



FirstWords

A publication of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego

Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream

By Suellen Sorenson with input from the ATD follow-up group

Can you feel it? Something wants to be birthed in and through us. It is a World that Works for Everyone. It is a sustainable, just and thriving human presence on the planet. This is the message of the Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream Symposium, created in the 1990's by the Pachamama Alliance.

Here's the story from the Pachamama Alliance website... "In the mid-1990's, through a mysterious set of circumstances, a group of North Americans visited a remote and intact group of indigenous people – the Achuar – located deep in the Amazonian region of Ecuador. The relationship, that was to become [The Pachamama Alliance](#), was actually initiated by the indigenous elders and shamans themselves. From the beginning, the Achuar reminded us (the people from the modern world) that one of the most powerful actions that can be taken in support of the rainforest and its inhabitants is to "change the dream of the North," since it is our dream—our desires and appetites—that is driving the destruction of the rainforests around the world.

The Pachamama Alliance took the Achuar's mandate to change the dream of the north- the dream of the modern world- seriously. They began looking for a tool powerful enough to meet the task, and after nearly a decade of research and development they offered the first Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream Symposium in March, 2005".

While the Achuar people are caring directly for the rainforest, North Americans are putting on the Awakening the Dreamer (ATD) Symposium (www.awakeningthedreamer.org) in communities across the country, to help people wake up to the facts around our high consumption, throw- away modern culture. Today, over 100,000 people have taken the Symposium and over 3,000 people have been trained to lead the Symposium in more than 40 countries.

As a result of the First Church symposium in early April, with over 200 attending, many people signed up to become facilitators in order to conduct their own symposiums. Prior to this, some members of First Church attended the Symposium at the Unity Center last October and many more attended two more large symposiums held in San Diego in May, bringing the total attendance to more than 1700 in our area. In April, Unity offered an ATD facilitator's training attended by thirty two people who are now trained to facilitate the Symposium.

A movement is beginning in San Diego. Recently, a group of people who attended one or more of these symposiums met to discuss the future of Awakening the Dreamer in San Diego. Another facilitator's training is planned before the end of the year. The symposium will be offered many more times in smaller venues (one option is in your own living room!) as more people are trained to lead the program.

At the end of June, follow-up activities at First Church will be posted in the Window. An adapted version of the symposium is called "Generation Waking Up" for ages 17-29 (www.generationwakingup.org).

The incredible response the symposium received in such a short time has made one thing clear: people from all walks of life are ready to make an environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilling, and socially just human presence on the planet the guiding principle of our time.



THE
PACHAMAMA
ALLIANCE

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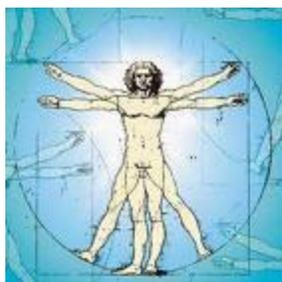
Creating Whole Human Beings

BY Rev. Dr. Arvid Straube

Much of the work of spiritual growth is best done in small face to face groups where the participants come to trust each other and soulful conversations are encouraged. Recently a staff team began to evaluate the church's program for small groups. Since the purpose of the best small groups is to help individuals grow in wholeness, we brainstormed what a whole human being is like.

This is a summary of what we came up with. Creating whole human beings is core to the mission of our church:

- ✧ Whole human beings have an open mind and heart. They are reflective and aware. They are able to grow and learn and admit mistakes. They are honest with themselves and others. They know that they are not perfect, and because they know not to expect others to be perfect they are quick to forgive. They have a sense of humor and can laugh at themselves.
- ✧ Whole human beings are able to have compassion for self and others. They love with depth and power. They are kind to all others they meet. They take good care of themselves.
- ✧ Whole human beings understand that they are part of a story that is longer and larger than their own lives. They walk gently on the earth and spend time in and learn from nature. They feel a responsibility for the larger community. They stand with those who are oppressed, mistreated and abused. Being good consumers in not what they live for. Because they love they are loved. Because of their integrity, they inspire others. They are the righteous ones who hold up the world; the ones who show us all how to live. Our a venture as a congregation is being a community of those who resolve to be whole human beings.



July Sermons

Celebration Times:

Hillcrest Campus:

Sunday, 9:30 and 11:30 a.m.

