



FirstWords

A publication of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego

Contemporary Worship at First UU San Diego

By Dana Decker, Associate Director of Music

Now that First Church is six months into its new second service mode, it seems appropriate to answer some “frequently asked questions” and consider additional possibilities for the look, sound, and feel of this approach to worship. First Church is a diverse community, and as such, the worship, contemporary or traditional, should reflect that diversity. My hope is that, over time, the second service will become as musically rich and diverse as the congregation that chooses to make the second service its spiritual home.

I was raised in a Methodist church in the Midwest and enjoyed congregational singing as well as being a part of the varied holiday programs each year. After graduating from college, I worked as a professional musician in contemporary worship services of all types in Minnesota, Boston, and Southern California. I have been a part of contemporary worship services in Methodist, Lutheran, Nazarene, Presbyterian, Baptist, Pentecostal, Evangelical, Unitarian, Religious Science, and even Catholic churches. I have had the opportunity to learn from some amazing, seasoned worship leaders.



Building a viable model for contemporary worship for religious liberals is a passion of mine. I first developed a model of contemporary worship for Unitarian Universalists at the Sepulveda U.U. Society in North Hills, CA in 2006. Since that time, I have led contemporary worship services at PSWD District Assemblies, UU Musician's Network conferences, and the UUA's General Assembly. At these events, I have engaged in deep discussion with music directors, ministers, and religious educators from across the country. There is a growing consensus that contemporary worship will play an important role in energizing the Unitarian Universalist movement.

In 2009, I was hired by First Church to be the contemporary worship associate at the South Bay campus. Over these four years, I have worked with an amazing group of instrumentalists and vocalists to find a style of contemporary worship that resonates with our South Bay congregation. It requires open communication and much listening, but the congregation and the worship planning team have found a way to em-

brace contemporary worship in a way that creates a powerful spiritual experience.

You may be asking, “If it took four years in South Bay, how long is it going to take to develop the contemporary music program here in Hillcrest?” There is no easy answer to that question. What I can say is that it will take time—and that the worship team regularly reevaluates the music at both services. The ministers and musicians listen to your feedback and work to incorporate the best ideas into a vision of contemporary worship. The recent jazz service was a great success, and the worship team is creating a monthly pattern of contrasting contemporary worship styles it hopes will become both familiar and comforting at the Hillcrest campus.

I am encouraged and humbled by the professional musicians who have not only been willing, but are enthusiastic about working in a spiritual community that is so tolerant, open-minded, and progressive. We are giving these musicians a spiritual gift each week that they are in turn giving to the wider community of San Diego musicians who may know nothing about Unitarian Universalism. This is a powerful outreach.

We are developing something that will be a model for UU congregations across the country. There is a way to use contemporary music in worship that opens the door to a spiritual experience like none other. This is not my service, nor is it Arvid or Kathleen's or Ken's: this is our service. By talking openly and exchanging ideas, the congregation will build the service that it has always dreamed of attending and that others will find compelling, too. And it will be happening each week at First Church here in San Diego.

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Arvid's Arcana— Christian Mystical Writers

By Rev Dr Arvid Straube, Lead Minister

In my messages, I've been referring to Buddhism a lot. There are several reasons for this. One is that Buddhist meditation and study are my core spiritual practice. The other is that the way Buddhist teachings are laid out is very compatible with Unitarian Universalist sensibilities. However, all of the religions of the world have spiritual writers and teaching throughout their history who have had nearly identical experiences and insights. This includes the Christian mystical tradition. I'd like to share with you some of my favorite quotes from the Christian mystical tradition. Perhaps they will give you something to ponder:

From Meister Eckhardt, German popular preacher and theologian of the Middle Ages:

"When is a person in mere understanding? I answer, "When a person sees one thing separated from another." And when is a person above mere understanding? That I can tell you: "When a person sees All in all, that person stands beyond mere understanding."

"If the only prayer you ever say is "Thank you", that will suffice. "

"If you knew what your soul said to God, you would be surprised."- Brother Lawrence, a 16th Century French monk who was thought to be too simple to do anything but wash pots in the monastery. He turned washing pots into a meditation and was later recognized for his great spiritual wisdom.

