



Ploughshare

A Piece of Mike's Mind by Rev. Mike Morran

Since the election, many of our members and friends have expressed that they want to get involved in something positive, find some way of making a difference in opposition to the mendacity, racism, and selfishness of the incoming administration. "What can I do? How can I help? Where can I plug in?" are what people asking.

One of the things that gives me hope right now is how much activism is happening in response to the election. I am seeing conversations happening, groups and alliances forming, people organizing, and awareness growing pretty much everywhere I look.

Here is something very specific that you can do:

Join me at Shorter AME Community Church on Tuesday, January 17th at 6:15p. For a couple months now I've been part of an interfaith group organizing around police accountability: "Creating a Faith-Based Movement to change the culture of law enforcement and the Justice System to:

- *Be racially just*
- *Protect immigrant families*
- *Address over-crowding in the Denver jail*
- *Implement policies that value human rights*
- *Establish relationship and trust with the community*
- *Evaluate use of force policies and the definition of lawful order"*

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Ready to Rock by Erin Kenworthy, DRE

Happy New Year! I am so glad to be back on the job following the birth of baby Bryce! We enjoyed being with you on Christmas Eve, and find that we are deeply grateful for this community of friends who have helped us make it through these very early weeks as a family of four.

The Religious Exploration program has been lovingly cared for by Bridget Everhardt and Jen Stephens during my absence. I am so thankful for their support and teamwork in keeping our volunteers and families engaged. I am also amazed by the energy and dedication of Matt Davis, who took on extra responsibilities to present intergenerational worship experiences, online communication, and volunteer support.

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We have confirmed that Denver Police Chief White and other Denver City and County leaders will be present and we intend to make a very specific list of requests for more community accountability in the above areas. The organizing team is hoping for a thousand people of faith to attend and I would personally like to see a hundred faces from First Unitarian Denver. Shorter AME is at 3100 Richard Allen Ct, Denver, CO 80205. This will be local activism, local organizing, and speaking truth to power at its finest.

Other opportunities this month include First Unitarian hosting a racial justice movie night "13th," an award-winning documentary about race and the justice system will be on Friday, January 13th. **Love is Our Resistance!** Sunday worship on January 15th. Racial Justice potluck and meeting on that same afternoon. The annual MLK Parade will be Monday the 16th. Also, you are invited to be part of the Let Us Rise re-organization meeting happening at First Unitarian after the Parade. See more information about each of these elsewhere in this newsletter.

Still another effort I've been participating in is a Pro-Democracy Organizational Leaders Group. This is primarily labor leaders, some faith leaders, the ACLU, and others who have made the following statement:

As Americans, we know our freedom and democracy are precious and, like all democracies, fragile if not vigorously protected by its people. Tyranny destroys a democracy by a thousand cuts. Therefore, we declare that we shall remain steadfast to protect freedom and democracy. We shall rise in unity to oppose any such threats by the new administration, Congress, or other opponents of freedom and democracy, if they act in any of the following ways:

- *Any attacks on or the erosion of our rights under our Constitution and Bill of Rights, such as the freedom of assembly, right to peaceful protest, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press;*
- *Any violation of basic human dignity by our government or others;*
- *Any violation of our country's rule of law by our government;*
- *All violent acts against vulnerable minorities or political opponents by our government or if such acts are conducted and are insufficiently protected by our government;*
- *Any violation of our rights to due process and the right of innocence until proven guilty, including the scapegoating of entire racial or religious minorities.*

These are just a sampling of some local efforts and groups preparing for activism in the coming year. First Unitarian Denver will continue to Stand on the Side of Love.

Happy New Year from the Abundance Committee

January 1 – The start of a New Year. A time for taking stock of our lives. Why is it that taking stock often turns out to be a negative? We resolve to improve the things that are wrong in our lives. We want to be thinner, more fit, more organized, more, more, more...to correct our perceived faults. What would happen if we changed our focus from "fixing" ourselves to helping others? This year, January 1 falls on a Sunday, giving us a wonderful opportunity to put a positive spin on our resolutions. As we reflect on 2016, we see all the ways this church has fulfilled its mission, especially this year as our country has struggled through a difficult political time. Throughout the year, First Unitarian has continued to welcome all people as they are, to be who they are, and has invited them to join with this diverse community of seekers. We are delighted that many have done just that and will help us as we continue to create this welcoming space. So perhaps this January 1, as we reflect on the gifts we have we have received from this church and what it has meant to our lives and our relationships, we can make a positive resolution: to continue to support the mission of this beloved community, with gifts of time and money, and by welcoming all who come.

