



REFLECTIONS

Theme Based Ministry Newsletter of the Unitarian Church of Calgary
Volume 1, Issue 3 • November 2014

What does it mean to live a life of **Courage**?

November's theme:

Courage

**Nov 2 - A Life of
Courage: His Holiness
the Dalai Lama**

**Nov 9 - Living the Life
Courageous**

Nov 11 - Lest We Forget

**Nov 16 - The Courage
to Be Yourself**

**Nov 23 - The Cowardly
Lion's Perspective**

**Nov 30 - Striking Out
on Faith: The Courage
of John Murray**

Malala Yousafzai was recently named a Nobel Peace Prize laureate after she was shot by the Taliban for fighting for the rights of Pakistani girls to have equal access to education. After she woke from a coma, she began advocating for education rights again. In an interview with Jon Stewart, Yousafzai said that the Taliban could shoot her again if they wanted, but she would continue advocating for access to education for all girls, including the daughters of the Taliban.

Yousafzai saw a need and decided to act. She knew the risks to her own life but decided she would push to see a more just community actualized even if it meant the possibility someone may harm her. Yousafzai's acts of courage, like so many people we consider heroic, started not as heroism on a grand scale, but as an ordinary act of bravery.

Every day, unrecognized heroes around the world engage in acts of ordinary courage out of necessity. One example is the single mother who works long hours in order to provide for her children. Another is the person who decides mid-career she is unhappy with her job and decides to pursue her calling. Then there's the person who stands up for her values, even though doing so makes her unpopular among those in her peer group. Courage takes many forms. No matter what form it takes, it is a mark of a strong person who is sure of what matters in her life.

Courage is tough. Every act of bravery requires a sacrifice, whether of our social standing, our security, our own dreams, or even the possibility of losing our lives. Yet countless cultures and religions around the world have recognized courage as one of highest virtues a person can possess because of the transformative possibility courageous acts present, both in our own lives and the lives of others.
In faith, Chris Rothbauer



Upcoming Services

<p>November 2 <i>A Life of Courage: His Holiness the Dalai Lama</i></p>	<p>November 9 <i>Living the Life Courageous</i></p>
<p>Description: Diane Pask will present an overview of the life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and how his courage in the face of persecution can inspire us all.</p>	<p>Description: “In true courage there is always an element of choice, of an ethical choice, and of anguish, and also of action and deed. There is always a flame of spirit in it, a vision of some necessity higher than oneself.” This Brenda Ueland quote serves as inspiration for the morning’s service.</p>
<p>Presenter Diane Pask</p>	<p>Presenter Rev. Debra Faulk</p>
<p>Service Leader Loretta Biasutti</p>	
<p>Service Associate Corinna Neilsen</p>	<p>Service Associates Chris Rothbauer, Intern Minister, and Danielle Webber, Student Minister</p>
<p>Music Michael McKiel, Guest Pianist</p>	<p>Music Jane Perry, Music Director with UUphonia and TriUU</p>
<p>Tuesday, November 11 10:45 am – 11:30 am <i>Lest We Forget</i></p>	<p>November 16 <i>The Courage to Be Yourself</i></p>
<p>Description: This special Remembrance Day service will recognize the courage faced in wartime and honour our principles that call us to peace. This year is the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I.</p>	<p>Description: November 20 is Trans Day of Remembrance, a day that highlights the losses trans people face because of bigotry and violence, including the ultimate loss, death. Being yourself, even in the face of danger, takes courage, integrity, and determination. Today, we remember brave trans individuals who dare to be themselves and ask: how can we find the courage to be more authentic in our own lives?</p>
<p>Presenter Rev. Debra Faulk</p>	<p>Presenters Chris Rothbauer, Intern Minister</p>
<p>Service Associates Chris Rothbauer, Intern Minister, and Danielle Webber, Student Minister</p>	<p>Service Associates Rev. Debra Faulk and Danielle Webber, Student Minister</p>
<p>Music Jane Perry, Music Director</p>	<p>Music Jane Perry, Music Director</p>
<p>November 23 <i>The Cowardly Lion’s Perspective</i></p>	<p>November 30 <i>Striking Out on Faith: The Courage of John Murray</i></p>
<p>Description: Cowardly Lion in <i>The Wizard of Oz</i> asks: “What makes a king out of a slave? Courage! What makes the flag on the mast to wave? Courage! What makes the muskrat guard his musk? Courage! What makes the sphinx the seventh wonder? Courage! What makes the dawn come up like thunder? Courage! What have they got that I ain’t got? Courage!” He gives us another perspective on courage to explore. <i>Today’s service includes recognition of new members.</i></p>	<p>Description: In December, it will be 273 years since the Universalist minister John Murray set out from Britain to lose himself in the New World. Murray did so completely on faith with no idea where he would end up, and the result was the founding of a major Christian denomination whose ideas continue to influence Unitarian Universalists around the world. But was Murray’s act of faith foolhardy, or was it an act of courage from a man seeking to find himself? <i>This service will include the awarding of the Irvine Award to Carolyn Pogue.</i></p>
<p>Presenter Rev. Debra Faulk</p>	<p>Presenter Chris Rothbauer, Intern Minister</p>
<p>Service Associates Chris Rothbauer, Intern Minister, and Danielle Webber, Student Minister</p>	<p>Service Associates Rev. Debra Faulk, Danielle Webber, Student Minister, and Susan Stratton</p>
<p>Music Jane Perry, Music Director, Multi-generational Choir and UUphonia</p>	<p>Music Jane Perry, Music Director and UUphonia</p>

