

TAPESTRY

A Magazine for All Peoples UU

June 2024



Photo of Cofán swimmers by Lilly Ignacio



Editor's Note

They say that experience is the best teacher, but I respectfully disagree. The best teacher is a trusted friend who has "been there and done

that," and who is willing to share some advice to spare you the trouble of starting from scratch, making rookie mistakes, and learning everything the hard way.

Over the 20 years I have belonged to this congregation, I have been consistently impressed by the collective wisdom of our church community. Some of us may be more eager to offer guidance than others, but even the most reluctant have precious life lessons to offer. Their wisdom may appear in the form of personal narrative, but it may also be found in visual art, poetry, fiction, reviews, essays, or music. My favorite part of editing the Tapestry magazine is seeking out these distillations of life experience from as many congregants as I can, and then sharing them with you.

In this issue, Rev. Bruce Beisner explores variations on the Serenity Prayer, Jill Baker provides tips on leadership, Joan Miller reflects on her earliest life lessons, Lilly Ignacio and Deborah Novgorodoff share wisdom gained from international outreach, and Ann Adamek explores the challenge of "letting go" via art and a personal story. Thanks to these, and all our other trusted friends, for giving us the benefit of their experiences!



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Together on the Journey

by Rev. Bruce Beisner
Minister, All Peoples UU Congregation



On the wall in the kitchen of my father's apartment in West Virginia, there is a small framed piece of fabric art. It was one of my mother's favorite things and it remains where she hung it, even as we approach the fourth anniversary of her passing. Within this small gold frame are the words of what is known as The Serenity Prayer. In brilliant rainbow-colored thread it reads "O God, give me the strength to accept what I cannot change, the courage to change what I can change, and the wisdom to know the difference."

This prayer is often used in Alcoholics Anonymous and other recovery groups as a way of affirming the helplessness we can have over our addictions and the need to embrace the limitations of trying to overcome them alone. These words are attributed to Protestant theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, although they have been adapted and published in a variety of forms since he first composed them in the early 1930s. For my mother, the Serenity Prayer was a powerful expression of the wisdom found in humility and a statement about finding peace through acceptance. She found it particularly meaningful as she entered hospice care. For other people I know, this prayer is less satisfying. They feel it can be used to negate the personal and communal power we have to refuse to accept the unacceptable. In social justice circles these days, I have often heard

Niebuhr's prayer re-phrased as "God grant me the patience to accept the things I cannot change right now, the courage to work with others when I can to create change, and the wisdom to know that despite structures of oppression I can still make a difference."

There are many different kinds of wisdom. To me, the most profound and perhaps most essential wisdom we can seek to cultivate comes from engaging in the process of discovering an ever truer sense of ourselves and an ever clearer understanding of who we are and what we are meant to be doing with the gifts we each possess. This type of wisdom can involve study and academic forms of learning, but I think it most often appears out of reflection on the things we actually experience in life.

When I began my formation to become an ordained Unitarian Universalist clergyperson, my teachers and mentors would often ask me to tell them about "my call to ministry." This was their way of inquiring about what motivated me to seek to become a religious leader.

At first, I struggled to articulate my “calling” because I was trying to describe it in philosophical or theological terms. It was only after some deeper reflection that I began to better understand and express that my growing identity as a minister was not based in ideas or beliefs but was based in things I had actually experienced. I learned to respond to questions about my “ministerial calling” by sharing a story from my past.

Shortly after my 30th birthday, I found myself at a crossroads. I had been working at a bakery for many years but was ready to try something different. I was really doing some soul-searching about my future and was unsure what it might hold. One afternoon in 1998, I was returning home to Cincinnati after a visit with an old college friend in the suburbs of Toledo. As my Honda Civic sped along the flat plains of northern Ohio, a song came on the stereo. The soaring chorus of Ru Paul’s “Back to My Roots” brought a flood of memories to me. As I heard Ru Paul sing about his childhood friends and family back in Atlanta, I thought about my own personal story.

I thought of Michael, a sweet and beautiful young man who befriended me in the months after I “came out” and taught me much about creating a positive gay identity. I thought of my mother and the hours she spent reading to me when I was very young. And of Daniel, who often says my friendship saved his life, but I know his saved mine. I thought of Michelle who welcomed me in one cold rainy night and made me dinner when I was sure that the world had abandoned me. Richard also came to mind. He was the charismatic pastor who inspired my love of church at a young age and grounded my faith in a source of unconditional love that was beyond myself. Suddenly I remember feeling as though all these people, and many others, were right

there in the car with me, in spirit if not in reality.

There I was driving down I-75 with the radio blasting and a car filled with the presence of all these souls who had ministered to me. I was overcome with a sense of indescribable gratitude for these people who, along life’s bumpy road, have seemed to miraculously appear to help and guide me. My belief in the transformational power of relationships was brought into greater clarity and I felt compelled to ask myself some big questions: “How can I be a source of support to others on their journey?” and “How can I help build and sustain communities which create and strengthen such life-giving and life affirming connections?” My experience serving as an active lay leader and a staff member in a Unitarian Universalist congregation and my close friendships with several UU ministers allowed me to discern that going into seminary just might be the answer to these questions.

All these years later, I remain grateful for all the amazing people who have encouraged me to use my talents and energy in service to our faith. My sense of gratitude for the nurturing and empowering relationships I have been fortunate to experience continues to inspire and direct my sense of self and purpose, in my ministry and beyond it. Each and every day, I find that being a part of this beloved community we call “All Peoples” teaches me that there are even more truths to be discovered and more of myself to be understood. The wisdom to accept what I cannot change, change what I can, and to keep growing and exploring is a precious thing. And it most often emerges out of the joys and sorrows we experience together.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

New Member Focus

from Janet Taylor,
Congregational Life Coordinator

Lisa Benner

Annalisa (Lisa) Benner was born and raised in Clinton, Iowa, on the Mississippi. – Not on a farm, but next to one! She had loving, kind and understanding parents and two older brothers, sometimes kind and loving... sometimes not! The family went to the First Baptist Church until Lisa was in college, when her parents discovered the Unitarian Universalist Church in Davenport, IA, where she eventually, became a member and introduced her two daughters to UUs!

In 1981 her parents became part of a small group which evolved into the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Clinton. As her career led her and her children to various cities, she always found a close Unitarian Church and was on the Board of the UU Church in Columbia Missouri and the UU Church in Carbondale, Illinois.

An Associate Degree in Nursing at Clinton Community College was the beginning of a 35-year career in healthcare. As a Registered Nurse, she earned her certification in Emergency Nursing and later moved on to work in the operating room.

Her Bachelor's degree in nursing and Master's degree in business supported her in hospital leadership positions such as ER Director, and Chief Nursing Officer. In 2004 she met her current husband, Greg Benner, and moved to



Louisville to join St. Mary & Elizabeth Hospital as Director of Customer Satisfaction and Director of Emergency Services.

Several years later, she joined Norton Hospital as Director of the Intensive Care Units and Emergency Services, before retiring from hospital nursing. During her hospital career, she studied various holistic nursing practices, including Holistic Coaching. This skill set led her to work in Louisville with ChooseWell Communities, a non-profit organization supporting women in recovery from an addiction, with a child three years old or younger.