South Bay Campus: Sunday, 10:00 a.m.

Summer's **Transformational Theme** is

Rest, Renewal, and Sabbath

Sunday, July 3—Hillcrest Campus

"A Slick Hatchet Job on Ayn Rand"

- ✧ Rev Dr Arvid Straube (live)
- ✧ Ayn Rand is the author of Atlas Shrugged and the originator of a philosophy that greed is good and that society and the individual owe nothing to the less well off. In her philosophy, taxes are immoral. Why bother critiquing her writing from a religious point of view? Because many of the politicians on the American right are informed by her thinking.

Sunday, July 3—South Bay Campus

"Universalism: It's Not for the Faint-Hearted"

- ✧ Ken Herman (pre-recorded)

Sunday, July 10—Hillcrest Campus

"Pride Service: It Gets Better"

- ✧ Rev. Dr. Arvid Straube (live)
- ✧ The national It Gets Better campaign came about as a result of several well publicized incidents of teens who committed suicide because of bullying, especially LGBT teens. Arvid Straube and friends from First Church will explain how, It Gets Better. .

Sunday, July 10—South Bay Campus

"A Slick Hatchet Job on Ayn Rand"

- ✧ Rev Dr Arvid Straube (pre-recorded)

Sunday, July 17—Hillcrest Campus

"Compassion For Yourself"

- ✧ Rev. Dr. Arvid Straube (live)
- ✧ This is a sermon on the Third Step of Karen Armstrong's 12 Steps To A Compassionate Life.

Sunday, July 17—South Bay Campus

"Pride Service: It Gets Better"

- ✧ Rev. Dr. Arvid Straube (pre-recorded)

Sunday, July 24—Hillcrest Campus

"The Passion of Unitarian Universalism"

- ✧ Rev. Kathleen Owens (live)

Sunday, July 24—South Bay Campus

"Compassion For Yourself"

- ✧ Rev. Dr. Arvid Straube (pre-recorded)

Sunday, July 31—Hillcrest Campus

"Vitamin N"

- ✧ Rev. Dr. Arvid Straube (live)
- ✧ Why time in nature is critical for spiritual, physical, emotional, and political health.

Sunday, July 31—South Bay Campus

"The Passion of Unitarian Universalism"

- ✧ Rev. Kathleen Owens (pre-recorded)



Generosity Offerings

BY Rev. Kathleen Owens, Associate Minister

This past year we have given our offerings away to non-profits whose work reflect our values. The Social Justice Ministry Team (SJMT) is the group that works to oversee the process and create guidelines around this important part of our ministry and fulfilling our mission. Congregation members and friends are invited to make suggestions to members of the SJMT all throughout the year. The team then meets in the early fall to consider the suggestions, compare them with our guidelines and vote.

We try to keep a few months open so that we might be flexible in responding to urgent need that arise throughout the year. When the tsunami and earthquake hit Japan, we were able to shift the month around and could respond more fully. But our offerings are more than just collecting and giving away money. The offerings are also about education and meeting people who work for and benefit from the agencies to which we give our money.

There are two new components to our Generosity Offering program for this new fiscal year (July 2011-June 2012). The first is that First Church will be tak-

ing some of the offering (but no more than 15%), to support staff working on this program. This is a common practice of many non-profits that give money away (United Way for example). This will generate about \$10,000 to the operating budget and this budget was approved at the annual meeting on June 12, 2011.

The second change is that we hope to start having religious education classes related to the root causes that create the need for our Generosity Offerings. For instance, when we take an offering to help Feeding America San Diego, a class may be offered to help us learn about and understand better why hunger exists in San Diego and how might system-changes be addressed. These classes will offer another way to grow deeper into the work of change and building relationships with our community partners.

Thank you for your wonderful support of this part of our SJMT work. If you have questions or want more information regarding the SJMT, please speak with John Schaibly, April Stevenson, Kristen Kuriga or Kathleen Owens.



Welcoming the Wanderers: 7 Ways to Welcome Young Adults and Support Campus Ministry

From the Young Adult and Campus Ministry Summit, May 2011, Dillan DiGiovanni, Facilitator

1. Be a family of intention.

Many young adults don't have support from family during their hardest growing and building years. We can be that family.

2. Act as much-needed mentors.

Share what you've learned in your years. That wisdom is invaluable to young adults in their spiritual and identity development. Think of your life as the greatest gift you can offer. Be willing to listen to their story.