Alternative Wednesday Soulful Sundown services offered on 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month from 7:30-8:15pm. The Nov 5th topic will be Everyday Acts of Courage and will meet in room 4. The topic on November 19th will be committing to Act with Courage and will take place in Wickenden Hall.

Getting Started: November's Spiritual Exercise

Thinking About Courage

One way to better understand what courage is asking of us is to revisit what it has asked of us previously. It's a lot easier to be courageous going forward if we've made peace with and understand our lack of it in the past. So here's your spiritual exercise for this month:

Return to a Moment When Your Courage Failed You

As will often be the case, the true assignment for this month is, in a sense, to figure out the assignment—to figure out your own unique way of interpreting the words above. So I don't want to give too many instructions. But here are a few general questions to help you along your way:

Why did your courage fail you?

Or maybe better: why did you fail it? What happened in the moment that led to the lack of courage you might have otherwise had? What happened in the days—or years—leading up to the moment that maybe made the lack of courage predictable?

What do you wish you'd done?

Create a movie in your head of how you wish it had played out. What would have been “the courageous thing” to do? Besides a good supply of bravery simply appearing in your gut, what would you have needed to happen to enable you to do the courageous thing?

What can be done now?

What might it mean to “return and try again”? If you can't very well go back and do it over again (or make up for it), how might you return to it now in some other way? What might it mean for you to “honour what you wish you had done”?

Another Option: Compliment Someone for Their Courage

This is a very different way to engage ordinary courage. Instead of looking for the daily bravery in your own life, figure out a way to celebrate the courage of someone else. We all have people in our lives who inspire us with their courage. But have we ever told them so? Write a letter, give a gift, say it aloud for once—whatever it is, find a way to tell someone that their courage is visible and that it has made a difference for you. It's said that courage is contagious!

For Inspiration

Remember that these readings serve as “jumping off points.” They are not here to tell us how to “do it right.” Rather they serve as windows into how others have thought about what it means to be a person of deep listening. Hearing about the journeys of others, we are better able to think through our own.

There’s a lot here. Don’t attempt to absorb or analyze it all. Rather, think of it as a treasure chest that you are sifting through to find the jewel that speaks most strongly to your heart. Come to the meeting prepared to share the selection that resonates with or speaks most powerfully to the story of your own life right now.