Lisa lives in Simpsonville and enjoys her garden, art projects, caring for three of her grandchildren, who have recently moved back to Kentucky from Ireland, and periodically coaching the women of KYnship Creates, a group of ChooseWell graduates supporting healing through art.



POET'S CORNER

Earliest Life Lessons

by Joan Miller

Things we need to know
Have been well documented,
In fact, by two guys

In particular.

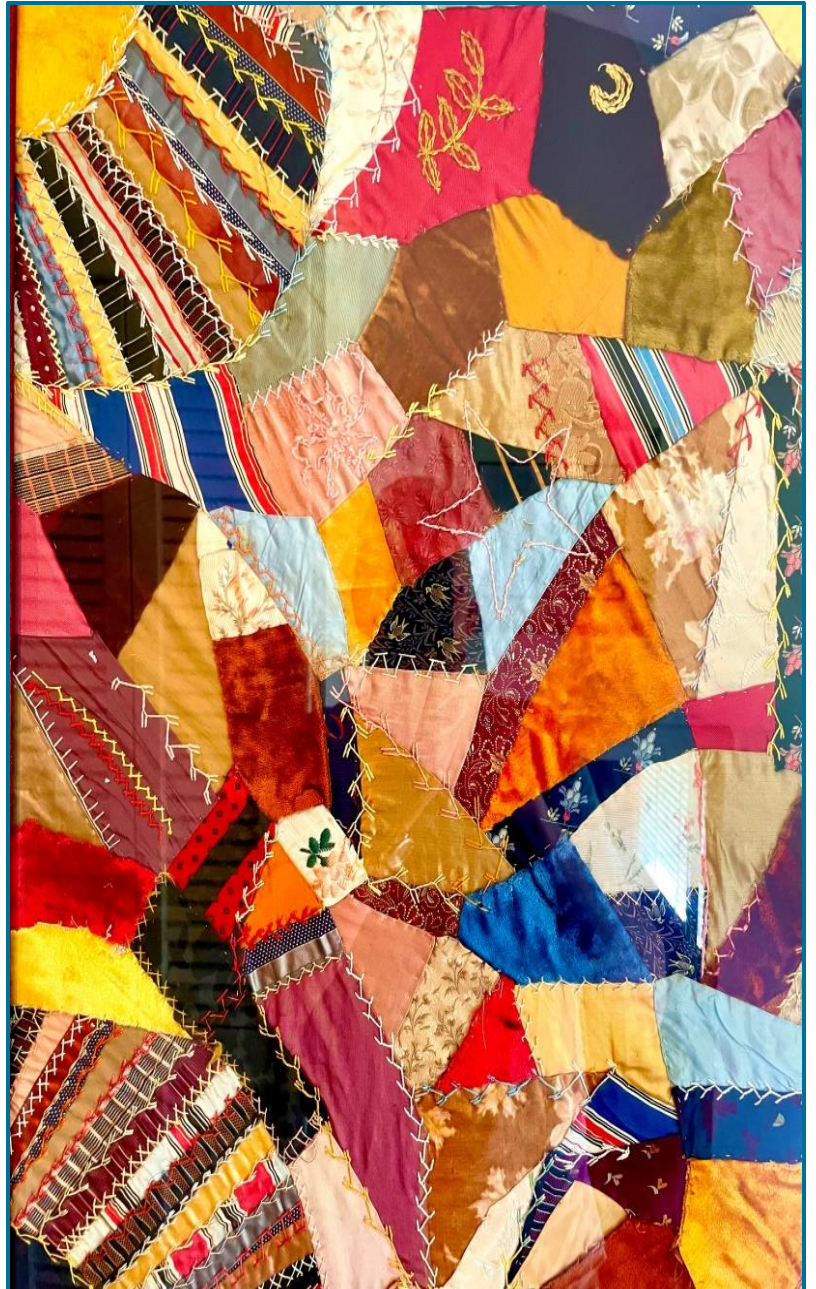
Number one, Mr Rogers
Two, Robert Fulghum

From 'Kindergarten'
We learned many useful things.
The way that word starts:

KIND. That's so special,
Shown by each of these two men
With such gentleness.

Sharing and caring
Thoughtfulness and compassion
Empathy and love

Can we live these traits
We were taught so long ago?
We try every day.



Detail of "Crazy Quilt" by Carolyn Rudy Barth

"Bookmarks"

Book reviews by our congregants

Armageddon: What the Bible Really Says About the End

by Dr. Bart Ehrman
Simon and Schuster, 2023

Book Review by Larry E Farr

Like many of the All Peoples' members, I have had no formal training in Biblical Studies: most of my Biblical education has come from the late Bishop John S Spong and Dr. Bart Ehrman. (Note: I capitalize all grammatical forms of "Bible" out of respect.) Thus, this review is from a layperson's perspective.

I will give a brief overview of the book without answering the major questions Dr. Ehrman addresses. (No "Spoiler Alert" necessary!)

Dr. Ehrman starts off addressing the most significant questions: Was Revelation written as a future prediction? Why or why not? He shares accounts of some of the failed Revelation predictors, including Hal Lindsey. Lindsey's predictions that the world would end in 1988 were quite prevalent when I was attending Asbury College, which along with parental influence, was part of my early traditional Christian experience. (For a Sociological Study of the effect parents have on the teaching of religion to their children, see Ryan T. Cragun, *What You Don't Know About Religion [but should]*, pages 32-40.)

Ehrman addresses why John wrote Revelation, what genre the book fits in, and why this book is considered the most mystifying book of the Bible. As with all these books (at least of the few I have read.) he gives a brief summary of the creatures, and God-driven plagues and disasters that are predicted.

If you are looking for a book to cover Revelation's chronology, such a book does not exist because the presentation of chronology in Revelation is not linear. For example, at the end of Revelation 6, the earth is destroyed but we still have the plagues and disasters of Revelation 7-22 to follow.

Dr. Ehrman then tells us some of the harmful effects suffered in our present day due to misinterpretations of Revelation, including the actions of David Koresh of the Waco disaster and longstanding US policies concerning Israel.

Dr. Ehrman spends a great deal of time dealing with a comparison of God and Jesus as described earlier in the Bible, in comparison to the God and Jesus in Revelation. For me, this was the real "eye opener."

In a departure from typical Revelation books, Dr. Ehrman spends a great deal of time dealing with a comparison of God and Jesus as described earlier in the Bible, in comparison to the God and Jesus in Revelation. For me, this was the real "eye opener" of the book.

I highly recommend this easily understood (no formal Biblical knowledge necessary) reading of 250 pages. The text includes 167 supporting notes, many quite detailed, and a full index.

As a person who gave up traditional Christianity, mainly due to the inadequacies of theodicy explaining extreme child abuse, I can also recommend Dr. Ehrman's *God's Problem: How the Bible Fails to Answer Our Most Important Question-Why We Suffer*.



