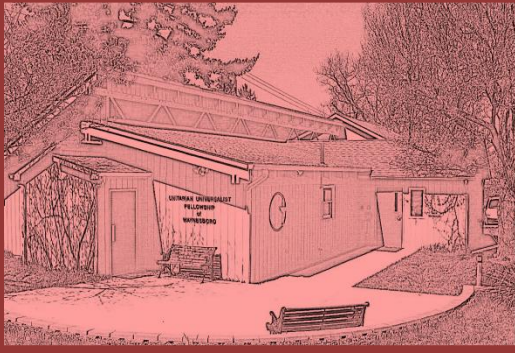




The CommUUnicator

**Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Waynesboro**

Hope and Positivity: UU Hallmarks

By Clint Nicely

This is our nation's birthday, 250 years. Yes, things seem like a mess right now, and sometimes it is difficult to feel hopeful. On that we can all agree. But hey, we're UUs—hope and positivity are in our DNA! We even lift our voices to this idea with some degree of regularity when we sing the lyrics, "And I'll bring you hope when hope is hard to find," from "Come Sing a Song with Me." We must simply focus on our principles and our values, and with those ideals in mind, we will never lose our hope. And perhaps there is another exercise in hopeful positivity we can consider.

Think of Emma Lazarus's poem, "The New Colossus," written shortly after America's 100th birthday, and still proudly on display as part of The Statue of Liberty. Sure, we all recall the lines. "Give me your tired, your poor,/ Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free." But do we remember the lines that come earlier in the poem: "[there] shall stand a mighty woman with a torch/ ... her name/ Mother of Exiles." Little wonder Lady Liberty is female, the embodiment and the essence of nurture and support. And recall the closing words as well: "I lift my lamp beside the golden door." Think of these words as you picture The Statue of Liberty, and think of the millions who gazed in amazement at that edifice as they sailed into New York, filled with hope and positivity, driven by the promise of America, the promise of freedom.

And think of the hope and positivity in your parents' eyes as they sent you out into the world. And think of the hope and positivity you felt as you sent your own children out into the world.

Yes, of course most of those immigrants who came through Ellis Island faced hardships and struggles, but they never gave up hope, because they could picture that first image of America, that "mighty woman with a torch," welcoming them with that promise of America, that promise of freedom. Our nation, like others, has had its struggles and strifes—a horrible civil war, a debilitating Great Depression—but we got through them, we survived.

And today we still face huge challenges. We continue to wrestle with racial injustices, all sorts of gender based and other discriminations, and a seemingly paralyzing wealth imbalance and inequality. Now, we even fear that our very democracy may be under threat because of a so-called leader who sees everything through his own distorted vision, and in terms of his own bottom line. Yes, it can be daunting, and scary, but we must not succumb to our fears and concerns, we must not give up on the promise of America.

When the barrage of negativity starts to weigh on you, simply close your eyes and imagine you are sailing into New York, the sun rising in the East behind you, shining its morning light on that great statue; imagine

yourself gazing up at that “mighty woman,” and remember all that is good in this land. Remember your covenants as UUs, and remember your guiding principles and values. Let those ideals be your navigator, with that great “torch” lighting your way, using hope and positivity as your touchstones. And above all, when things begin to feel overwhelmingly negative, keep in mind the encouraging sentiments of the ancient Sufi poets, as expressed in the words generally attributed to King Solomon: “This too shall pass.”

And if you need a further reminder, read [“The New Colossus”](#) in full.

Grounds Beautification

The UUFW had a work day last Saturday and made great progress on cleaning out the south side of the Fellowship Hall adjacent to 14th Street. Volunteers also dressed the two beds by the main entrance walkway. More cleanup days will be announced through the weekly reminders email and announcements.



Cleanup-day volunteers: left to right, Lydia Petersson, Margot Kephart, Tom Gederberg, Carla Throckmorton, Andrew Jones, Laura Riggan, Clint Nicely, Judi Keller, Wayne Nolde, Liz Jones, Sylvia Woodworth, and Steve Keller. Not pictured: Doug Woodworth, Gillian Preston, Donna Nicely.

Member News

Elaine Goss is currently living at Summit Square. She has been enjoying outings with friends. For cards and visits, her address is 501 Oak Avenue, Apt. 14, Waynesboro 22980.

This newsletter takes a break during the months of July and August. If you have news during these months about a member or community activity of interest to our congregation, send it to administrator@uufw.org for inclusion in the weekly reminders email.

