet
Friday, December 4
6:30 p.m.

Children's Pageant
Sunday, December 20
9:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve Services
Thursday, December 24
7:30 p.m.
11:00 p.m.

1 at 9 for 5

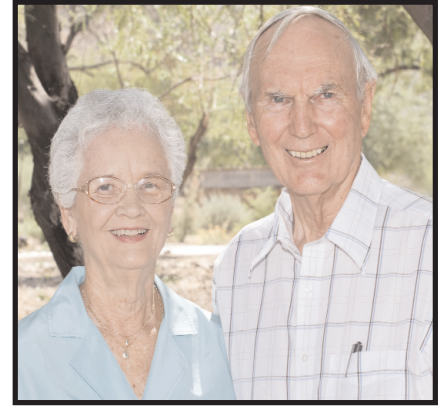
one worship service
at 9:00 a.m.
for five weeks
beginning December 20
two services resume
January 27



Kim Bachman with her brother Sam



Ladonna Lewis



Moonine & Darrell Walker



Carol Burns & Nicole Holton-Burns

We covenant one with another to be that sensitive and responsive part of human society which perceives and responds to God's newest thrust in the midst of history. The uniqueness and greatness of every life is radiating. Our task together demands a comprehensive view of life, always pointed intentionally to the future. Our life together involves us individually and corporately in study and worship, always maintaining a proper balance between proclamation of the Word about life with the deeds which make life good. Those activities which eliminate age barriers, cut across religious dogma, reduce cultural parochialisms, and engage secular people with life's ultimate possibilities will be worthy of our best efforts.

Welcome New Members

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.

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anxiety is relieved. Sameness does not allow for diversity or unity but it does reduce challenges and consequently reduces anxiety. It is our ability to tolerate diversity among ourselves that is a measure of our maturity. In some congregations the leadership is busy with maintaining compliance. In our congregation the leadership is busy calling all of us to maturity.

In addition to a call to maturity it is also imperative that we provide a forum for all the diverse voices of our fellowship. It is easy to feel magnanimous and mature when the view being articulated and explored resonates with our own views but what about the contrary voices among us?

Some of us sit in the pews, serve on our committees, and give of our time, treasure, and talent and feel conflicted. We do this feeling conflicted because we have come to love Shadow Rock, the spirit and message of inclusion, and the people, and yet we feel the sting of alienation. We wonder who speaks for us and since we do not hear any voice for us we begin to say that church is no place for politics.

On Kick Off Sunday I called us to greater balance of hands, mind, and heart. Our call to greater balance includes providing a forum for the "contrary voices" among us. The alternative is to ignore our friends and family until they are so alienated

that they leave. This kind of exclusion is not being on message and such inclusiveness risks watering down any message to nothingness.

I am sure that this article feels incomplete. The truth is our striving for inclusiveness, justice, and unity will always be incomplete in that it will always be on going. For the next three months our journey will take us through Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas, and into the New Year. This season brings joy and stress but it also gives us unique opportunities to invite others to our adventuresome journey which is also part of being on message.

Ken

Bakin' and Shakin' an overnight experience of culinary mayhem

Kids kindergarten-sixth grade are invited to a night of culinary mayhem on Saturday, **January 23rd** at 3:00 p.m. until Sunday at 10:00 a.m. where we'll be celebrating fellowship of the table.



Family Promise
guests arrive
Sunday,
November 22
and will be with us
for Thanksgiving!

Holiday Rituals and Traditions

Marilyn Rampley, Certified Celebrant

Holiday rituals and traditions can bring joy and a sense of community to families. According to the book *Unplug the Christmas Machine*, we can counteract the commercialism of the entire holiday season and recreate its joyous spirit with careful planning.

Rituals form memories, mark important life passages, and elevate events from the everyday to the sacred. Joseph Campbell states that "The function of ritual...is to give form to human life, not in the way of mere surface arrangement, but in depth."

Two new books further explore the theme of rituals and their function and form. Here are ideas for new or renewed holiday traditions and rituals. Some come from *Parenting with Spirit* by Jane Bartlett and *The Book of New Family Traditions* by Meg Cox.