"Four O'clock" --by Ann Adamek

Letting Go

*A life lesson from
Ann Lawson Adamek
Licensed Marriage
and Family Therapist (retired)*

Letting go is what I consider to be the most difficult task humans have to face in life. I recall countless times I have thought I have let go, only to find it keeps grabbing me back, or rather I keep grabbing it back.

There are so many ways we are challenged by letting go; I think most have to do with the illusion of control. We face letting go when in addictive relationships or any type of codependency. If I am thinking about another person's next steps, I don't have to think about my own (and they don't go away!) Who am I when I am not being a mother to someone else? How skilled we humans are at deflecting from ourselves!

There are all those little daily obsessions we have, such as misplacing something and spending an inordinate amount of time and energy searching for it. What escape artists we are!

I believe *The Serenity Prayer* is another interconnected and profound lesson we can learn, and another of the most challenging. I have modified it to say "help me to accept the people I can not change, and the courage to change the one I can (ME)."

I have experienced major times in my life where I intellectually knew I had to let go, but emotionally I was unable. I was like a hooked

fish on a line, and no amount of fighting would break me loose. It was only when I quit fighting and relinquished so-called control (surrender), that I was able to let go. One of these occasions occurred years ago with my alcoholic husband. I was a textbook codependent... I even tried to control my recovery in Al-Anon, to no avail! I finally "hit bottom" during a huge out of town AA/Al-Anon conference. I was emotionally exhausted, and with no effort of my own, I felt a major release... I had surrendered control! For the first time in years, I asked for help for ME. The weight of the world had been lifted, and I was free. I am forever grateful for this experience. A year later, when my husband died of acute alcohol poisoning, I did not feel responsible for his death.

There have since been numerous other experiences of letting go, but I believe the last one involving my late husband was so profound, it has had a lasting effect. I try to think "help ME to accept the people I cannot change, and the courage to change the one I can (ME). I am still working at it!



"To 'let go' is not to criticize and regulate anybody, but to try to become what I dream I can be.

To 'let go' is not to regret the past, but to grow and live for the future.

To 'let go' is to fear less and love more."

Excerpt from a poem Ann attributes to Virginia Satir

Thoughts on Leadership

Life Lessons from Jill Withrow Baker

Leadership in all areas of life, from the Presidency of the United States on down to a group leader in a small organization depends on the personality and working ethic of that leader.

My leadership philosophy is based on the concepts of teamwork and motivation. A leader must motivate and be willing to work as a team member at the same time. Let me explain what I mean by these two areas of a leader's character, along with some personal characteristics which may help a leader direct a group.

Others want to be caught up in the vision of what might be accomplished under the guidance of someone with exciting ideas.

The first thing that a leader must have is a vision. This vision of what might be accomplished is perhaps the most important part of the leader's character. As long as the leader can envision the accomplishment and can instill this vision in the hearts of those who follow through words, technological communications, speeches or other means, then he or she will have no problem leading. Others want to be caught up in the vision of what might be accomplished under the guidance of someone with exciting ideas as long as they are allowed to become a part of the team which works toward it (Nanus, p. 25). The leader must motivate followers with words of encouragement, of ideals, of how important it is to reach the goal. When a leader is able to do this, there will be enthusiasm and impetus (O'Toole, p. 161).

Other specific characteristics which a leader must have are:

Ethics and morals: A leader must have a sense of value. A clear look at the world and what might be accomplished if good, loyal and hard-working people put their minds to it is essential, but the opportunity to lead people toward a goal is a responsibility which must be carefully used. This is where ethics and morals in the leader's character come into play. If the leader is a thoughtful, respectful and considerate person, he or she will not take advantage of their followers' zeal to work and to follow, and will only make decisions which are for the good of everyone.

Respect for their Followers: A good leader will allow their followers to help them make decisions which lead to the overall goal of the team. This means that the leader not only has to leave his or her ego behind, but also to listen to members of the team. The leader must respect their opinions and knowledge in their particular area, as well as follow up and implement these ideas, if they are valuable to reaching the goal. Giving each team member the respect they deserve will assure the leader of receiving their respect in return.

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Selfless: The leader must not only be willing to lead by following, but also by working as hard or harder than the other team members at what he or she is best at, whether that be

making decisions, doing paperwork or applying him or herself to the actual work alongside the others. The leader must be willing to meet with the team members and listen to them and their ideas and concerns. This also means that if there are problems brought up by members, to work to correct these problems.

Courageous: The leader will be the first to know if emergencies, accidents or negative events occur which hinder the team's actions toward the goal, or to the members of the team itself. In this case, the leader must be able to make quick decisions based on ethics, instinct and prior experience as to what would be best for the entire group. Sometimes the leader has to go to others and ask for a favor, or appear adamant in demanding that something be done for the good of the team. In this and other situations, the leader must have the courage to stand up to something or someone which others fear.

The most important power a leader has is delegation.

Delegate, delegate, delegate: A leader knows that one person (the leader) cannot do everything. Therefore, the most important power a leader has is "delegation." If the leader trusts the team members, the team members will be able to function effectively. So, the leader must delegate tasks and other leadership positions (such as heads of committees) that are important to team members who are able to complete those tasks. They might need encouragement and training, but to delegate a task to a team member is one of the most important and courage-building things a leader can do. It not only builds up the morale and efficiency of the whole organization, but the leader will feel freer to pay attention to other important things. Overseeing these delegates is an

important part of delegation, by the way, and so inquiring how things are going, or dropping in on meetings where delegates are performing is an important part of keeping up with functioning delegates.

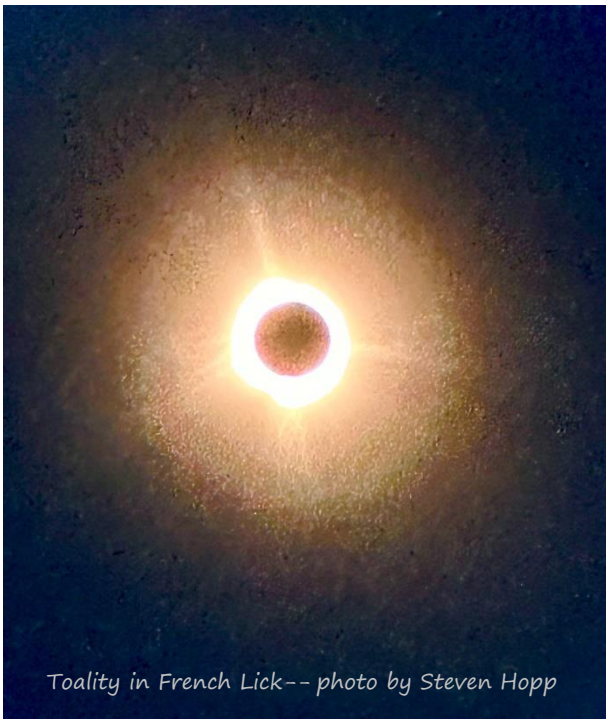
Diplomacy: A good leader knows how to make people around him or her act in a cooperative manner. Not only do team members disagree with each other at times, a team may meet with opposition from without. Both situations can be brought around to concord with wise diplomacy. In situations where people disagree, a good leader can bring them together and find compromises and similarities in goals, so that a meeting of parties in opposition may turn into a profitable arbitration which satisfies all demands.