"What can we gain by sailing to the moon if we are not able to cross the abyss that separates us from ourselves? This is the most important of all voyages of discovery, and without it, all the rest are not only useless, but disastrous."- Thomas Merton, a 20th Century Catholic monk and writer who, later in his life, was drawn to Buddhism.

From St. Theresa of Avila of 16th Century Spain, who was a true spiritual genius:

"Remember that you have only one soul; that you have only one death to die; that you have only one life. . . . If you do this, there will be many things about which you care nothing."

"I do not fear Satan half so much as I fear those who fear him."

Finally, from William Blake, an 18th Century English poet:

To see the World in a Grain of Sand
And Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour.

Join Arvid for Coffee and Conversation about "the Perennial Philosophy: A Tour of World Mysticism" starting Wed. Apr 10.

March Sermon Messages

Celebration Times:

Hillcrest Campus: Sunday, 9:30a (Traditional) and 11:30a (Contemporary)

South Bay Campus: Sunday, 9:30a (Intergenerational, Bi-lingual [Spanish, English])

The March **Transformational Theme** is **Letting Go**

Sunday, March 3:

- Hillcrest Services—"The Beginning of Wisdom: Essential Spirituality Series," Wisdom is letting go of your cherished opinions ." Rev Dr Arvid Straube (live)
- 9:30 Music: Chalice Choir sings "How Can I Keep from Singing?" set by contemporary conductor-composer Bradley Ellingboe.
- 11:30 Music: "From A Distance," made famous by pop singers Nanci Griffith and Bette Midler, speaks to the difference between how things appear to be and how they really are.
- South Bay Service—"From Margin to Center: Claiming Our Space," Kristen Kuriga and Journey Toward Wholeness young adults (live)
- Story: "The Skin You Live In;" Coffee Conversation.

Sunday, March 10:

- Hillcrest Services—"Bringing it Home," Rev Kathleen Owens (live)
- 9:30 Music: Soprano Lynn Mendoza-Khan sings an American folk hymn "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing."
- 11:30 Music: Our monthly jazz service features the Arlen/Mercer classic "Anywhere I Hang My Hat is Home" to welcome Rev Kathleen Owens back. Roy Attridge's UUBella-tion hand bell ensemble joins the band in "Clocks" by the English rock group Coldplay.
- South Bay Service—"To Everything There is a Season," Emily Webb, Intern (live); Coffee Conversation after service.

Sunday, March 17:

- Hillcrest Services—"To Everything There is a Season," Emily Webb, Intern (live)
- 9:30 Music: The combined Chalice Choir and Voices in Unity youth choir sing "Give Us Hope," you may find out about this at soundsofabetterworld.org.
- 11:30 Music: Seeger's "Turn! Turn! Turn!" an '60s Bryds classic.
- South Bay Service—"Bringing it Home," Rev Kathleen Owens (live)

Sunday, March 24:

- Hillcrest Service—"The Wisdom of Imperfection," Rev Dr Arvid Straube (live)
- 9:30 Music: JUUL Tones sings "The Parting Glass," a traditional song arranged by the bluegrass Wailin' Jennys.
- 11:30 Music: Arvid sings Dylan's "I Shall Be Released".
- South Bay Service—"The Beginning of Wisdom: Essential Spirituality Series," Rev Dr Arvid Straube (pre-recorded)
- Membership & Meaning Coffee Conversation.

Sunday, March 31, Easter:

- Hillcrest Service—"Celebrating the Miracle," Rev Kathleen Owens (live)
- 9:30 Music: The Chalice Choir and Harmony Strings perform Mozart's "Ave Verum" and UU composer Daniel Pinkham's "Awake, O North Wind."
- 11:30 Music: The band offers "Waiting for the Miracle" by singer/songwriter Leonard Cohen.
- South Bay Service—"¡Amor Vive!," Emily Webb (live)



Easter is in March this Year!

