



UUFL Weekly Newsletter

Sunday, October 04, 10:45 AM

Program: *"Not The Future We Ordered"*



How many of us are dazed and confused at the escalating rate of change? Who would like someone to offer a few encouraging words? Who would like to be the change we want to see in the world? And how can we possibly do that in today's world?

Pull yourself together long enough to hear Michael Dowd's discussion of these things. It just might help. Join us via Zoom. Ruth Semrau will be our Worship Leader.

Zoom Sunday Service Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8780546386?pwd=dIFMVHNrSDcwS1N0TE5aazlUWnVadz09>

Carol's Words of Wisdom Collection:



The time is always right to do what is right.

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at the time of challenge and controversy.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. . . . Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.

I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

UUFL Financial Support:

Those of you who wish to contribute financially can mail your contributions to:

UUFL P O Box 3451 Longview, TX 75606. If you would like to contribute electronically, contact Tammy.

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Our Favorite Story Teller (Me and Betsy McCall, We've Come a Long Way, Baby)

I'm thinking about the world in terms of things we can repair, refold, repack, and refurbish, and things that we can't, the sewing patterns, and the broken eggs. You know how people often say that "You can't unbreak an egg." And they're right. But by nab, I can refold a pattern really well. Still, I can't uncut it. So how much does any of this apply to living?



There's a lot in my life that I can't undo, can't refold, can't fix. Social gaffs come first to mind. I suppose that's why we humans invented apologies. When I've been focused on myself and my own doings, I can forget things that really matter. And all I can do is apologize afterward, and then mop the egg off my face. I could probably fill a sizeable book with apologies of that sort, and I could chew up the rest of my life doing it. I'm a thoughtless person altogether too often. I do hope that most people realize I'm just flakey, not mean, and that they really do matter to me.

I sometimes think of the marriages I've entered into and then wished I hadn't. But as I'm fussing at myself for being so stupid, I think of the periods of my life when I was in those marriages, and I wouldn't want to undo the good times that came about because of those marital missteps. Most especially there's the miracle of my children, Ted and Lisa. Without my ill-fated marriage to their dad, those two amazing and wonderful people wouldn't have happened. That makes me very thankful that I married Allen.

I grew up reading my mother's magazines, magazines like *Ladies Home Journal* and *McCall's*. They were beautiful glossy magazines, and *McCall's* always ended with a page for Betsy McCall, the ideal little white girl, a story of a day in her life, and a paper doll Betsy with the clothes she wore for that day's story. Bliss. I can still see Betsy in my mind's eye, and she was adorable. She was the girl I wanted to be.

So there was a page for little girls in each *McCall's Magazine*, and then there were pages and pages for our mothers, pages filled with ideal women, beautiful glossy people living flawless lives in perfect homes, eating amazing meals cooked by those glamorous women, and I read it all. I'm not sure why Mother let me read all that stuff when I was a kid. I suppose she didn't realize that I actually did read it. I knew all about the lives women were supposed to live in the 1950s. I knew that they needed pretty homes to keep all shiny and perfect, and I knew tips for making every home look that way. After all, I helped Mother do a lot of that making and fixing and polishing. And I knew that a husband was essential to all that happy housekeeping. I knew that cooking lovely meals for a husband to come home to was a big part of a woman's day, and I imagined myself someday in a beautiful home of my own, cooking glorious meals to share with my handsome and loving husband and my two perfect children. The women's magazines were a large part of my education for adulthood, and sometimes they may have been a trifle unrealistic. Just a trifle. There may be a good reason those magazines have almost disappeared from our 21st century lives. Stay-at-home moms are a minority nowadays, and women who work to put beans on their stoves are the norm. Some of them call themselves career women, but more of them, I think, call themselves overextended and tired. Still, there are more and more women who have given rein to their brains and their strengths and have achieved great things – there are more and more of these women, and I'm so glad. Their world is one that *McCall's Magazine* and Betsy never seemed to think could happen, and it's here. We're living in the middle of it, celebrating the achievements of women.

Lordy, how I love Mother Google! I just looked up *McCall's Magazine* and learned that it was published from 1873 to 2002. And Betsy McCall came along in 1951, when I was turning ten. Google shows pages and pages of Betsy and her clothes, and then it gives us a page of Michelle Obama as a paper doll, and *her* clothes, a pretty good balance for all those years when a little white girl with brown hair was the icon for girl children. How much better for us to learn about great women of color who are law professors. Wouldn't it be wonderful to grow up with Michelle Obama paper dolls? And how about Ruth Bader Ginsburg paper dolls? Another news flash! I googled Notorious RBG paper dolls, and they exist! Elizabeth Warren paper dolls are there too, and there's so much more. The icons for our children have changed over my long lifetime, and it is changing for the better. I can't quite imagine what the effect on my child self would have been with role models like Michelle Obama, Ruth Bader Ginsberg, and Elizabeth Warren. But here I have to give myself a yank by the collar. Either Ginsberg was self-propelled or there were models for her that I just didn't know about because when I was

eight, she was sixteen! Maybe the models were there and I just didn't look for them, didn't see beyond Betsy McCall and all those beautiful women in those highly polished houses.

What I started to say two pages ago was that the women's magazines of the 1950s and 1960s pushed women toward homemaking, and we believed that was a good idea, a lot of us girls and young women. My father thought the best career plan for me would be teaching because if I had to work, say because my handsome husband of the future with his high-powered and well-paid career had mysteriously and ever so tragically died, I'd have teaching credentials that would let me support my children and myself. And in my ears, my Daddy's deep voice was the Voice of God. I adored my father, and I knew how wise he was and how brave he was, and I knew that he loved me and wished me well, always. It didn't occur to me that Daddy's own experiences were limited, and he could give me only the benefit of what he had experienced.

All in all, I've been wonderfully lucky. So I made some dreadful marriages. So I never made a lot of money. So I've also never been a very good cook, no matter how many cookbooks I buy and even read, or how many women's magazines I've devoured cover to cover. I've worked as a teacher, and I made the transition to nursing, and then another transition to counseling, and all along the way I've known fascinating people and had lovely adventures. I have a house, and a bank account, and more than enough to eat, life with Jerry is good, and I'm still standing. But I'm really glad my daughter didn't grow up reading women's magazines that filled her head with ideas of staying home, keeping house, and being cared for by a handsome, powerful, and well-paid husband. *She's* powerful, that girl. And well-paid and good-looking. She makes decisions, she did well in med school, she runs her medical practice and she has a hand in running a hospital. She's fierce, that girl. And she loves her three sons. Her life hasn't been perfect either, but she's been so much braver than I was. And maybe it's partly because she didn't read those lovely magazines, wherein a woman's greatest achievement was in keeping her hand at her husband's back, keeping the home fires burning, keeping the furniture and the silverware polished, and looking divine while doing it all. Funny thing – she now has a live-in boyfriend who does all that keeping of the home fires – he cleans the house and the pool and mows the yard, prepares beautiful and nutritious meals, and he's her fitness coach besides. Imagine. Time does indeed march on.

Sherry K.

UU humor:

The children in a UU church school class were drawing pictures. The teacher asked one,

“What are you drawing a picture of?”

“I'm drawing a picture of God,” was the reply.

“But nobody knows what God looks like,” objected the teacher.

“They will,” said the child, “in a minute.”

2020 Election:

Gregg and surrounding counties are looking for election poll workers for the November general election. This could be a way for you to contribute some time and energy.