Conclusion: A good leader has a way of leading which involves their ability to inspire and to lead others to follow. But the wise leader also has characteristics which are used every day for the goal and the team members, such as diplomacy, courage, selflessness and respect for others. Team members feel fortunate and part of the community of effort, if they are able to follow such an ethical and respectable leader.

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Toality in French Lick-- photo by Steven Hopp

Nature in Our Neighborhood

by Rob Kingsolver

A Solar Eclipse Comes to Kentuckiana

It began just as the astronomers had predicted, at 1:48 pm on April 8 of this year. I had come with family members on a short trip north to French Lick, Indiana so that we could celebrate my sister's birthday within the zone of totality of this year's solar eclipse. We were all set up on the lawn behind the historic West Baden Springs hotel, with picnic blankets, snacks, folding chairs, and, most importantly, our geeky eclipse glasses with lenses so dark they rendered everything except the sun completely invisible.

At first, the eclipse appeared as a dark indentation in the side of the sun. As the moon slid farther across its face, the solar disc became a crescent, and then a sliver, and finally, at 3:06 pm, a glowing corona surrounding the moon's black shadow. Our fellow eclipse watchers hooted and clapped, but the animals eased into their evening routines. As the sky faded to twilight and the street lights clicked on, we heard frogs begin to call from the banks of a nearby stream.

During the three minutes that the sun was totally obscured, we took off our eclipse glasses and marveled at this rare celestial phenomenon. The air cooled, and the wind changed direction. Although it wasn't totally dark, we could see stars in the sky. Colors of the landscape looked strange--shifted toward the blue end of the spectrum. The diminished sunlight coming from straight overhead was not traveling through as much atmosphere as the light coming from a setting sun, so the red-shift of sunset that our eyes are accustomed to see in twilight conditions was not happening.



photo by Paula Kingsolver

Total solar eclipses are rare. I was lucky enough to witness the 2017 totality while camping at the Land Between the Lakes in Western Kentucky, but the next one visible from our state won't occur until October 17, 2153. (Be sure to mark your calendar!) Since even our grandchildren won't be around to see the next one, we Kentuckians have valued this chance to experience two extraordinary exceptions to the natural order of day and night.



All Peoples' People

Bernie Novgorodoff

interview by Paula Kingsolver

Although Bernie Novgorodoff may be the quieter half of a very involved All Peoples couple, along with his wife, Deborah, he has been integral to the success of our congregation, perhaps especially in regard to social justice endeavors. And in our collection of people with fascinating stories, Bernie's life story stands out – his childhood alone would make a great movie. Here is some of Bernie's story, in his own words:

I was born in Shanghai, China in 1946, shortly after the end of World War II and the start of the civil war in China. My father was born in 1919 but his father died in the Spanish flu pandemic in 1918, before he was born. His mother [Bernie's paternal grandmother] left Russia because of the Russian revolution to go to Vladivostok, from Moscow. But on her way on the trans-Siberian railroad, the revolution showed up in Vladivostok. So she settled in Harbin, Manchuria in Northern China where my father was born. It's in Inner Mongolia. They survived the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in the 1930's. After suffering a lot of violence there, my grandmother and father moved to Shanghai. They left Northern China because of the Japanese occupation, and settled in Shanghai, only to have the Japanese take over Shanghai in the 1940's.

My parents met in Shanghai sometime in their twenties, but they suffered through the Japanese occupation of China until the war ended in '45. I was born shortly thereafter. My mother was Chinese, from southern China. My father was born in Harbin but was ethnically Russian – that's where "Novgorodoff" comes in.

We stayed in Shanghai until 1949, when the communists took over all of mainland China.



My father had a job as a civilian working for the U.S. Navy, and anybody who was associated with the U.S. at that time would be summarily executed, so he took off to Japan. My mother and I stayed on there until about 1950 under the guise of visiting my grandmother who was living in Hong Kong, which was at that time a British colony. We just crossed the border and never came back, just left everything behind. We stayed in Hong Kong about six months or so and then moved to Japan, the Tokyo area – Yokohama, where we spent close to two years.

We just crossed the border and never came back, just left everything behind.

My parents always wanted to come to the U.S., the great land of opportunity, but there was a quota system at the time; there were only so many people from the Far East who could get into the U.S. So we lived in Tokyo for about two years, at which point we emigrated to Brazil. We took a freighter, a three month voyage from Tokyo to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, stopping at several countries along the way. It was quite a journey; I really enjoyed that trip!

I have only a few memories of China. I remember my mother leaning outside the window of our upstairs apartment one time, talking to the cook in the outdoor kitchen below. Another time I remember her leaning out the other side talking to nationalist soldiers who were camped out below.

They suggested she shut the windows because there was going to be some action that night. When we opened the windows the next morning there were communist soldiers parked outside! I remember my dad carrying me on his shoulders while out walking, and there were anti-aircraft guns moving around on the hilltops, the sky just filled with planes, it seemed like from horizon to horizon. There wasn't any shooting, but that was just the situation at the time.

We ended up in Brazil, and lived there for eight years; my younger brother was born there. English was always a second language for me. My mother spoke Cantonese, and Shanghai-ese – there were so many dialects in China. That's what I spoke until I got to Japan, and then I spoke a little Japanese, as much as a little boy could. In Brazil I became fluent in Portugese.

My first school experience was in Brazil, where my parents put me into a local Portugese school that did not work out very well for me, and I did not like it. Then somehow they got me into the British school in Rio, where the sons and daughters of diplomats and ambassadors went. We were poor people- we didn't have anything - I don't know how they got me in there. When we came to Brazil we moved into to this one room apartment. The first night my mother and dad and I slept in one bed under an umbrella because the roof was leaking all over. The owners called in roofers and while we were out and my father was looking for a job, the roofers stole most of our possessions. So we had *nothing*; but somehow my parents got me into that school.

We lived in an apartment that must have been about fifteen stories; I think we were on the ninth floor. The next block over were the *favelas* – the slums of Rio – and I used to go out and play in the favelas, with the barefoot kids playing outside. Then the limousine would come up and pick me up to go play with my friends from school! So I had a foot in two worlds.

I was thirteen going on fourteen when I came to the United States - from Shanghai, to Tokyo, to Rio – to Grinell, Iowa, population seven thousand! My father had left Rio a year before to find a job in the United States. He came in '58 in the middle of a recession and couldn't find anything, and ended up in a pineapple factory in Hawaii. Then he found

a job in his field, telecommunications – he had to quit high school to support his family but was self-taught in that area – first at a phone company in Riverside, California, then at a better job for a phone company in Grinell. I loved it there; I was there for four years.

When I started at the British school in Rio I hadn't been to school for a long time. I was second grade age, and they put me in second grade, but I didn't know how to read or write at all, so they put me back in first grade to learn the basics, then I ended up skipping third grade. When I came to the U.S. they weren't sure where to put me, so I started in the second level of the 7th grade. Two weeks later I went to the first level, then three weeks after that they put me into 8th grade. So I went to high school there but my dad got a job in New York at the end of my junior year, so I ended up going from a school of five hundred kids to a school of five thousand kids - Flushing High School in the borough of Queens.