By Liz Jones, Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry

This year we will resume our traditional Easter Egg Decorating Party and Potluck! During the construction of our new Welcome Center, we put this annual event on hold, but now that we have the room to do it, everyone is invited to join us on March 29, at 6 PM in Bard Hall. We will begin the evening with a traditional potluck supper. Please bring a dish to share that will serve 8. We want this evening to be easy for everyone, so if making a dish is too complicated, please feel free to bring store-bought – we care more about you being with us than the food. After dinner, volunteers will help set up an area for dyeing Easter eggs. Family Ministry will provide the dyes, we just ask that you bring your own HARD BOILED eggs to dye. You will get to take home the eggs that you dye. This way your family can dye as many eggs as you like, and not have to purchase all kinds of kits. While the egg dyeing is going on, other adults will help stuff plastic eggs to be hidden on Easter morning for our traditional egg hunt between services. Join us for the return of this special event!

Egg dyeing is not only fun, it can have meaning! Here are some of the meanings that go with specific colors:

Yellow – Connected to the sun and egg yolks, it is the color of creativity, the power of the mind, and communication.

Orange – Also a sun color, and connected to drive and personal desire. It is also connected to cheerfulness and strength in difficult times.

Red – Is the color of blood. It is connected to the cycles of life, desire, courage, war and strength. In Asia red is connected with good fortune and joy! Red is a color of energy.

Green – this is the color of the Earth, and Spring. It is connected to abundance, growth and fertility.

Green is also a calming color. It is connected with renewal and balance.

Blue – Blue is connected to dreams, sleep, knowledge, peace and unity. It is also connected to honesty, authority and religion.

Violet – Is the color of intense spirituality, and healing. It is also connected to the divine. This is also the color of inspiration.

White – White is often connected to perfection and purity. It is connected with innocence and new beginnings.

Brown – Brown is another earth color. It is also connected to animals. Brown is the color of structure and stability. It is a natural and wholesome color.

Black – This color represents mystery. In western cultures it is connected to death, and in eastern cultures it is often connected to life. Black is the color of power and control.

Pink – this color is associated with Spring. It is also connected to peace and love. Pink is also connected with Hope.

Silver – this color is representative of the moon and the inner self. It is the color of illumination and reflection.

Gold – This color is also connected to the sun. It is used in connection with wealth. Gold is also the color of enlightenment and compassion.

As you dye your eggs this year, think of the messages that the colors can send!



Looking Glass Season Supports the First UU Church Mission

This is the way we build community at First UU Church San Diego.

The Looking Glass Theatre 2012/2013 Season includes acting opportunities for youth and adults

of all backgrounds. Each show supports our First UU Church Mission by building community, encouraging spiritual growth and presenting our UU values to the outside community.

Our 2012/2013 season opened with "8" a reader's theatre presentation of a new account of Perry v. Schwarzenegger (now Brown), the Federal District court case filed by AFER (American Foundation of Equal Rights) in 2008 to overturn Proposition 8, which eliminated gay and lesbian couples' right to marry in California.

The Fall show, "Spoon River Anthology," was a theatrical adaptation of Edgar Lee Master's scandalous, best seller of the same name. The poet made a candid and revealing portrait of his home town community circa 1915 by writing an epitaph for each of the people buried "on the hill," the town cemetery.

Our season climax, "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown," is a 1967 hit [musical](#) comedy based on the characters created by [cartoonist Charles M. Schulz](#) in his [comic strip Peanuts](#). We will cast ages 5 to 20 somethings for this show.

This year we need to raise \$3,000 to pay the show royalties, a fee paid to the writer or composer for the right to perform his or her work.

LGT will gratefully accept donations of any amount, but for donations of \$100 or more, Looking Glass Theatre will present you with four tickets to be used at any LGT performance and will list your name in the program as "LGT Royalty."

To donate, write a check to First UU Church of San Diego and write LGT Royalty on the memo line. Send your check to the First UU Church of San Diego, 4190 Front Street, San Diego, CA 92103 in care of the LGT Treasurer.