3. Practice perfect imperfection.

Let our church be a role model for being perfectly imperfect. Young adults need to learn how to accept this about themselves. Don't try to change or shift your culture (worship, etc.) to fit the needs of one person (unless it REALLY needs to shift for the sake of everyone in the church.

4. Have the same expectations (or none at all).

Young adult ministry welcomes any and all efforts, contribution and participation any young adult can offer, without expectations of return via money or volunteerism. Young adults can and will help in the ways they can, which can be very different from older members (or exactly the same).



5. Have someone doing the work!

Have someone designated to welcome and support each young adult in finding their path.

6. Think of Young Adult Campus Ministry as a relay race.

Our children/youth will grow up and perhaps move away to be young adults in other towns. Prepare for those coming from "away" to be young adults at First Church (and other churches in the cluster). What experience do we want our youth to have in other places? How can we be that for those who move here?

7. Be present. Be aware.

Know what is going on in their lives. Keep in touch, stay informed, follow up, invite them to lunch. Hold trainings, conversations, and events relevant to what is happening in their demographic.



First Unitarian
Universalist Church
of San Diego

to create community
to nurture spiritual growth
to act on our values
to help heal the world



Why Are We Here

BY Käthe Larick

At every youth ministry training that I've co-led with my training partner Amanda GrantSmith or at every youth advisor training that I've held here at First UU, I always invite the participants to consider the question, "Why have you decided to take part in youth ministry?" The reasons and motivations are many, but a common thread seems to be that the adults who work with our youth do so because they believe that youth empowerment and youth leadership are key factors for our denominational survival and growth.

But what exactly is youth empowerment and what does youth leadership look like in our congregations? Many people are skeptical or even resentful of the term "youth empowerment" due to confusion, in my opinion, over exactly what this term really means. They have the mistaken idea that youth empowerment means letting the youth "call the shots" or run a youth program with little or no input from the adults. Coincidentally, this is the perfect definition of what I call youth abandonment. I like to define youth empowerment as a shared leadership between youth and adults within the parameters set by the adults. The role of adults in this definition is the key to successful youth empowerment because of the analytical abilities, decision making skills, life experience and compassion of the adults who participate in this vital ministry. As my friend Craig Block likes to say, "Power shared is power multiplied," and this outlook can help to create youth programs that are vibrant, fun and spiritually fulfilling to the youth and adults who participate.



As I embark on my next decade of youth ministry, I find this to be truer than ever. Our youth are going to be our denominational leaders in the near future and we need to provide them with loving and steadfast support as well as a firm ethical and spiritual foundation upon which to stand. There is no safer space for youth to test their leadership wings than in youth group, or at our district youth camp or as a volunteer in our congregation. Each of these places is full of supportive, dedicated adults

who are ready to share the reins of leadership and encourage our youth to develop the skills they will need to succeed. Within this framework of shared leadership, our youth will be ready to take on the challenges of the future and continue to

grow toward becoming whole human beings that can help heal the world.

How can you be a part of this exciting future? Become a youth advisor, be a mentor in our church's "Coming of Age" program, volunteer to be an adult staff member at camp or support the many projects that our youth hold here at church. Investing your time and resources in our youth is the best way to guarantee the future success and growth of our UU faith in San Diego and beyond. Their hugs and smiles may not be legal tender, but I guarantee that you'll definitely feel richer when you receive them.

Marriage Equality in 2012

FROM: Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of California, submitted by Jan Garbosky

Editor's note: This is the first half of a memo from the UULM. The second half will run in September.

Should supporters of marriage equality in California try to overturn Prop 8 in the November 2012 ballot?

As Unitarian Universalists we seek to: support marriage equality; respect religious freedom; protect the most vulnerable among us; strengthen the institutions of our democracy, and be good stewards of shared community resources.

We appreciate the invitation to engage in thoughtful dialogue regarding the possibility of returning to the ballot in 2012 to overturn Prop 8. We encourage our members to attend the upcoming town hall meetings and ask that careful consideration be given to the following issues of concern:

Strengthening the institutions of democracy

In a constitutional democracy, the civil rights of a minority are constitutionally protected and should not put up for a popular vote. When a constitutional principle is violated, it is the role of the courts to rectify the injury to both the constitution and to the minority community who was targeted for discrimination. A campaign to overturn Prop 8 through popular vote would, once again, inappropriately put the rights and lives of a minority up for discussion by the majority. Voting on civil rights undermines a fundamental part of our constitutional democracy and puts the dignity and equality of couples and families at the mercy of a statewide political debate.