It was a very hard adjustment for me. Halfway through I almost dropped out. My parents and I spent a whole night talking about it; they convinced me to stick it out, otherwise I would have been a high school dropout. I actually had the highest GPA in the senior class but since I was only there for one year they felt they couldn't give me valedictorian, so I was salutatorian, which was fine with me. My parents were upset about it – they were the kind of parents who said, *You got a B? What happened?*

For college, my father wanted me to go to Oxford in England, my mother wanted me to go to Harvard, my guidance counselor wanted me to go to Cornell, and I decided on the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

For college, my father wanted me to go to Oxford in England, my mother wanted me to go to Harvard, my guidance counselor wanted me to go to Cornell, and I decided on the State University of New York at Stony Brook. It was a small school when I entered, around 1200 students. When I graduated four years later it was 5000; now it's something like 30,000.

Those were very formative years. Stonybrook was a very liberal school, and I became a campus radical, a member of SDS – Students for a Democratic Society – until SDS bombed a lab at the University of Wisconsin. Then I said, “No, violence is not for me,” so I left that group. But that’s where a lot of my social justice came from, those years at Stonybrook. This was the time of the Vietnam war. When I turned 18 I refused to register for the Selective Service – the draft. Two deans and a member of the Selective Service Board met with me at school, trying to convince me to sign up, because I was already three or four months beyond my birthday [the required time to register]. I finally relented but I fought the draft the entire time. They said the students who had a B average or better would get deferred. I did well, but I refused to submit my grades. The second year they had students take aptitude tests, or something like that; I refused to take the test. This went on through graduate school.

I got accepted into a graduate program in Social Psychology at the University of Delaware, which one of the professors at Stonybrook had recommended. I was a little tired of school, so I asked for a deferment of my admission, and I went to New York City. They were short of teachers, and there was a crash program over the summer to teach you how to teach. I did that and I taught in New York City for a year in an all Black neighborhood. There was a strike going on at the time which I decided was a racial thing – the white teacher’s union. I crossed the picket line to go in. All the other teachers were Black teachers. They gave me sixty kids, no materials, not even chalk; I had to buy my own chalk. I would teach all day and after school I would go home and go straight to bed! I learned how to teach really fast.

It was a great year. I was teaching second grade. I’ve always loved kids, so I had a good time, but at the end of the year it was time to go on to graduate school. After I got my Master’s I had options of three possible paths – the mental health path as a psychologist in a psychiatric hospital; a really intriguing position doing research on race relations in the Army in Germany; or an academic position. I didn’t hear from the civil service [research position] for quite some time so I finally accepted a position at Rhode Island College in Providence. Two months after I started there I got an acceptance from the civil service to do the research in Germany, but it was too late at that point.

Academia wasn’t...have you heard of the book *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*? There is a quote in it, “Teaching dull conformity to hateful students wasn’t what [I] wanted to do.” It was a tough year. I had one class of graduate students, a bigger class than I anticipated. So I said, “Let’s go around the room and say why you are here.” A couple of students actually said, “This is the only class that’s offered at this time.” It was quite a challenge, so many unmotivated students. So I ended up leaving.

I had met [wife and All Peoples member] Deborah at University of Delaware. She was an undergraduate and I was a graduate teaching assistant, teaching a course in abnormal psychology; somehow she volunteered to help with my dissertation research. I don’t think such relationships would be tolerated nowadays, but when she turned in papers in my class I gave them to other TA’s to grade, so we were aboveboard. When I was ready to leave Rhode Island, Deborah was in a Ph.D. program in Boston but was not satisfied with it, so I convinced her to transfer to Northwestern; they had one of the best programs in the country in Social Psychology. So we packed up the U-Haul, drove it to Evanston, IL (where Northwestern is), got an apartment the same day, and stayed in the Chicago area for close to twenty years. We were married in 1977.

I got a research position in adjunct faculty at Northwestern for a year, and afterward I did a post doctoral clinical internship at the Milwaukee Mental Health Center. I did a lot of forensic work there, testing, interviewing, treating. I remember going into the Kenosha county jail to interview a triple murderer – stuff like that! We lived in Kenosha, Wisconsin, halfway between Milwaukee and Evanston. I would commute 50 miles up to Milwaukee every day and Deborah would take the train down to Evanston every day. Then one day a week I would drive down to Evanston to teach a class in abnormal psychology in the evening. After that we stayed in the Chicago area where our first daughter [and All Peoples member] Danica was born, in 1980, and three years later our twins, Devon and Jacqueline.

Like many young couples, Bernie and Deborah were inspired to look for a church after the birth of their first child, Danica.

Prior to our coming to the U.S. I had never had any involvement with churches or religions that I recall. When we moved to Iowa my parents joined a Congregational church there. I attended Sunday school regularly. I won more Bibles for good attendance! But somehow I was beginning to have questions and doubts and managed to avoid going through the confirmation process. Finally, in high school, the minister wanted to talk to me about becoming a member of the church. I said, "Okay, we can talk about it." I went in and sat down with him for about an hour. Afterward he said, "I don't think you should join the church." So that was that! I had no further involvement until we had Danica in 1980, at which point we thought it might be a good idea to look into options, so we shopped around. I went to a Congregational church service and found nothing much had changed. Deborah had been raised Catholic; she went to a Catholic church service and found nothing much had changed. We went to a Quaker meeting house and sat through an entirely silent service, and decided we wanted more stimulation than that. Finally we ended up in the Unity Temple in the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed church in Oak Park, Illinois, and became members there. Danica was dedicated there.

In the Chicago area I was working in a mental health clinic. I missed doing research but didn't want to go back into academic research, so I decided to look into market research. I looked up a psychologist research colleague who was working at Quaker Oats and asked, "What's it like?" She said, "Why don't you come over, and we'll talk?" I didn't realize "coming over to talk" meant a full day of interviews, at the end of which they offered me a position.

Bernie's career in market research included work both at Quaker and at the Nutrasweet company. It eventually led him to the Brown Foreman company in Louisville where he started their international market research division, in 1995. Bernie and Deborah began attending All Peoples and have been in Louisville ever since.

We had belonged to a UU church up in Indiana, and started coming to All Peoples in late '95 or early '96. Deborah joined sometime around then. I didn't join; I don't know why, but one year after I started attending I became co-chair of the building committee that built the sanctuary, and the

gathering space, and the kitchen. So I got involved early on, though not as a member. Finally in the late 90's, I joined. I said, "I'd like to be the first member to join in the new millennium!" So in January, 2000 I joined. I was on so many committees – Stewardship, Social Justice, Nominating, the Board (including Board president). I accepted the Board President position only to hear that [Minister Emeritus Sturtevant] Elwood was going on sabbatical that year!

When asked what drew him to All People's Bernie responded:

Originally it was Elwood - I thought he was fantastic - and the people. When I told Deborah I was considering a position here in Louisville, she said, *Kentucky?!* But we have come to love it here. And we have met so many wonderful people here at church. Most of our social contacts are people here.