- Paula Johnson

Our 9th Annual Dining for Dollars Returns

Many of you have enjoyed creating and hosting dinners, teas, picnics, museum tours with lunch, pool parties, brunches, barbecues, cooking classes, sailing expeditions and other events, as well as providing services like: computer help, tax help, massages, handyman services, and more for your fellow church members and their families. Last year was another success with 101 events, over 1,056 winning bids and over \$40,000 contributed to our church. In the coming weeks (through March) we will be accepting your offers to host events, then we will print another fabulous bidding booklet (as well as have it online) and commence the auction on May 5 (Sunday).

Look for information on Dining for Dollar\$ on the patio starting March 17 (Sunday) and in upcoming issues of the Window. Start planning now for the event(s) you want to offer. This year we have an electronic -Event Host Form or email Robie Evans and she will send you the information and forms. Start turning in your event forms now, but no later than April 8th.

Bidding will take place for three consecutive Sundays, starting May 5, 2013.

If you have questions, suggestions, or are interested in helping with the auction, please contact Robie Evans at 619-398-4433 or robie@firstuusandiego.org.

Check our website for [further information](#).

D4\$ IS COMING SOON!

NOW IS THE TIME TO CREATE YOUR EVENT(S). WE WILL BE ASKING YOU TO SUBMIT ALL EVENTS DURING THE LAST THREE SUNDAYS IN MARCH.

BIDDING BEGINS MAY 5TH.

For more info, contact Robie Evans (619) 398-4433
robie@firstuusandiego.org



LETTING GO OF AGEISM

By Emily Webb

I never thought I'd live in Southern California. Surprise! Here I am. Moving here, I had to let go some of my expectations about what it would be like. In Northern California, people sometimes have a negative attitude about Southern California – imagining it is all bad traffic and shallow people. I am happy to report to my friends and family in Northern California, that has NOT been my experience. On the contrary, I celebrate the glorious sunshine, the beautiful succulents, the open-hearted nature of the people I know here. In order to embrace my life here, I had to release some of the preconceived notions that I arrived with.

Stepping into leadership in this congregation, as the intern minister, I know that many folks also had to let go of their preconceived notions. I know this because people have started to tell me. Someone remarks almost every Sunday “It’s just unbelievable you seem so young – well, you are so young, and yet you have such wise things to say!” I know people who share this are speaking honestly, and that their intention is to support me and affirm my gifts. However, when I hear comments such as “I cannot believe you are capable of doing what you are doing” a part of me feels sad and frustrated. I am sad and frustrated that the underlying assumption is that young people aren’t naturally wise, or that we don’t have significant experiences and teachings for others.

It is frustrating that people so often judge based on appearances, even when we come with pure intentions. I know this is a source of frustration for older folks as well. Many times I have heard “Just because I am elderly, doesn’t mean I am incompetent!” Sometimes people mistakenly believe that elderly folks cannot hear, or follow complex ideas, and so yell and talk down to them like children. No one is perfect. We all mess up sometimes. And our covenant of right relations call us back, again and again. Theologian Martin Buber wrote that we are a “promise-making, promise-breaking and promise-renewing” people. Being in beloved community isn’t about always getting it right – but rather, what you do when you realize you haven’t gotten it right.

Next time you find yourself drawn to appreciating a young person’s contribution or presence, try this:

1. Say what you observed the person doing (“When I heard your singing, When I read the writing you shared with our group)
2. Share what feeling or affect it had on you (My heart was opened”, My spirits were lifted”)
3. Name what need was met in you by this person’s actions (I was inspired, I learned something new.)



When you follow these steps, you keep the focus on the person’s behavior and qualities, not on their age, or a comparison of them to another person. How we share appreciation of one another really matters. It is easy for something intended as a compliment to have a negative twist in it (for example, “That was really good – for a woman!”) When we share our love and care for one another, without basing the comments on age or other comparisons, we truly honor one another.

First Church’s
Annual Rummage Sale

Saturday, June 15, 2013

Please start saving your
grocery bags (both paper and plastic).

Please contact Robie if you want to volunteer to help
and/or again head up your boutique or division.

(619)398-4433
robie@firstuusandiego.org



OUR NEW KITCHEN POLICY IS HERE!