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My gratitude extends to Marcus Ryan, who has tirelessly served our youth program this year by mentoring our youth fellows, coordinating a youth service, and supporting our middle school volunteers as they forge a new experience for our Junior UU's. Finally, all of the program volunteers who planned and facilitated lessons kept the heartbeat of our program going strong, and I am inspired by your commitment and generosity. We truly are stronger together.

We've gracefully arrived at the start of 2017. This year, we are called to stretch our social justice muscles in preparation for seemingly endless opportunities to serve our community. The Religious Exploration community will reach out beyond our walls, each class will select and implement a social justice project. We'll enjoy a report of their work in the Spring with a small social justice fair. Between now and then, may we talk often with one another, from our youngest to our wisest, of our passion and our actions that move us closer to justice this year.

May 2017 bring you growth, connection, and renewal. May we challenge ourselves, and others to champion love, to seek justice, and to live with compassion. Blessed be.

The Economy of Perspective by Lia Davis

When I consider Economy through a personal and spiritual lens, I reflect on the allocation of my non-material resources—primarily my time and energy. How do I choose to fill the 24 hours I am gifted each day? What are my priorities? What is truly important to me? These questions remind me of Victoria Stafford's story which Mike has shared on Sunday mornings from time to time. While walking in a New England cemetery, Stafford noticed a "strangely soothing" epitaph: "She attended well and faithfully to a few worthy things."

What have I attended to in the past year? What do I wish to attend to this year? I find these to be fruitful questions as we enter the new year. To be clear, I am not a fan of New Year's resolutions. I am very much drawn to the process of taking stock, reflecting on the past year, and considering the year to come, but I loathe the finite, fixed goals, such as "lose 20 pounds by April 1". My most successful attempts to make changes in my life respect the fact that change is incremental. Establishing new habits requires us to choose these habits again and again. This perspective is more forgiving than making resolutions; we can't fail, because each day is a chance to start anew and choose again.

On January 1, after taking stock of where I felt I had "drifted" in the past year, I wrote a list of practices, habits, and activities I would like to attend to more frequently this coming year. These practices include gratitude, movement, and spending time connecting with my family, among other things. I consider this to be a reference list—a reminder of the things that help me to be more balanced, more sane, more healthy and more connected to myself. I am not viewing it as a "to do" list or a set of check boxes. There is no specific yardstick of success or failure to which I'm holding myself. I am, instead, bringing my attention to the joy, energy, and connection that these practices engender, and to the momentum that arises when I engage in these practices regularly.

How will you strike a balance with your own personal economy of time and energy? What brings you joy, energy, or connection? What are a few worthy things you wish to attend to more fully this coming year? Are there a few things you wish to let go of or attend to less often this year? My New Year's wishes for each of us are to embrace each day as an opportunity to choose again; to find joy, satisfaction, and perhaps even momentum through our daily practices; and to be kind to ourselves and one another as we learn, change, and grow.

The 1960's Championing of Human Rights

by Kathlene Sutton

As we celebrate Martin Luther King's birthday this month, it is with loving gratitude that we also celebrate First Unitarian's early civil rights activists, with special thanks to longtime and still-active members Helen Wolcott and Ruth Steiner.

Along with many other First Unitarian members and countless others in the community, Helen and Ruth stood in the forefront of virtually every civil rights struggle in Denver throughout the 1960s. Under the banner of the Congress of Racial Equality (or CORE, led locally by Jim Reynolds) --and alongside FUSD compatriots such as Maryjane Raabe and Rose Tanaka, Helen and Ruth worked tirelessly to eliminate discrimination in Denver housing, schools and employment.

Helen attributes much of CORE's success to strategically targeting the most important stores not hiring blacks in up-front jobs and then picketing, marching and negotiating with the stores' top brass behind the scenes. Once the top department store (then Denver Dry Goods) and the top grocery chains (King Soopers and Safeway) agreed to hire African American sales clerks, the smaller stores tended to fall in line quickly. But it took nerve and persistence: Denver Dry Goods buckled and hired three black clerks only after five weeks of well-publicized picketing; Safeway picketers were sprayed with garden hoses, and King Soopers caved only after a memorable meeting with Lloyd King (though he tried to intimidate Jim and Helen, he betrayed his nervousness when he lit his cigarette on the wrong end). Helen is relieved that Denver protestors never had to deal with violent blowback.