Thanksgiving

- ❖ Let your children be involved in the meal prep.
- ❖ Setting the table, choosing napkins (cloth ones are extra special) and designing place cards are kid-friendly activities.
- ❖ Serve a special beverage—we make Ziggies (our made-up name), which are just pineapple juice and Sprite.
- ❖ Cut out leaf patterns or trace around small hands on paper in fall colors and let family members write down (or dictate to you) things for which they are thankful.
- ❖ Attach to a tree branch supported by small rocks and standing in a painted coffee. Voila! A centerpiece!
- ❖ Put a cardboard box on the counter before Thanksgiving with a pile of blank papers and a pencil. Everyone writes down things they are thankful for and these are read during the feast. You could even let folks guess who submitted what.
- ❖ Put three corn kernels at each place and during the meals have each person count out three things for which they are grateful.
- ❖ Always use the same tablecloth and have everyone sign it each year. Someone can embroider the names, each year a different color. Or...for the non-crafty, just use a different color permanent marker each year.

Pre-Christmas and Christmas

- ❖ December 6 is St. Nicholas Day. Start a tradition that St. Nicholas leaves craft kits for each family member so they can make gifts for others.
- ❖ Put up your Nativity piece-by-piece, one figure each

night. Baby Jesus doesn't appear until Christmas Eve.

- ❖ Make an Advent wreath and light it each Sunday leading up to Christmas.

- ❖ Take each holiday-related book you own and wrap it Christmas paper. Write numbers 1-24 on the packages and open one each night and read it. If you don't have enough, use library books and/or videos.

- ❖ Adopt a child from A Stepping Stone Foundation Angel Tree. Shop together.

- ❖ One family created "Camp Christmas" where they rode around looking at lights, attended a Christmas Eve service, and worked in shifts to bake cookies, sing carols and decorate Christmas hats or stockings. A slumber party followed. I think this could better happen some week-end before Christmas.

- ❖ Some families have fewer gifts, but add to the fun with a scavenger hunt to find the one big gift.

- ❖ Open presents in a certain sequence. We start with youngest, then they choose the next person, who chooses the next, etc.

New Year's Eve

- ❖ One year we made silly hats out of materials on hand and had a fashion show.

- ❖ Celebrate by banging pans outside at 10:00 p.m. and pretend it's New Year's.

- ❖ Think of the highs and lows of the year past by looking through a calendar month-by-month, then burning the pages as you go along. Talk about hopes for the next year. Drink bubbly at the end.

- ❖ Cut paper in small strips. Take walnuts, crack them open and remove the inside. Each person makes three resolutions, one written on each paper strip, then carefully folded and put into a nut. Glue each nut closed and write a name on the outside. Reuse the nuts next year, plus check to see how well you've done.

- ❖ Use fancy glasses and serve sparkling water or cider. Each person makes a toast, saying one thing they hope happens in the new year to himself or herself, plus one for the family and one for the wider world. End with a shared family toast "To the (Name) family!"

Observe Need a Sweater Day, Turn Off the AC Day, First Day Under 100 Degrees Day, Monthly Pizza Blast and Welcome Summer Party. Cherish all these special moments and milestones. Create wonderful memories. They will live on.



Shadow Rock Youth at play

Libby Shelby, Youth Leader Intern

On October 3rd, The Shadow Rock Youth met at Moon Valley Park to play a game of capture the flag with the youth of St. Paul's Catholic Church and All Saints Lutheran Church. As the youth arrived and multiplied, I began to panic, slightly. We had over 75 youth from all three churches, and more were still arriving. Seventy-five teens playing outside of their denominational lines. Seventy-five youth scrapping stereotypes. Seventy-five people acting out their faith. It was radical, exhilarating, "cutting edge." And yet there was something so comfortable about it, so effortless. Eating peanut butter and jelly in the field, playing tag in the sand, dancing Little Sally Walker in the field.

For me, this moment explains the significance of multi denominational youth programming, especially in light of Shadow Rock's mission statement. The youth are practicing their faith, unintentionally and spontaneously. They are living Shadow Rock's welcoming message, including and accepting everyone. By interacting with diverse denominations, the youth are learning to find common ground and listen to the message behind the words, to find the dynamic radical love within Christianity despite differences in theology or rhetoric.

As the year continues, the Youth will continue to foster a relationship with other churches in the Shadow Rock community and other Phoenix UCC youth. Doubtlessly, there will be more games and more peanut butter and best of all, more opportunities for tolerance, love and peace.

