
September 2025: Outlaw's Bridge Universalist Church

Welcoming Congregation

The Bridge

You are encouraged to join us for 11:00 a.m. church services.

No Sunday School programs and no childcare.

The playroom is clean and open for parents who wish to use it.

September 7: "Grandparents Day" – Clark Lane – Clark will be continuing his service from the Mothers' Day/Homecoming Service.

September 14: "Bridge to the Gods" – Jimmy Merritt – The modern problem of living in a rational, logical, math-based thinking world, and the irrational world of symbolism, metaphor, and Cultural Fine Arts, especially in Music.

September 21: "Secrets, When Are They Good or Bad" – Reverend Brian Clougherty – Secrets can isolate and divide. Inclusion in a secret can imply that we are "special people", in-the-know-people. But "special people" are lonely people. When is a secret appropriate? Let's take a look at secrets.

September 28: "Why I am Not a Christian" – Reverend Justin Lapoint – Among Unitarian Universalists, I am considered a UU Christian because I revere and seek to follow Jesus of Nazareth; however, when I taught World Religions at James Sprunt Community College, I decided that I would present each religion the way a member of that faith would accept. That is when I discovered that while I might be considered a Christian among UUs, especially those who cannot bear to hear the words "Jesus" or "God", I am not a Christian according to the main beliefs of Christians. Also, I will explore the reason the teachings of Paul which form basic Christian theology have made possible the abomination known as "Christian nationalism".



Dates to Remember

September 11: AUW Meeting. Meet at the church at 11:45 a.m. to go to Johnny's Seafood for lunch. Meeting at the church at 1:00 p.m.

September 14: Following the service, covered-dish lunch and Annual Meeting. All members are encouraged to attend.

October 4: Harvest Sale!
Sale at 3:00 p.m. with
Supper at 6:00!



Excerpts from “Truth: How it Sets Us Free”

Reverend Brian Clougherty

Outlaw's Bridge Universalist Church: August 24, 2025

We were born worthy of love. Nothing and no one, not even our own selves, can take that away from us. The lie of shame says we are defective and unworthy. Shame says we cannot fix that shame because we are completely broken. In my Christianity, Jesus shows us that we are worthy and always are worthy; we do not need cleaning up to be loveable.

Last Sunday's topic was courage; about why it is important and how to build it. We need courage to live life to the fullest. To live fully means showing up as our authentic selves. To be authentic is to live by our high values, including valuing our own selves, valuing our talents, valuing our gifts. It takes courage because when we are authentic, we are vulnerable to meanness like ridicule and put-downs. It takes courage to live with the high values of compassion and fairness. It takes courage to live by these values because there are others who value bullying, cheating and cruelty. They like to take advantage of our values. So, we must be wise as serpents and innocent as doves, to quote Jesus.

We need wisdom to choose who to trust. We need wisdom to see through the lies and seduction of those who like to manipulate and lie. Innocence is about living your life fully. Live in the care and support of those who love and care about you. Ignore the nasty criticism. Live with the exuberance of an innocent child.

Spiritually, to live small is to choke our soul. To live small is to give up participating fully in the great “I AM”. When we live small, we give up being ourselves. We give up being who we were born to be. We give up our full selves for a safe, small shadow of ourselves.

The truth that sets us free can also be said this way: Because we are inherently worthy, every day, every moment, presents a new opportunity to live more fully, to claim our worthiness, no matter what sins, mistakes or shame has happened. Every day, every minute, we can risk being our true selves.

However, before everyone runs out shouting “Free at last!”, we need to be wise and learn how to counter shame and all its allies, like meanness, bullying, put-downs and cruelty. To be free and live fully, we need the antidote to shame. That antidote is empathy from a caring community. Just as it takes a community to confront bullying, it takes a caring community to heal shame. The caring community can be as small as you and one friend who cares about you. Outlaw's Bridge Universalist Church feels like a caring community that knows how to free people from shame. None of us get this right all the time, but community helps us keep doing better. If we could get the whole world to know and live this truth that sets people free, the caring community could be the whole world.