Efforts to end discrimination in housing were launched on two fronts. Often, Helen or Ruth would follow up after learning a black person was turned away in response to an ad for an apartment rental (typically because "it was just rented to someone else"), by sending in a white applicant, who would invariably be offered the apartment. There were so many episodes like this, Helen noted, that "it was easy to make a case" against virtually every landlord approached. (Once, as she was lying on his examination table, Helen suddenly realized that her own gynecologist [cum landlord] was due to face her in court.)

But this strategy was insufficient to address such issues as "red-lining," whereby lenders denied mortgages to potential buyers in black neighborhoods (outlined literally in red on lenders' maps). So protestors pressured the state legislature to strengthen Colorado's weak Fair Housing law with stiffer non-discrimination requirements and penalties for violators. Helen, Ruth and a handful of others sat in at Gov. Love's office for 46 hours to pressure him to add the revised law to his legislative agenda. After the protestors were rebuffed by Love and the state legislature, a special session of the legislature later passed the beefed-up law.

As CORE's representative to the official city committee on desegregating Denver's schools, Helen along with other CORE members also worked to support court-ordered school busing (riding school buses for weeks with bused-in black students and visiting highly impacted schools). They also helped to combat efforts to sabotage the busing plan, such as covert, repeated attempts to redraw neighborhood-school boundaries.

Unfortunately, Helen says (and she is backed by a 2006 Harvard study), many Denver neighborhoods and schools have re-segregated over the intervening years, to the dismay of those who labored so hard to integrate them. Undaunted, she calls for the current generation to again take up the fight wherever civil rights are threatened souls!

Fundraiser Concerts for the Capital Campaign

There are three opportunities in the next few months to contribute to our building renovation fund while also enjoying top-notch live music! Members of the Music Committee will be selling tickets for these concerts on Sundays during coffee hour between services. If you don't find us in the community room, check with Glenn in the office. Email Lia (ldavis@fusden.org) for more information.

Ron Miles & Friends

Friday, February 10th, 7:00p

Ron Miles will perform an intimate house concert in the Stapleton neighborhood. Limited seating: \$50 includes dinner, drinks, dessert, and live music by Ron on cornet, accompanied by his 4-piece rhythm section (Solomon Chapman, Roger Green, Gonzalo Teppa, and Alwyn Robinson).

Richard and Peter John Stoltzman

Sunday, February 26th, 2:00p

Richard Stoltzman (clarinet) and Peter John Stoltzman (piano), father and son, have delighted audiences in the US from Washington State to Washington DC and throughout Italy and Japan. The Stoltzmans have been featured on "CBS Sunday Morning", NPR's "Performance Today" and "Weekend Edition" shows as well as on the Voice of America network. Richard and Peter John Stoltzman will perform a concert of American works by artists such as Bernstein, Copland, Carter, Gershwin, Ellington, Brubeck, Monk, and Porter.

Many Voices: FUSD Choral Festival

Saturday, April 8th, 7:00p

First Unitarian will hold a Choral Festival on Saturday, April 8th at 7 pm, featuring Denver-area choirs as well as our own Chalice Singers and Children's Choir. This will be a celebration of choral music and our final fundraising concert for the building renovation fund. Please save the date, more details are forthcoming!

Speaking of Economy...

During the month of January, save \$10 when you purchase tickets to all three of these fundraiser concerts. There is no limit – save \$10 on each set of tickets you purchase. You'll need to act fast – this offer is valid only while seats remain for the Ron Miles concert. (If you already purchased tickets to the Stoltzman concert, you can still get this deal by purchasing tickets to the other two concerts.)



We're On Our Way

Happy New Year! In 2016, besides all of our community work, we also became a Denver Landmark—which brought to light our extensive history of social justice work over 145 years! In addition, as of this writing, we have secured over \$2,040,000 in commitments to the Capital Campaign. What an amazing feat! We have far exceeded what many thought was possible and reaffirmed that we are a strong congregation who feel good about ourselves and our work. Not only have we managed to reach this figure, but on December 4th, we voted **unanimously** to move forward with our interior renovation plans.

Now, more than ever, Denver and Capitol Hill need First Unitarian's space to gather and DO SOCIAL JUSTICE WORK. An important part of our history has been to offer space--for meetings, for trainings, for those who need sanctuary. The people of our church are critical social justice actors. Our building is also a critical piece of our social justice story--having a place to meet and organize helps move efforts forward. Taking care of our building and enhancing the space IS social justice work.

The Capital Fundraising Team looks forward to “finishing the flame” as we move into the final phase of campaign in January. We feel confident that we will reach (or come incredibly close) to our goal of \$2.6 million by April 2017.