Protecting the vulnerable

The impact of the vitriol unleashed during a ballot measure is profoundly hurtful to the most vulnerable in our community. In California's most conservative regions, the hostility from talk radio, anti-gay religions and a neighborhood full of lawn signs can be very dam-

aging. Youth are especially vulnerable in such hostile landscapes. Many LGBTQ people who were left to fend for themselves in conservative parts of California during Prop 8 are still working to rebuild their sense of belonging in their communities.

When we finally secure full legal marriage equality, it will be a profound signal of acceptance that helps to prevent teen suicide for LGBTQ youth. In the meantime, committing community resources to anti-bullying work and the safety of LGBTQ teens and young adults provides immediate support for those most vulnerable. Anti-bullying organizing also helps to educate the larger community about who is really putting children and teens at risk. Anti-gay bullying, theological exclusion and family rejection hurt youth, not same-sex marriage.

Stewardship of Community Resources

The current state of the economy has the potential to hamper the prospects of winning marriage equality at the ballot box in 2012. Many people, who under less stressful circumstances would provide financial support and volunteer time, are struggling for economic survival and are not able to make marriage equality a priority. In addition to individuals and families, many supportive non-profit organizations and faith communities are also facing financial challenges. We must be good stewards of our resources and recognize these current limitations.

California is a huge state with many media markets, requiring tens of millions of dollars to support a ballot measure. How do the needs of smaller states to advance LGBTQ rights influence our thinking about the relative value of going back to the ballot in California in 2012?

Next time: sharing the issues of concern for overturning Prop. 8 on the 2012 ballot





Marv Pulliam

promises to be an exciting time for the church.

Concerning Bard Hall, the bureaucratic permit process has already tested our patience for some time now. Construction in this next year will challenge our ingenuity to work around our normal everyday issues and to find solutions to new and unexpected issues.

When I reflect the rich legacy of programs available to us at First Church and the vast diverse culture that has developed, I feel privileged to be a member. I look forward to being involved this coming year in the many new and reshaped programs that will become a part of our church experience.

I am honored that you have selected me to be as your standard bearer for this next year, which

The President's Remarks

BY Marv Pulliam, Board of Trustees, President

I feel that we church members and friends are quite fortunate to have such high quality church ministers and staff. I have personally enjoyed working with them and getting to know them on a deeper level. I am enthusiastic about continuing what to me has become a precious bonding. Church is about connection and I feel enriched by the growth of this connection in my personal life, both with church staff and church members and friends.

Since I moved to San Diego a little less than 3 years ago, First Church has been an integral part of my retired life. This year will represent a new phase of that experience which has already been quite fulfilling. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to explore this new terrain. I feel humility and, at the same time, I feel a sense of adventure. I pledge to you that I will do my best to earn your trust and perform my duties to the best of my ability.

First Words on Vacation in August

BY Nancy Fisk

In her June 19 sermon, Rev. Kathleen Owens urged the congregation to take some time off for rest and relaxation. As a result, First Words will be on hiatus in August. I'm also taking this opportunity to remind you to send material to First Words. While some readers are regular contributors to First Words, I'm sure there are more stories out there that need telling. The articles should follow any one of the following guidelines. You can also send an article to me for approval if you're not sure if it meets these guidelines.

Guidelines:

The article should include (any of the following):

Subject matter that has to do with Unitarian-Universalism, or the guiding principles of the mission statement of First Church;

An activity that is coming up at First Church, a concert, a workshop, etc.;

An activity you participated in that expresses UU values;

Your personal credo; what is your history and what guides your spirituality;

Photos for any of the above, especially a photo of you so that people can attach your face to your byline.

Finally, all articles should be around 500 words long. For time-sensitive material, it needs to be submitted a month before the event takes place. There is no age limit as to who can contribute. I am looking for material from youth as well as adults. If your article runs long, I will be happy to edit it to a length I can use.

My email is nfisk1@juno.com for any submissions. Have a great rest of the summer and I hope to hear from you soon!

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