The encouraging thing is that every time you meet a situation, though you may think at the time it is an impossibility and you go through the tortures of the damned, once you have met it and lived through it you find that forever after you are freer than you ever were before. If you can live through that, you can live through anything. You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you stop to look fear in the face... You must do the thing you think you cannot do.

- Eleanor Roosevelt

Don’t be ashamed to ask for help. Take on life’s tasks with the resolve of a soldier storming the breach. So what if you are lame and cannot scale a wall alone. Does your lameness prevent you from finding someone to help you?

- Marcus Aurelius

What paralyzes life is the failure to believe and the failure to dare.

- Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

In true courage there is always an element of choice, of an ethical choice, and of anguish, and also of action and deed. There is always a flame of spirit in it, a vision of some necessity higher than oneself.

- Brenda Ueland

Courage doesn’t always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says, I’ll try again tomorrow.

- Mary Anne Radmacher

Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen.

- Winston Churchill

The great courage is to stare as squarely at the light as at death.

- Albert Camus

The first and greatest commandment is, ‘Don’t let them scare you.’

- Elmer Davis

Courage! What makes a king out of a slave?
 Courage! What makes the flag on the mast to wave?
 Courage! What makes the elephant charge his tusk in the misty mist, or the dusky dusk? What makes the muskrat guard his musk? Courage! What makes the sphinx the seventh wonder? Courage! What makes the dawn come up like thunder? Courage! What makes the Hottentot so hot? What puts the “ape” in apricot? What have they got that I ain’t got? Courage!

- *The Cowardly Lion, The Wizard of Oz*

Courage may be the most important of all virtues because without it one cannot practice any other virtue with consistence.

- Maya Angelou

The reward for conformity was that everyone liked you except yourself.

- Rita Mae Brown

Our word 'courage' comes from the French word *coeur*, 'heart'. Courage is a willingness to act from the heart, to let your heart lead the way, not knowing what will be required of you next, and if you can do it.

- Jean Shinoda Bolen

“Courage is acting out of self-respect for doing the right thing. To not act, or to do something different other than the right thing, is soul murder. Not being true to oneself and others leaves one diminished and in some ways less than human.”

- Harry Holleywood

Courage is the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees the others.

- Aristotle

A single feat of daring can alter the whole conception of what is possible.

- Graham Greene

Love is the most difficult and dangerous form of courage. Courage is the most desperate, admirable, and noble kind of love.

- Delmore Schwartz

Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage.

-Anais Nin

One of the most significant decisions anyone can ever make is how to respond when hurt or injured by life. When I am roller-skating I realize that I have at least three choices. One temptation is simply to remain sprawled out on the roller rink floor, wallowing in my misery, hoping for some pity. Another choice is to crawl off the floor, get on the bench, nurse my wounds, and sit out the rest of the session. Or I can get up again and say, “You’re never going to keep me down.” In my life it has been important to make the decision to get up once more, brush myself off, and try one more time to make it around the rink. This has not always been easy. And on more than one occasion

I’ve needed a helping hand to get me back on my feet again. Yet I know I do not want to be a permanent spectator on the sidelines of existence. In the fullness of time I want to be back in the flow of things, to re-enter and move with the rhythm of the circle of life.

- Christopher Buice, *Roller-skating as a Spiritual Discipline*

Courage is a heart word. ... In one of its earliest forms, the word courage meant 'To speak one's mind by telling all one's heart.' Over time, this definition has changed, and today, we typically associate courage with heroic and brave deeds. But in my opinion, this definition fails to recognize the inner strength and level of commitment required for us to actually speak honestly and openly about who we are and about our experiences — good and bad. Speaking from our hearts is what I think of as 'ordinary courage.'

- Brené Brown

Happy are those who dare courageously to defend what they love.

- Ovid

It's a shallow life that doesn't give a person a few scars.