The Capital Fundraising Team aims to have **full participation** of the congregation in the campaign. Everyone is encouraged to give at a level that feels good and comfortable. If we all commit, we will make our goal. If you have not yet participated, please join us at the Fire of Commitment: Soulful Concert and Singing event on January 28th (RSVP in Glenn's office or at www.fusdcapitalproject.org). It will be a wonderful event and an opportunity to learn the latest about the project and campaign, as we enter our final phase.

Building Renovation Meeting *from the Executive Building Team*

Do you have definite ideas about how the new kitchen in our renovated building should be put together? Are you passionate about the chairs in the sanctuary or risers for the choir? Here's your chance to get involved in those areas! On the morning of January 14, the Executive Building Team is hosting a “choreography” meeting—that is, a meeting where members of the Building Renovation Team and the Capital Fundraising Team convene to exchange information and coordinate work on the renovation project. This meeting will be a little bit different from past meetings, however. The EBT is inviting anyone interested in one (or more!) areas of the building project to join them to discuss those areas. The areas we're discussing are:

Kitchen

Bathrooms

Rental spaces

Chairs and Risers

Technology/Sound

Religious Education spaces

If you'd like to be involved in the discussion on any of these areas, please join the EBT at 10am in the Community room on Saturday, January 14. We will break into groups to discuss each area for about an hour and then reconvene as a whole group to wrap up.

MLK Weekend Learning and Activism Opportunities

Racial Justice Movie Night

To help kick-off Martin Luther King weekend, on Friday evening, January 13th, First Unitarian Denver will host a showing of 13th, a poignant and award-winning documentary about race and the justice system. The film will begin at 6:30p, and there will be conversation afterwards.

Sunday Worship: Love is our Resistance!

This Sunday worship will be led by our Racial Justice Project, Advisors of the MLK Youth Con, and UU Youth from around the region.

Racial Justice Potluck

Sunday afternoon will have the second monthly meeting of the First Unitarian People of Color group (1:00p to 3:00p), simultaneous with the second monthly potluck meeting of white partners and accomplices (12:30p to 2:30p). All are welcome to attend the appropriate group!

Martin Luther King Jr. annual Marade

Monday morning the MLK march will begin at City Park as usual, usually leaving the park about 10:30a.

Let Us Rise presents: Where do we go from here?

Join us Monday, January 16th after the MLK Marade from 1:00p to 3:30p at First Unitarian Society of Denver for a family-friendly gathering with food, activities, song, action planning, and justice work with other concerned, caring people from around the city. There will be free food for this post-Marade event!

Across the city, country, and beyond, justice-seeking people are finding one another and figuring out ways to respond to hate and fear with strength and love. Let Us Rise, a group founded in Denver to do work around shaping collaborative visions of a more just society, has recently reemerged and wants to join with you to build up a new world.

Come explore ways to plug in with various community organizations throughout the Denver area. If you've been seeking ways to respond to ever-more-hateful rhetoric and action, we'd love to see you and build with you on Monday the 16th at First Unitarian. All ages are welcome and warmly invited.

Reverend Mike and The Committee On Ministry Want to Hear From You!

During January your Committee on Ministry (COM) will be facilitating Reverend Mike's annual evaluation. As in years past, we will be using the appreciative inquiry method which works best when many members of our community are involved. With that in mind, members of the committee will gather responses and facilitate discussion on the following three questions: (1) When do you think the senior minister was at his best? If it was related to a particular class, sermon, meeting, event, or project, please note this. What made this instance (or this project, etc.) stand out for you? (2) From your point of view, what are the most important contributions the senior minister is making to congregational life at First Unitarian? (3) What would you like to see more of from the senior minister, and where would you like to see him focus his energies over the next year?

To encourage as much participation as possible, committee members will be present at upcoming events in January (1) at the Whole Soul Supper following Vespers on Wednesday, January 4, 2017, and (2) between worship services on January 15 and January 22, 2017. Please attend and participate if you are willing and able. Thank you and we look forward to hearing from YOU!

