

# Flame on the Water

Celebrate Diversity 

Question with Integrity

 Build Justice



**OPEN HOUSE-Saturday,  
February 15, 1-4 PM**

**February 2025  
Inclusion**

**Page 1: The Gift of Anger**

**Page 2: The Gift of Anger (cont)  
What is Inclusion?**

**Page 3: What is Inclusion?  
(cont)  
Letter from UUA President**

**Page 4: Letter from UUA  
president (cont)  
Adult Forums**

**Page 5: Continued  
announcements**

## The Gift of Anger

By Julie Yeeun Kim

January 15, 2025

“Whenever I speak, I must cry out, I must shout,  
‘Violence and destruction!’

The word of the Lord has brought me insult and injury all  
day long.”

—The Prophet Jeremiah (20:8)

When I was sent to the principal’s office in the second  
grade for pointing out my teacher’s conspicuous  
favoritism, my parents wondered aloud what to do with  
me. What followed was a lifelong lesson about the tricky  
balance between message and method: how not to deliver  
the right message in the wrong way.

My parents have taught me, sometimes using words, that  
telling the truth will cost me something; that wisdom is  
the negotiation of minimizing or avoiding that cost. “Be  
careful with the truth,” they said. “People who don’t like  
it will just call you angry.”

When the United States elected its 45th president, I  
encountered something for which my parents’ lessons had  
not prepared me: People rarely wanted to hear the truth  
about a man as told by a woman. I learned that women  
who share their truth are dismissed as being “dramatic” or  
“too angry.” It took so little to be ignored yet so much to  
be heeded.

I did it anyway. I named the willing seduction of  
American evangelicalism, already one of the most  
powerful religious institutions in the world, greedy for  
more power. I pointed out the silent moderacy of the  
Christian majority as the enemy of their purportedly

### The Gift of Anger (continued)

beloved “gospel.” I also examined my contribution to American evangelicalism, silent moderacy, and quests for power and stability.

I’ve received countless reminders to be a “Christian,” a “godly woman,” and to “show grace,” terms describing something more like a sedated animal disconnected from its own sense of anger than a human afraid about the future. These people read my anger as a disqualifier of reasonableness. Even in monstrous times, I’m expected to be respectable and respectful, my anger dissolved in a string of soft words.

But anger is not at all what people think it is. Anger has been kind and caring to me. When, as an undocumented woman, I felt most vulnerable to the former-and-future President’s rhetoric and policies, anger was the sign of my will to survive. Outrage on my behalf was hope for our collective futures.

More often than not, in the secret center of anger is not a desire to destroy but to protect those it loves. It wraps itself around a vulnerable area, like a body turned into a shield for its friends.

### Prayer

God who inspires and anoints our anger, give us the ability to discern this gift, to discipline and harness it with righteousness. Just as joy without spine and love without resolve are empty, so too is struggle without anger. Teach us this lesson; give us this gift. Amen.

Do you need a donation report for your taxes?  
See Bob Antweiler

## What Is Inclusion?

By Krystal Kavita Jagoo

Krystal is a social worker, committed to anti-oppressive practice.

Inclusion is the practice of including and accommodating people who often face discrimination and exclusion due to race, gender, ability, sexuality, or identity. In light of the current racial climate, many settings are becoming increasingly aware of their lack of diversity and representation. Such organizations have failed to represent people of all backgrounds, genders, etc. This has left the most oppressed folks feeling undervalued, ignored, erased, etc.

Despite often being used interchangeably, the terms diversity and inclusion indicate different efforts. Diversity efforts can often be focused on representation while inclusion practices tend to be more about how to help groups feel as if they belong.

In other words, inclusion involves more than just making sure that people are represented in a group. Instead, it refers to how diversity is utilized to create healthy, fair, and equitable spaces that help people to feel included and respected.

From the preface of their 2020 book, *Organizing Inclusion: Moving Diversity From Demographics To Communication Processes*, authors Doerfel and Gibbs name the institutional biases of white supremacy, sexism, settler colonialism, homophobia, etc. which have contributed to inequitable outcomes within groups, organizations, and society itself. In doing so, they make the case for why organizations must communicate differently if they are invested in inclusion efforts given how much of the status quo poses barriers.

In their work, these authors encourage communication that identifies the forces of oppression that can be insidious and require targeted efforts to combat.

## What is Inclusion? (Continued)

While it can feel daunting to become more aware of all the ways in which society fails at inclusion of the most oppressed groups, that ability to recognize such gaps can be a big part of taking action.

Just as the problematic status quo was developed over a long period of time, investing in inclusion will take a great deal of work, but it is well worth the effort.

### Active Inclusion

To get meaningful responses about what needs to change, organizations need to start by asking the right questions. This includes recognizing and understanding that BIPOC and LGBTQPIA+ folks have often been left out of such discussions.

Experts suggest that such efforts are unlikely to succeed unless they are enforced from the top of the organization all the way through.

### What You Can Do to Promote Inclusion

Here's some ways in which you can help to promote inclusion in your daily life:

- Ask yourself which marginalized folks may not feel welcome in a space, and make an effort to change that.
- Identify the barriers to inclusion to those in leadership positions when it is safe to do so to address them.
- Assess how much privilege you have and how much space you hold and amplify more oppressed voices.
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### Keep in Mind

As you have probably gathered, it would be impossible to explain all that inclusion is in one article. Every setting you encounter may be one in which you have an opportunity to promote inclusion. If you have the capacity to do so, that effort could benefit the lives of those who may not otherwise have access to those spaces.