- Garrison Keillor

We have not even to risk the adventure alone; for the heroes of all time have gone before us; the labyrinth is thoroughly known; we have only to follow the thread of the hero-path. And were we had thought to find an abomination, we shall find a god; where we had thought to slay another we shall slay ourselves; where we had thought to travel outward, we shall come to the centre of our own existence; where we had thought to be alone, we shall be with all the world.

- Joseph Campbell

Like all explorers, we are drawn to discover what's out there without knowing yet if we have the courage to face it.

- Pema Chodron

A ship in harbor is safe — but that is not what ships are for.

- John A. Shedd

The highest courage is not to be found in the instinctive acts of men who risk their lives to save a friend or slay a foe; the physical fearlessness of a moment or an hour is not to be compared with immolation of months or years for the sake of wisdom or art.

- Joseph H. Odell

I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.

- Nelson Mandela

Courage is like – it's a habitus, a habit, a virtue: you get it by courageous acts. It's like you learn to swim by swimming. You learn courage by couraging.

- Mary Daly

Courage is not the towering oak that sees storms come and go; it is the fragile blossom that opens in the snow."

- Alice M. Swaim

Let me not pray to be sheltered from dangers,
but to be fearless in facing them.

Let me not beg for the stilling of my pain,
but for the heart to conquer it.

Let me not look for allies in life's battlefield,
but to my own strength.

Let me not crave in anxious fear to be saved,
but hope for the patience to win my freedom.

Grant me that I may not be a coward, feeling your mercy in my success alone;
But let me find the grasp of your hand in my failure.

- Rabindrinath Tagore

Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.

- T. S. Eliott

The opposite of courage in our society is not cowardice, it is conformity.

- Rollo May

A coward is incapable of exhibiting love; it is the prerogative of the brave.

- Mahatma Ghandi

Real courage is when you know you're licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what.

- Harper Lee

From caring comes courage.

- Lao Tzu

You don't develop courage by being happy in your relationships every day. You develop it by surviving difficult times and challenging adversity.

- Epicurus

It takes courage to grow up and turn out to be who you really are.

- e. e. cummings

A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is braver five minutes longer.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Sometimes even to live is an act of courage.

- Marcus Annaeus Seneca

It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

- Robert F. Kennedy

Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says, I'll try again tomorrow.

- *Mary Anne Radmacher*

The nonviolent approach does not immediately change the heart of the oppressor. It first does something to the hearts and souls of those committed to it. It gives them new self-respect; it calls up resources of strength and courage that they did not know they had. Finally it reaches the opponent and so stirs his conscience that reconciliation becomes a reality.

- *Martin Luther King Jr*

I Will Not Die an Unlived Life
by **Dawna Markova**

I will not die an unlived life
I will not live in fear
of falling or catching
fire.

I choose to inhabit my days,
to allow my living to open me,
to make me less afraid,
more accessible,
to loosen my heart
until it becomes a wing,
a torch, a promise.

I choose to risk my significance;
to live so that which came to me as seed
goes to the next as blossom
and that which came to me as blossom,
goes on as fruit.

Courage
by **Anne Sexton**

It is in the small things we see it.
The child's first step,
as awesome as an earthquake.
The first time you rode a bike,
wallowing up the sidewalk.
The first spanking when your heart
went on a journey all alone.

When they called you crybaby
or poor or fatty or crazy
and made you into an alien,
you drank their acid
and concealed it.

Later,
if you faced the death of bombs and bullets
you did not do it with a banner,
you did it with only a hat to
cover your heart.

You did not fondle the weakness inside you
though it was there.

Your courage was a small coal
that you kept swallowing.

If your buddy saved you
and died himself in so doing,
then his courage was not courage,
it was love; love as simple as shaving soap.

Later,
if you have endured a great despair,
then you did it alone,
getting a transfusion from the fire,
picking the scabs off your heart,
then wringing it out like a sock.
Next, my kinsman, you powdered your sorrow,
you gave it a back rub
and then you covered it with a blanket
and after it had slept a while
it woke to the wings of the roses
and was transformed.