Immigration Update by Kathy Glatz

You may or may not know that Ingrid, a fine lady from Peru who has been in U.S. many years, has entered Sanctuary at Mountain View Friends Meeting. **We need to visit with Ingrid and Anibal.** We know it's been the holidays and a lot of folks were traveling, but now we need to help out Friends and Ingrid! For folks intimidated by Spanish--like me--Ingrid's English is superb! Ingrid and Anibal, her 1-year-old, welcome visits and overnights at Mountain View Friends Meeting. Bryant, her 8-year-old, was staying there over break, but has returned home w/his dad. Sign up here to drop by. Please provide your phone number or email so we can connect! <http://tinyurl.com/mvfmquest>

If you live far away, it'd be great to get some cards made and sent to Ingrid for moral support. The online comments posted on articles [NY Times] about her are pretty brutal and it would be good to have some physical messages of support! You can send them to: Ingrid Encalada Latorre, c/o Mountain View Friends Meeting, 2280 South Columbine St., Denver, CO 80210

Training: Looking for ways to do something tangible in relationship with immigrants in your community? Training can be your New Year's Resolution! Build capacity as part of the Metro Denver Sanctuary Coalition Resistance DocuTeam or Relief Workshops in partnership with the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition and AFSC. Ingrid came to us through the DocuTeam as have a dozen other folks we've accompanied this past year. You can choose from two tracks. These trainings will go from 1:00p to 6:00p on Saturday the 14th and from 9:00a to 1:00p on Sunday the 15th. Register at, <http://coloradoimmigrant.org/training/>

Participants will be able to choose from 2 tracks:

- 1) Relief: a. Training on a new Relief Toolkit aimed at helping community to identify forms of immigration relief that people could qualify for AND b. Training on how to become a Community Navigator to support and run Citizenship Workshops
- 2) Resistance: a. Training on how to document incidents of interactions between Police and ICE in your community AND b. Training on how to provide support for deportation cases

Recall Rev. Peter Morales' call for all UU churches to assist those in Sanctuary. Now it's our turn to help our partners, the Friends, in keeping Ingrid safe and comfortable.

Rev. Mike to Receive Community Service Award This Month

Rev. Mike will be honored to receive the Tom Knorr Community Service Award from Capitol Hill United Neighbors this year. From Capitol Hill United Neighbors:

Rev. Morran has steered the 1st Unitarian Church toward "Standing on the Side of Love," a multiyear celebration of GLBTQ civil and human rights at the State Capitol and support for "Black Lives Matter." The banner for Black Lives Matter facing 14th Ave. has been defaced twice in two years. First Unitarian Church has offered sanctuary to an individual due to be deported by Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Rev. Morran also has been co-chair of Capitol Hill United Ministries and has helped align faith groups in all of these endeavors, acting as a spiritual leader in the spirit of Tom Knorr for almost 20 years. His work has been nationally recognized as promoting civic engagement in Capitol Hill. He leads the community in recognizing that we all have a place here in this neighborhood of the people and that our continued strength is magnified by the diverse cross-section of interests that we represent. Rev. Morran is a wonderful example of the substance and meaning of what Tom Knorr offered us all.

FAITH COMMUNITY EVENT For Criminal Justice Reform



Creating a Faith-Based Movement
to change the culture of law enforcement
and the Justice System to:

- Be racially just
- Protect immigrant families
- Address over crowding in the Denver jail
- Implement policies that value human rights
- Establish relationship and trust with the community
- Evaluate use of force policies and the definition of lawful order

**Local faith leaders,
public officials, and
law enforcement
will be invited**



January 17th, 6:15 PM
Shorter Community AME Church
3100 Richard Allen Ct, Denver, CO 80205

Organized by Together Colorado

Questions? Contact: Shorter Community AME Church
Shorter.office@shorterame.org
(303) 320-1712

Whole Souul Living

Economy is our Whole Souul Living Theme for January, which probably needs just a little introduction. In a sense, **everything** has some economy to it because everything comes with trade-offs. E.B. White once wrote, “I wake each morning torn between two impulses: the impulse to savor the world, and the impulse to save it. It makes it hard to plan the day...”

Consider this definition of economy: **“The correct and effective use of available resources,”** which is the heart of the issue. In every moment, Life provides us with exactly two limited quantities to spend: our Time, and our Energy. These will eventually be spent no matter what we do, and we can’t do everything. Every decision, every investment of time or energy has costs, benefits, consequences, and a certain risk. It is in this sense that economy becomes a spiritual question for every human being and for every community.

Focus Questions:

1. What commands and receives your best time, your best energy?
2. What are you spending and being spent for?
3. What are your hopes, goals, and purposes in life? What will you or do you exchange for them?
4. List (at least) five authentic sources of self-worth. What do they cost?
5. Expand the above questions, applying them to your religious community. For example; what commands and received the best time and energy of your church? What is your church spending and being spent for? Etc.