



The CommUUnicator

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Waynesboro

Welcome to the Age of Aging

By Dr. Anne Cooper-Chen

Global aging, along with climate change, may be the great challenge of this century —

Paul Irving, Center for the Future of
Aging, the Milken Institute

In effect, during the [past] century... the average human life span has doubled —

Steven Johnson, co-host, PBS series
“Extra Life”

What percent of UUFW attendees on an average Sunday have emerged into seniorhood? I would guess more than 35 percent of us have hit the over-65 mark. If so, our UUFW congregation approximately mirrors the oldest society in the history of the world — that of Japan. We don't yet have robotic helpers to pass the collection plate, but Japan is already using robots to deliver food and provide companionship. The U. S over-65s represent about 17 percent of the population today, but by 2030 we will be 20 percent old — a figure that qualifies us as entering Super-aged Society status.

Furthermore, how many of our UUFW members are Baby Boomers? Think of the changes that the cohort born between 1946 and 1964 has created. For example, the waiting list at the retirement community I (a war baby) hope to move to has a waiting list of about

2,000 people; the early Boomers, who have already turned 75, have decided to think about their golden years.

What social changes will the silver tsunami bring? Who will care for great-grandma and great-grandpa? Where will they live? What new attitudes will emerge? Remember how Ronald Reagan, 69 during his campaign and when he took office in 1981, faced the “age question”? Yet in 2021, Joe Biden became the oldest person to take the oath as U.S. president at age 78.

Still, words such as “old” and “elderly” are considered derogatory in American culture. Thomas Cole, 70, a gerontologist, states, “We live in an ageist culture, and we have negative associations with words and images of old people.” Indeed, the American Geriatrics Society has stopped using the word “elderly.” Moreover, one scholar writes that older women “face the double blow of sexism and ageism.”

As we UUs recognize and honor our first principle, “the inherent worth and dignity of every person,” we must remember that it does not preclude ageism. Worth and dignity applies to everyone regardless of age or age-related issues.

I will be giving an interactive presentation on aging, based on my 2023 book SilverComm, on Tuesday, November 14, from 4-5 p.m. at the Augusta County Library, Fishersville. No, not all people 65 and over have visibly silver (or gray) hair.

However, my co-author and I believe that hair color remains a symbol of differentiation between the generations.

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*Marketing Practices and Messages
for the Age of Aging*



ANNE M. COOPER and YOUNG JOON LIM

New (Old) Art on Our Walls At UUFW

By Maribeth Nolde

When we think of Thanksgiving and Christmas, many of us think of warmth, cozy fires, love of friends and family, and, of course, hot chocolate and turkey. These ideas, and more, have fueled the past two *Art On Our Walls* shows for the months of November and December. This year is no exception.

Quilts, comforters, and other hand sewn or embroidered items will grace our walls this holiday season. Each textile has a history, sometimes a full one and sometimes a sparse one, as often happens when items such as these

are handed down within families. But all of them were made with love and care to

provide warmth as they were being used and enjoyed by many. We invite you to enjoy this show, which is entitled "Remembering..."



Ineffable

By Linda Ankrah-Dove

An ordinary dark winter's day.
I bent to look at a thorny bush.
It glowed.

Ineffable beauty.
The experience transfixed me.
But, no, experience is not the word.

No, the welcome embraced me,
the peace, the bliss, the joy
suffused my senses.

Perhaps it was transcendence.
But no. It was all life here and now,
a spark here, then gone.

But even a spark is not quite right.
Oneness it was that enfolded me,
a sense of oneness with everything.

Linda Dove is a member of Harrisonburg Unitarian Universalists. This poem is from her book of poetry, Borrowed Glint of Jade.