Later,
when you face old age and its natural conclusion
your courage will still be shown in the little ways,
each spring will be a sword you'll sharpen,
those you love will live in a fever of love,
and you'll bargain with the calendar
and at the last moment
when death opens the back door you'll put on your
carpet slippers
and stride out.

Questions for Discussion

1. Who is the most courageous person you know? And has their courage been contagious?

Or maybe, most importantly, does their courage need to be contagious? Have you been honoring them in word only and not in deed? It's one thing to celebrate someone's courage by telling others about them; it's another to celebrate them by letting them change you.

2. Are you as "courageously vulnerable" as you'd like to be?

Bravery is often talked about as being hard, tough, strong, determined. But sometimes the scarier thing is to be tender, open-hearted or honest about your weakness. For instance, strength for guys is easy; try letting others know what scares you if you want to prove how tough you really are. Or how about real love? That takes a softer version of bravery. If you aren't brave enough to be vulnerable, you can forget the adventure of love or friendship. No real relationship was gained without those involved being willing to take the risk of allowing themselves to be really and truly seen.

3. When did you have the courage to admit you were wrong?

If this question needs explained to you, then it's likely we already know what your answer is.

4. Do you have the courage to ask for help? And is that courage needed in your life in right now?

Marcus Aurelius said: "Don't be ashamed to ask for help. Take on life's tasks with the resolve of a soldier storming the breach. So what if you are lame and cannot scale a wall alone. Does your lameness prevent you from finding someone to help you?" This quote does a great job of pointing out that heroic, and even aggressive pursuits are not at odds with seeking help. What are you trying to achieve in life that you simply can't do on your own? And why aren't you asking others to help you get there?

5. When have you been surprised by courage?

When have you acted courageously and then afterward said to yourself, "Where the heck did that come from?!" (Don't forget to reflect a bit on where you think it actually did come from!)

Family Page

Submitted by Shannon Mang, Director of Religious Education



Growing Character: Teaching Children About Courage

By Jody McVittie, M.D. <http://bit.ly/1FVWbRo>

Do superheroes have courage?

I'd say, "Absolutely!"

But if you ask **superheroes in our community** how they achieved what they did, courage will probably not be among the first words they utter. Instead they would be likelier to tell you that they just did what was "right," or that they are just being themselves.

We often think of courage as big — as something that is perhaps lacking in our own makeup. That's because courage looks different from the outside than it feels from the inside. Interesting, isn't it? From the outside, the work that superheroes do looks courageous. From the inside it feels like "just being me." Perhaps our confusion results from how we hold the word courage. The word itself is derived from the Latin *cor*, meaning heart. Maybe courage isn't as much about heroism as it is about moving in the direction of becoming our best selves: to be connected, contributing members of our community. Sometimes that might manifest as a heroic rescue, or a bold and daring act. Most of the time, though, courage is quieter. Courage is welcoming a new neighbor, cooking soup for a friend who is sick, cleaning up the traffic circle, speaking out when a friend is being taunted or hurt, sharing your sandwich with a friend at school who forgot her lunch or picking up garbage not because you dropped it but because it is the right thing to do.

Because courage can be quiet, we tend to underrate or overlook our own acts of courage. I frequently work with teachers who can easily identify courage in their students, but fail to recognize the kind of courage it takes to show up every day in the classroom, eager to share knowledge but expecting that there will be unanticipated obstacles that will make sharing knowledge both challenging and rewarding.

Where do you see courage, in yourself and in others? How can we help our children understand what courage looks and feels like?

Here are some tips for teaching your children about courage:

Help them see their own courage. When you see courage in your children, identify it. "It took courage to stand up for yourself like that." "It sounds like you did the right thing even though it wasn't easy. That is what we call courage."