Bernie retired from Brown Foreman in 2011. He loves being "Pop Pop" to five granddaughters, spending a lot of time babysitting along with "Nana" Deborah. The couple will celebrate their 47th anniversary this year. Bernie's interest in immigrant issues continues to be central in his life.

I'm looking forward to more involvement with immigrants. I was our Liaison to the Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Justice. As you can imagine I have deep sympathies with immigrants. My parents and I had U.N. passports for ten years; we were refugees.

I really see myself as an internationalist. Even though I am a naturalized U.S. citizen, I don't make that distinction; everybody's important.

Deborah and I went on the first trip to Kenya [for KEAP, the Kenya Education and AIDS Program], and went on the first trip to the Cofan tribe; Deborah went back a second time this year [see related articles from Lilly Ignacio and Deborah this issue]. We plan to continue being very supportive of our international efforts. I really see myself as an internationalist. Even though I am a naturalized U.S. citizen, I don't make that distinction; everybody's important.



Heard from the Pulpit

Quotations from sermons and talks recently delivered at All Peoples.

On Finding Compassion through Self Awareness:

Saying "no" so that you can say "yes" is really O.K. Being aware is about filling up your well so that you can be your best self--and that's what compassion is all about. It's showing up as your best self so that you can help others.

--Van Hurst

From "Compassion, What Is It?" 4/7/2024

On Women's History:

Women's history Month is about much more than just famous and well-known women. It is truly about all women, and the transformation of our society by their liberation as we continue to evolve towards affirming the personhood, potential, and preciousness of all people of all genders.

--Rev. Bruce Beisner

From "Our Faith Shaped by Feminism" 4/17/24



Bleeding Hearts--photo by Rob Kingsolver

Introducing Carlos: Where Passion Meets Purpose

*Life lessons in service
by Lilly Ignacio*

I had the opportunity to meet Carlos A. Menéndez during my recent visit to Ecuador as part of the All Peoples Cofán team. Taking advantage of our shared language (Spanish), I took the initiative to interview him to learn more about him and his contribution to the Cofán Community. Below is his story:

Born in Quito, Ecuador, in 1973, Carlos is the fourth of seven siblings. He came from very humble origins. His parents are from Guayaquil on the coast. He started working at a young age to help his parents care for the family. He lived with them until he got engaged to the mother of his four children. He had to work hard to ensure his children would get ahead. At the time, his work depended on driving a motorcycle and making a modest income. He worked as a delivery boy for newspapers, pizza, and chicken, all by motorcycle.



*Carlos Menéndez
photo by Lilly Ignacio*

Carlos had a motorcycle accident during one of the deliveries. Having lost his means of transportation, he asked a friend if he thought he could find a job at the Cofán Survival Foundation. His friend told him to come in and try. Randy Borman (The Foundation Director) interviewed him, whom he coincidentally met while delivering a pizza to his home. Randy offered him the job of messenger and professional driver for the organization. Here is where his Cofán story begins! Carlos got to know the Cofán people and learned their language. His work involves helping with the logistics of the Cofán Park Guard Program, which means he gets to travel to the far corners of Cofán territory. As years with the Foundation passed, he began helping Cofán people get treatment for their sicknesses. Many came to Quito in search of good hospitals. They needed to learn how to get around in the city and what procedures to follow for medical attention. He helped them receive proper care, which involved interacting with hospital directors, doctors, and administrative staff. Many of the people he helps are children and older adults. Most of them make it, but unfortunately, some do not survive. Some suffer from genetic diseases, and others from oil contamination. Many must deal with both. Staying alive has been a tireless fight for the inhabitants of Amazonian Ecuador, which many call the "lungs of the world." Unfortunately, it is also a place where people are exposed to many diseases and suffer many accidents.

Nineteen years have passed since Carlos began working with the Foundation. Carlos is now part of a team helping to manage the Seguro Campesino (Health Insurance) program. He helps Cofán people negotiate the confusing procedures involved in Seguro Campesino from the beginning to the end: from signing up for checkups to getting all the care to maintain their quality of life and not suffer needlessly due to deteriorating health conditions that medical services could cure. He took it upon himself to ensure the system prioritized the Cofán people. Many live very far from "civilization," and it is tough for them to access care, especially in the case of emergencies.



Lilly Ignacio (center), with Cofán friends.

One of his responsibilities with the Seguro Campesino program is to arrange medical brigade trips to each community to identify and treat health problems before they become significant. Unfortunately, if they do not receive the proper medical care, the Cofán people could disappear due to all the diseases and other health problems they face. In addition to this, there are cultural challenges that the Foundation must deal with, as women feel ashamed to visit a male doctor. Sometimes, by the time they complain, the illness is beyond treatment.

Despite not having a degree, the Cofán people call him "Abogado" ("Lawyer") because he fights for their right to get medical treatment and surgery as required with dignity and respect. They all know him, share their limited food, and greet him excitedly when he shows up. Carlos would like to do more, yet financial and physical resources limit him. Our donations cover the insurance but not all of the additional expenses

(gas, food, and lodging) while transporting people to and from the city. He feels he can do more if he can get a higher-occupancy vehicle that can transport 6-7 people at a time.

Carlos rarely takes credit for the job he diligently does. He always refers to what he does as a team effort. If financial resources are available, the team will continue to organize to provide medical care for all the Cofán people who need it. Many Cofán people are still waiting to join the Seguro Campesino program, and the Foundation is doing all they can with the resources they have to enroll them and unconditionally support them.

Carlos's parting words: "Thank you for the great aid you (All Peoples) provide to improve the health of all the Cofán. With your help, we are doing all we can to meet the objectives of the Seguro Campesino project. "

As for me, I am very honored to have had the unique opportunity to meet Randy, Carlos, many Cofán people, and the Foundation support team (drivers, chefs, lawyers, and others). Protecting the Cofan community is a cause worth supporting.





One of the Most Amazing People I've Ever Met

by Deborah Novgorodoff

Randy Borman is one of the most amazing – *you want to hang onto every word he says* – people I've ever met. Born in Ecuador of missionary parents from the U.S. Midwest in the late 1950's, Randy grew up from infancy among the Cofán indigenous

tribe. His parents were linguists who created an alphabet for the Cofán language, thus making it a written language. Randy is a highly respected Cofán elder, married to a Cofán woman and with children and grandchildren. He and his adult children are tri-lingual – speaking the Cofán language, Spanish and English fluently. They have degrees from U.S. universities, spend a lot of time in Quito working with government entities on behalf of the Cofán, yet they feel most at home in the Amazonian rainforest.