Being, Becoming, Belonging: Youth Confirmation 2009-10

We have begun the life long discussion of exploring the matters that are of greatest consequence in our lives. Focusing on our relationship with God and others, what does it mean to be a Christian? Ultimately, it is the truth within our own hearts that we must each know and name. Our class content times have been led by Rev. Ken Heintzleman, Rev. Diane Thomas, Rev. Liana Rowe, Karen Richter, Marilyn Rampley, Ed Favilla, Rev. Bill Reece, Barb Zaborowski and Eileen Hoard.

Wednesday, December 2, at 6:30 p.m. our last class content time will address being Christian in an age of pluralism. Dr. Paul Eppinger, Arizona Interfaith Movement, has arranged for folks of various religious paths to join us for presentation and discussion. YOU are also invited to be a part of this enriching evening.

Please keep Morgan Barnes, McKayla Boice, Addie Cahill, Nathan Cooke, Matisse Davis, Sara DeCotret (not pictured), Gennie Higgins, Nick Haizer, Megan King, Ashlyn Meyers, William Pynn, Allison Rowe, and Kelsey Struckmeyer in your thoughts and prayers as they continue their journey.

check us out

FaithQuest is our faith centered education hour where youth are separated by Junior and Senior high. Youth determine subjects they are interested in and also lead the discussions. Senior High normally has more discussion time, while Junior High involves more activities

Youth After Dark (YAD) is a rotating series of all church events, off campus events, service, and discussion centered activities, usually incorporating and exploring these areas with drama, art, technology, and music. Junior and Senior High meet separately, but share a meal.

Youth Sunday is November 22

w w w . S o u t h w e s t U C C . o r g



6th grade - 12th grade

Feeling thankful? TA! is a wonderful opportunity to give back to our community and the Southwest Conference UCC. It's a rewarding blast that entices people to come back year after year. It's one of our biggest events of the year and let me tell you it is worth every penny to come and support this event! There will be a plethora and variety of work projects from building houses to painting youth centers to playing bingo at retirement homes. Really the possibilities are endless! So sign up right away cause the energy and excitement is contagious, you don't want to miss out on this awesome opportunity!

Watching Young Adults in the 21st Century

Brian Gruhn, Young Adult Leader

One of the things that's quite lovely about the postmodern era-in a so fun it'll drive you crazy kind of way-is that it's really almost impossible to make generalizations about any given group of people. So if you're trying to serve the young adults of the 21st Century, then you have to understand that generalizations, as a rule, won't work. God, the devil, and life is in the details. However, it can be said with some certainty that things are different for these people-my people-than what we have seen before. Online culture-Facebook, iTunes-combined with emerging lifestyle trends-Green Living, global citizenry-and a rapidly shifting economy-2008 to the present-are all conspiring to create a young adult experience unlike the world has ever known. What does this mean for us? What does this mean for you? What might our journey together look like? Personally, I can think of three modern stories that can help us begin figuring things out. Of course, by stories, I mean movies:

Garden State, Away We Go, and Star Trek (the new one!)

We don't have time or space to go into the details of these stories, but I would highly recommend watching them. The picture that these stories help illustrate, however, is pretty easy to sum up: For young adults in 21st Century America, everything is up for grabs. Change is the only constant. Uncertainty is the new black. We exist in one of those in between times, a cultural shift that comes along every once in awhile in which technology and knowledge induce an epochal shift on the minds and spirit of the upcoming generation, but the tools we need to adjust and thrive in this new era have yet to be developed. These stories give us a sense of what this means, and how it looks; hopefully, that's the first step in figuring out how to address the situation.

There is no "normal;" not when it comes to jobs, ethics, morals, lifestyles or love. Some people go in search of childhood dreams, some take the job that most easily presents itself. Sometimes you find love with someone your own age who you randomly meet at the doctor's office, and sometimes you find it with your best friend's mother. Some people do drugs, while others don't, and those people are usually hanging out together. You are almost equally as likely to have family and friends from foreign countries as you are to have dogs and hamsters. All this diversity would lead one to wonder: How do you find meaning and purpose in your life?

Largely, the answer is found in the language of capitalism: we shop around. We contrast and compare lifestyles, trying on various guises until we find something that fits.