Make a family practice of connecting and contributing. Plan a short activity that gives back each week. Children have fun doing this as a secret. They can deliver flowers anonymously to a neighbor's doorstep, take a short clean-up walk around the block or write a note of appreciation to a teacher or friend.

Self-reflect in the presence of your children. "At work today I heard someone say, 'That is so gay.' I like this person, but didn't like what they said. It was the first time I've been able to stop and let someone else know that I thought the comment was hurtful."

Extra Resources

Books

Anne of Green Gables by Lucy Maud Montgomery

A Better Way of Dying: How to Make the Best Choices at the End of Life by Jeanne Fitzpatrick, Eileen M. Fitzpatrick and William Colby

The Courage to Be by Paul Tillich

The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life by Parker J. Palmer

Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead by Brené Brown

Desmond Tutu: Rabble-Rouser for Peace: The Authorized Biography by John Allen

How to be Sick by Toni Bernhard

I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb

Letters from Burma by Aung San Suu Kyi

Out of the Blue by Jan Wong

Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda by Romeo Dallaire

The Trauma of Everyday Life by Mark Epstein

A Year to Live by Steven Levine

Articles

"A First Time for Everything" – <http://nyti.ms/1vbCZXd>

"Five Ways to Live Courageously" – <http://huff.to/1tiWsXS>

"The Science Of Conquering Your Fears – And Living A More Courageous Life" – <http://huff.to/1AYlrRJ>

"The Six Attributes of Courage" – <http://bit.ly/1yIb8BI>

"Standing Up and Speaking Out" – <http://bit.ly/1rSMwS1>

Movies

Ghandi

Milk

The King's Speech

The Most Dangerous Man Alive

Shut up and Sing

This is Not a Film (2011)

To Kill a Mockingbird

Tuck Everlasting

The Wizard of Oz

Video and Audio

Eve Ensler on Security – <http://bit.ly/1oWJHDS>

Heretics: A This American Life Radio show on Rev. Carlton Pearson's Conversion to Universalism – <http://bit.ly/1oWMVaG>

Mala Yousafzai on *The Daily Show* – <http://bit.ly/1tDsBLd>

Say (and ask for) Thanks – <http://bit.ly/1cZwrTG>

There Are No Mistakes on the Bandstand – <http://bit.ly/ZXdwsm>

Looking Ahead

The content for these packets is a group effort. We welcome submissions of your ideas of readings, stories, videos, visual images, questions, and spiritual exercises for each month's topic. While not everything will make it into this collection, it is useful for our worship team and our group facilitators. You can send submissions for December's topic of "Connection" by the third Sunday, November 16th, to debra@unitarianscalgary.org

Themes for 2014-15

September – Listening
October – Purpose
November – Courage
December – Connection

January – Character (ethics)
February – Passion
March – Freedom
April – Sustainability

May – Honesty
June – Imagination

Theme-based Listening Circles (TLCs) for 2014-15

Theme-based Listening Circles are now meeting all over the city! This is your opportunity to connect with others within the church while, at the same time, delving deeper into the theme of the month. If you still need to sign-up, spots are available in many of the groups and new groups will be forming soon to meet demand. These are the current groups.

4th Sunday, 12:00-2:00 pm, Unitarian Church of Calgary, Chris Rothbauer and Ev Dewar, Facilitators

4th Tuesday, 7:00-9:00 pm, Renfrew, Liz Webster and Susan Bradt, Facilitators

4th Wednesday, 2:00-4:00 pm, Kensington, Bev Webber and Martin Watson, Facilitators

4th Friday, 10:00 am-12:00 pm, Unitarian Church of Calgary, Bonnie Evans and Sylvia Fenn, Facilitators

A TLC is forming especially for families that will meet at various locations and times throughout the year. A virtual TLC is also available.

To sign-up for any of these TLCs, e-mail Chris Rothbauer at chris@unitarianscalgary.org or phone (587) 585-5141.

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