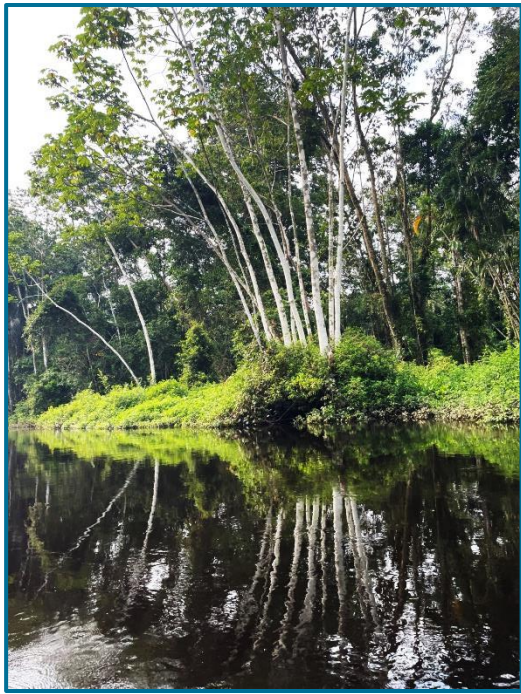
Randy has suffered some health challenges lately, and Mike Cepek, president of the U.S. based Cofán Survival Fund (CSF), recently devoted most of a newsletter to Randy's accomplishments. Here's a snippet from the November 2023 newsletter:

Each of Randy's brushes with death reminds me of all that he, the CSF, and the Cofán Nation have accomplished. No one thought the tiny "tribe" would survive the onslaught of the oil industry in the 1960's, but they did. And then, often led directly by Randy, the Cofán went on to recoup one million acres of their ancestral territory and to protect it more effectively than almost all other Indigenous Peoples—as well as Ecuador's Ministry of Environment and National Park System. Many Cofán leaders have been essential to this story, but Randy has been the most important of them all.

Randy's diverse background and experience allow him to bring multiple perspectives to any issue with tremendously creative solutions to important problems. The innovation that he has fostered among the Cofán, his broad understanding of the Cofán's critical role in mitigating climate change, and his past and current leadership are all reasons why we – All Peoples – are inspired to support these incredible indigenous people.

"I learned more from Randy Borman in a week than in a year-long course at Yale."

-- Danica Novgorodoff



Photos by Deborah Novgorodoff

Deborah Novgorodoff has been a member of All Peoples International Justice Committee since its inception in 2004. She is very involved in our efforts to fund healthcare for the Cofán indigenous tribe in Ecuador. She and other members of the International Justice Committee will be leading the June 30 Sunday Service about our work with the Cofán. Come listen to Randy (via video) speak about the interconnected web, climate change, and the impact of our healthcare funding on June 30!



March Puuzzle Answers

Crossword--"In the 'Ville"

I	N	B		O	L	M	S	T	E	D		P	C	T
C	O	O		V	A	C	U	O	U	S		R	A	H
H	O	T	M	E	N		F	L	A		M	A	N	E
	C	H	U	R	C	H	I	L	L	D	O	W	N	S
T	E	E	H	E	E	S			L	E	N	N	O	N
S	A	R	A	N			B	U	I	L	D		L	A
A	N	Y	M	D		T	A	K	E	S	A	D	I	P
		O	M		P	A	G	E	S		Y	O		
U	S	U	A	L	L	I	E	S		T	N	U	T	S
N	T		D	R	O	L	L			R	I	G	H	T
I	R	S	A	G	T			N	E	I	G	H	E	D
F	A	L	L	S	O	F	T	H	E	O	H	I	O	
I	I	I	I		V	U	U		L	I	T	E	R	S
E	N	C		P	E	S	T	L	E	S		S	E	C
S	S	E		P	R	E	S	O	R	T		T	M	I

Acrostic

In these days, we must resist the attempt to normalize things that we know are wrong. We must raise our voices against every erosion of civil society, and every attack against the personhood of another group of people.

--Cecilia Kingman

PEOPLES PUZZLE

"Tall Tales"

by Rob Kingsolver

ACROSS

1. Increase the volume (2 wds)
6. "_____ the Woods" musical
10. York or Pepper (abbr)
14. Aesop's competitors (3 wds)
17. Suit actress in Godzilla films
18. Festive convoys
19. Scouts' entertainment
21. Bulls may not like hearing this
22. Words of agreement (3 wds)
23. Acme
24. One side of Santa's list
26. Where to find John (abbr)
27. Land of enchantment (abbr)
29. Home of the Tigers (abbr)
31. Legendary Friar
33. Leaning
36. News service (abbr)
37. Subject of creation stories
41. Edged out by George in 2000
42. Staying cool (2 wds)
43. Doctor of Literature (abbr)
44. Hankering
46. It's south of MO
47. Bean initials
49. Knox or Campbell
51. Mediocre
54. Double reeds
57. The "L" in L.A.
58. Her side of the story (4 wds)
61. "A Passage _____" film (2 wds)
62. Madeira Island Cocktail
63. People of Arthurian legends
66. Teensy measure of time (abbr)
67. Canadian fuel brand
68. Self-affirmation (3 wds)

DOWN

1. Long US hiking path (abbr)
2. Embedded in most fables (2 wds)
3. Loin or ribeye (2 wds)
4. West Texas school (abbr)
5. Magic wand sounds
6. A rat by any other name-- (3 wds)
7. Louisville to Cincinnati heading
8. Accesses (2 wds)
9. "A man _____ first" (2 wds)
10. Divide up
11. Type of tire
12. Source of classical myths (3 wds)
13. Thomas Hardy heroine
15. Suffix with ign-- or mun--
16. A bit of rain
19. Deception, informally
20. Dorothy's aunt
25. Nymph who loved Narcissus
28. Russian space station
30. Major Louisville employer (abbr)
32. Relations
33. Pale brew
34. Start of many rappers' names
35. Worker's hallelujah (abbr)
37. Celebrated with a pole
38. Spies' org. (abbr)
39. Circus performers
40. How he knew? (3 wds)
45. Heed
47. Lumberjack? (2 wds)
48. Title of Louisville's namesake
50. Bag checkers (abbr)
52. A drive-in or a hedgehog
53. Renaissance fair word
55. Preposition between two sides
56. Holy Italians
58. What a Scot might wear (2 wds)
59. Feast
60. Sports org. (abbr)
64. Undergrad degree (abbr)
65. Therefore

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
	17							18						
19							20							
21				22					23					
24			25		26		27	28			29			30
	31			32			33			34	35		36	
37					38	39						40		
41			42						43					
44		45			46			47	48		49			50
	51		52	53		54	55			56		57		
58					59						60			
61								62						
63							64							65
66					67					68				

ACROSTIC PUZZLE

by Rob Kingsolver

Follow the clues and fill in the blanks to complete each word. Then copy letters into the matching numbered squares to complete a quotation from a well-known UU author. The first letters of each of the words, read from top to bottom, spell out the author's name and topic.