## From the UUA President: Fierce Love Compels Us To Action

By Sofia Betancourt

January 23, 2025

Fam, Family, Familia,

There are mornings when I wake with a deep need for wisdom that comes from sources beyond my own individual self – times when the struggle toward justice and the next faithful action eludes me and I find myself grateful that I am able to turn to the larger community, the legacy of my ancestors, and the shared values of our faith tradition that I hold dear.

I wonder if, like me, you have experienced such mornings over the course of the last week – rising to the knowledge that we cannot do this alone. The extraordinary good news, even amid so much pain, is that we don't have to.

*Each and all of us is in fact a vital part of the fabric of this nation, deeply beloved and deserving of protection, safety, and belonging.*

We should not need to repeat the basic truth that Trans people exist in this world. That our Transgender and Nonbinary beloveds – my family and yours – are not only real, but sacred. That each and all of us is in fact a vital part of the fabric of this nation, deeply beloved and deserving of protection, safety, and belonging. That Earth itself cries out for restitution, and we must not turn away from the fight for climate justice. I send love upon love to the interconnected family that we are for one another, knowing that none of us goes it alone in these destabilizing and complex times. We are real. We are here. Together, in all the ways we can be. And we will remain committed to the struggle ahead and the future we will make together.

As the executive orders rolled out of the office of the US President on Monday, we witnessed the attempted unravelling of decades of work for a more fair and free nation. Among the documents signed this week was an unconstitutional executive order challenging the 14th Amendment of the US Constitution, which enshrines the right of citizenship to those born in the United States. Passed in 1868, the 14th Amendment has been the lasting bulwark against the Jim Crow laws designed to dehumanize Black communities in the South.

From the UUA

President, continued

These executive orders pave the way for large-scale deportations, the separation of families, and the unjust exercise of power in ways we can expect and ways we will discover in the years to come. We know they are already being challenged in the courts. Our work must be to challenge the bad theologies and oppressive systems that support them.

I am the daughter of immigrants. Both countries of my parents’ heritage – Chile and Panamá – have been held under the control of US trained dictators. This shapes my analysis, as do all our relationships, identities, and commitments. And I know that for many of us, these new executive orders do not contain abstract human rights violations, but very real harm that will impact us and those we love in our daily living.

We Unitarian Universalists are people with diverse identities, stories, and experiences. Yet we are personally, theologically, and covenantally bound together by the expansive Love that has always been the animating center of our faith. Far more powerful than any faction, leader, nation, or creed, it is this fierce Love that compels our deepest loyalty and our most courageous action. And it is this Love that moves through and between us, enabling us to nurture wisdom, guidance, courage, and grounding in ourselves and in one another.

We must respond with action. I encourage you to reach out to your local communities, support organizations that are long established in the fight for justice, and make your voices heard. Together we can build a future where love and justice reign.

In these days I send my love and solidarity – to each of you and to your families, communities, and organizing networks. To our faith, our nation, and the world. May that love take the form of courageous and faithful resistance and renewed commitment, today and in the days and years to come.

With faith and renewed purpose,

Sofía

## Resources for Taking Action

[Support the Pink Haven Coalition](#). Founded and led by 2STGE+ organizers, the Pink Haven Coalition has built an international mutual-aid network that provides life-saving aid to those living under hostile governments in the U.S.

[Support the We Are Home Campaign](#). Over 20 immigrant-led coalitions have come together to deliver a clear message rooted in each person's undeniable humanity and worth—We are Home. Learn how you

## February Adult Forums

2/2-Raylene Duckworth, with Rise Up Foundation on healthy masculinity & preventing sexual violence.

2/9-Alex LeCure, an advocate for children in crisis & listening to the child’s voice.

2/16-Rod Chapel, President of state NAACP

2/23-Betty Cooper, “What Do You Believe?” A culmination of years of thought brought together after an emergency medical incident.

**If you would like to schedule a forum, please see Frank Rycyk @ 573-636-2135**

### **Lunch - after services-**

if you would like to join other members and friends for lunch, watch for postings and announcements, or ask about each week's lunch location. If you have a particular place you’d like to recommend, please let us know.



**Joys & Concerns-Please submit your Joys & Concerns to our website:**  
<http://uufjc.org/joys--concerns.html> by noon on Friday or on paper forms for in-person contributions as early as possible on Sunday mornings. See Heidi Atkins-Lieberman for assistance.

Pat Behler is now out of isolation and back in her regular room at Heisinger. Know there are still active COVID cases on her floor if you plan to visit. She misses her UU friends and would greatly benefit from cards or letters. Please contact Jan Harcourt for more information.

**Religious Education, 10:30 am**

**Children attending are welcome to join RE instructor Dr Samantha Porter for a lesson during the service hour.**

**Insight Meditation, Thursday evenings at 7 pm**

A meditation group led by Joe McCormack meets weekly in our building, when possible. Zoom may also be available. Contact Bob Antweiler.

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On Thursday, February 13, at 6:30, Bill Zimmerman, a local volunteer with the Farmer-to-Farmer program, will be giving a presentation at First Presbyterian Church. The Farmer-to-Farmer program is a federal initiative funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). It offers free expert technical assistance to farmers in developing countries around the world. Bill was the program's Volunteer of the Year in 2024! He will be speaking about how the program works and the experiences and insights he has gained in other countries.

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