Do we want to be the funny yet obnoxious mother who would sooner banter with her children than raise them? Do we want to be the overly enlightened parents whose love and care for their children defy cultural norms? Is it important to us to be married, or have careers, or have children, or adopt them, or none of the above? Every question needs to have a "none of the above" option. We know truth when we encounter it, and if it's not true, it's discarded and ridiculed. As terrifying as some things in the world might be, nothing is scarier than living a lie. And this leads to another important truth about our lives that has a rather terrifying connotation: We would rather destroy ourselves than risk falsehood.

Interestingly, even though this lifestyle makes connection and community difficult, there is absolutely no evidence suggesting that those things aren't important to us. Possibly more than ever before, we long for belonging, we long for meaning. Sadly, we are just less likely to find these things. Communities of faith seem to be the last bastion, the one place that could offer the tools needed for shaping our lives in meaningful ways. This would mean, however, that the faith community needs an intentional desire to reframe traditional stories and values in new ways. We need a solid community that we can connect with, one that can bring the traditions that make life good in a style that rings true. Does such a place exist? I guess we'll find out together.

Where do we go from here?

from the Living Our Faith Team

We all seek deeper meaning in our lives, but probably never more so than during these troubling economic times. As we think about living our faith at Shadow Rock, we strive to help those in need today and in the future. We think the future holds much for us to do, and we are optimistic that we can effectively contribute to our community.

We continue to ask ourselves, "What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?" (James 2:14) We do not pretend to know the answer, but we strongly believe in working, as part of our faith, to provide for those who have nothing.

We sympathize with Teresa of Calcutta, who suggested that we should make a difference for others as we journey through life, that we should touch lives with our actions, not so much our words. "I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in. Hungry not only for bread - but hungry for love, naked not only for clothing - but naked for human dignity and respect, homeless not only for want of a room of bricks - but homeless because of rejection."

We will work with others to educate, serve, and advocate for justice and humanity. It is time to set aside our differences to provide the care unavailable to many people in our community. It is time for us to work together to ensure that no one suffers from poverty and the atrocities carried out in the name of race, sect, or politics.

We will continue to work with our community by serving food and providing clothes and school supplies for the people of Sunnyslope. We will support the Desert Mission Food Bank and will continue to provide support for Rebuilding Together. We will continue our quest to educate, serve and advocate for those in need in the community. Finally, we will focus heartily on the recruitment of others to join our ranks in working together to serve those who need help.

Shadow Rock facilities update

Bill Peterson, facilities team

The Facilities Team has been very busy. A water heater in a rest room of the Kreider Center, which served us well for eighteen years, shorted out. A team of six worked on a Sunday afternoon before our Family Promise guests arrived to provide our guests with hot water. Two weeks later, two sewer backups (tree roots growing into the pipes) provided more work for the team. The team also installed the lovely, home-built Peace Pole. Two major irrigation pipes broke and were repaired. One pipe broke after a thirty-year-old tree grew so large that it actually bent the one inch pipe far enough out to crack it! The iron fence around the Festival Garden was repainted. Incandescent bulbs have been replaced with low-wattage compact fluorescent bulbs, and there's always a leaking faucet somewhere. In October, a couple of heat pumps were fixed for the Sanctuary in preparation for the cooler weather which cost several thousand dollars.

A couple of major projects have been put on hold because of the church's lack of monies available for

preventative maintenance and repairs. The parking lots are several years past due for maintenance (to prevent further cracking) and there are water leaks in the roof of Smith Hall and the Education Building. One leak is by door to the kitchen, and one leak drips into the nursery. Some patching has been done, which, according to the contracted roofers, has not fixed the real problem which is the deterioration of the underlying roofing materials. It has been recommended, by the contracted roofers, that those two sections be re-roofed.

As you can see, the Facilities Team is working behind the scenes to keep our buildings and campus open and running smooth, but more help is needed! You are invited to attend the **Annual All-Church Workday on Saturday, November 14** from 7:30 a.m. to noon. Individuals and families are welcome to join in the work, for any amount of time, as the campus and buildings are prepared for the holidays with landscaping, cleaning, repair projects which always includes wonderful camaraderie.

Transitions

Baptisms

Riley Burns

April 26, 2009

daughter of Nicole Holton-Burns & Carol Burns

Audrey Parnell

September 20, 2009

daughter of Josh & Cindy Parnell



December 5, 2009
Proceeds benefit the
Shadow Rock Preschool

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