1 Y	2 S	3 G	4 C		5 W	6 J		7 V	8 I		9 S	10 J		11 B	12 W	13 A	14 T	15 G	
16 A	17 A	18 W	19 T		20 G	21 Z		22 U	23 D	24 U	25 M	26 S	27 S	28 B	29 N		30 W	31 O	32 J
	33 S	34 Y	35 J	36 E	37 E		38 F	39 I	40 H	41 T		42 L	43 N	44 N	45 D	46 V	47 K		48 T
49 K	50 N	51 B	52 Y	53 P	54 I		55 J	56 O	57 H	58 Y	59 Q	60 H	61 C		62 H	63 N	64 V	65 B	66 V
67 X	68 C		69 E	70 Y	71 J	72 Y	73 Q	74 R		75 S	76 F	77 K		78 Q	79 L	80 U		81 C	82 U
83 Z	84 X	85 B	86 X	87 D	88 O	89 Y	90 A		91 J	92 P	93 Q	94 P		95 N	96 W		97 F	98 X	99 L
	100 U	101 T	102 D	103 H	104 B	105 Q	106 V	107 C		108 K	109 P		110 N	111 X	112 J	113 O	114 C		115 S
116 T	117 I	118 N		119 U	120 H		121 L	122 M	123 U		124 Y	125 A	126 S	127 E	128 Z	129 Z		130 Q	131 X
132 U	133 H	134 S	135 M	136 U		137 T	138 B	139 N	140 A	141 M	142 E	143 O	144 F		145 E	146 P	147 W	148 D	
149 B	150 L	151 F		152 E	153 W	154 B	155 A		156 Z	157 S	158 S		159 H	160 D	161 H		162 Q	163 D	164 W
	165 Q	166 X	167 W	168 R		169 A	170 L	171 C		172 E	173 R	174 G	175 V						

A. Pitcher's "heat"

169 16 90 140 17 125 13 155

B. Rude

51 149 11 104 138 65 154 28 85

C. Start anew

171 107 81 61 4 68 114

D. Prepared to replay

102 23 163 87 160 45 148

E. Meringue ingredient

152 172 145 69 37 127 36 142

F. Hail or snow event

144 38 76 151 97

G. Thespian's prize

20 174 3 15

H. Win-win strategy

103 57 159 62 120 161 40 133 60

I. ____-puppy

54 117 8 39

J. "Wild Blue Yonder"

112 10 55 6 91 35 71 32

K. Outbreak

77 108 47 49

L. Particular

121 79 170 150 42 99

M. A berry or a writer

141 122 25 135

N. If not

139 110 43 29 50 95 44 118 63

O. Arctic

56 88 143 113 31

P. Spirit

53 92 146 109 94

Q. Buckeyes

73 59 105 162 78 165 93 130

R. UU program

173 74 168

S. Route's end

158 26 126 33 9 157 134 115 27 2 75

T. Competitor

137 41 116 14 101 48 19

U. Print medium

123 80 119 132 22 82 100 136 24

V. Eat up

175 46 106 66 7 64

W. Slow change

96 153 147 18 12 30 167 5 164

X. Clear finish

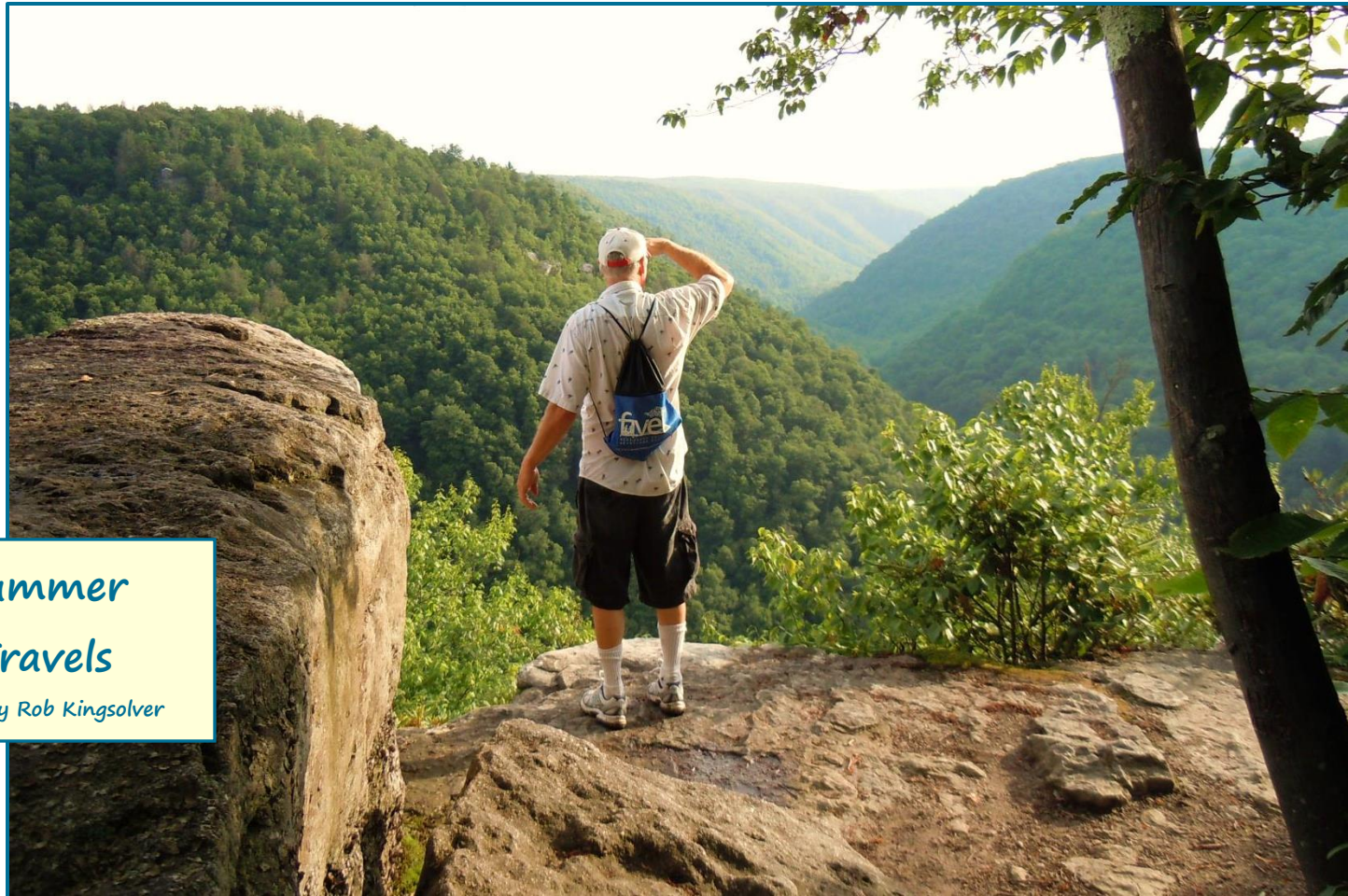
166 98 111 67 131 84 86

Y. Barged in

70 1 58 34 52 72 124 89

Z. Unwavering

128 21 129 156 83



Summer Travels

photo by Rob Kingsolver

By the time our next issue comes out in September, many members of our congregation will be recently returned from summer vacations. The summer break gives us a chance to change up our routines, to wander a bit, and to see life from a different perspective. Travel, whether it's around the block or around the world, always holds the promise of discovery. For the fall issue, we invite you to share photos and stories about your summer travels, and to include something you have learned along the way.

Whether you go to an exotic foreign destination, or just to a new part of Louisville that you hadn't seen before, we would love to hear about your discoveries. Think of it as a postcard shared with all your friends at *All Peoples*.

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Tapestry's mission is to celebrate *All Peoples congregational life through personal reflections, stories, poetry, music, visual arts, and a healthy measure of fun.*

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