By ROBIE EVANS, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS



Food-Handlers

Your Kitchen Cabinet Committee has been hard at work. They have completed the new "[Certified Commercial Kitchen Policy and Guidelines for Use](#)." This Policy will be presented to your Board of Trustees at the March board meeting. This comprehensive document provides important information that will help us maintain our current "A" rating with the County of San Diego's Department of Environmental Health (DEH).

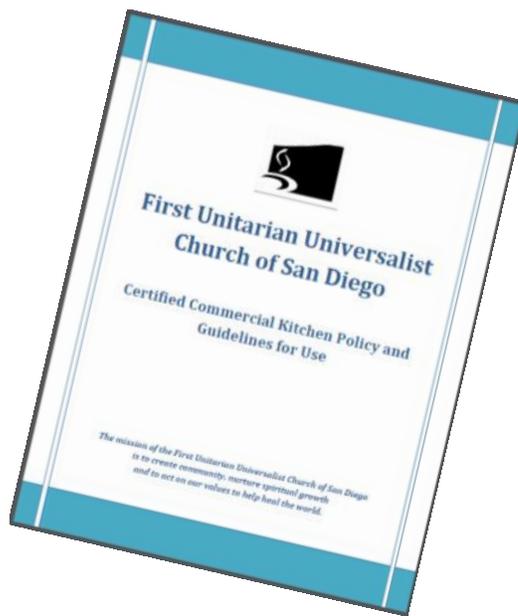
The Kitchen Cabinet, led by Chair Kath Hillery, includes Mike Hctor, Mary Rose, Rose Van Oss and Robie Evans. They are here to facilitate all communications regarding the Kitchen, implement policy and procedures, and oversee other administrative areas.

Anyone who wishes to use the Welcome Center Kitchen will need to have an approved Kitchen Manager or Kitchen Supervisor plus any needed additional approved certified Food Handler volunteer(s) to be on hand throughout the entire set up and tear down of a specific event.

Over the past two months' time, several Food Handler classes have been given by our Kitchen Manager, Chef Ray Evans. We now have over 70 certified food handler volunteers who are qualified to help out in the kitchen. We will hold periodic food handler trainings that will include training on specific use of our kitchen equipment. A complete procedures manual will be permanently placed in the kitchen, as well as other required DEH materials.

If you are interested in becoming a certified Food Handler, please watch our upcoming weekly newsletter, The Window, for upcoming class schedules. These classes are free. Or, if you prefer to complete class training in your own home, please go to <http://www.usfoodhandler.com/> and take the tutorial and test. The fee is \$12.95 and will be reimbursed by the church upon proof of satisfactory completion of the course.

If you would like further information, please contact our Director of Operations, Robie Evans, at her direct line (619)398-4433 or via email at robie@firstuusandiego.org.



Chef Ray Evans helps the UU Women at their annual Bunco Party Lasagna Dinner event that was held Friday, February 22, 2013.



John and Ardath Schaibly

Hi First UU friends. I'm the new lay leader of the Larger UU Connections (LUUC) along with Rev. Arvid. LUUC is the ministry team dealing with activities within and communications about the UU community outside First Church.

Our domain includes activities in the UU Partner Church Program (international level), Unitarian Universalist Association (national level), PWR (Pacific Western Region), PSWD (Pacific South-west District), Camp de Benneville Pines, and SUUN (San Diego Cluster Church Network).

It is my feeling that knowledge of what's going on at all these levels will be of interest to many in our congregation. I am therefore writing this column to provide a summary. Anyone having such knowledge you'd like to convey to the congregation as a whole can send it to me for inclusion in the next First Words.

Here is the summary of some of the goings-on during January from our various committees:



Denominational Relations (DR): (Joan Cudhea and Joanne Barnes co-chairs)

DR announced opportunities to attend the new [Pacific Western Region Conference](#) as delegates or visitors. It is being held in San Jose April 26-28 and the [UUA General Assembly](#) will be in Louisville, KY June 19-23.

THE BEST OF LUUC

BY JOHN SCHAIBLY



Friends of de Benneville Pines (Ardath Schaibly and Mac Downing, co-chairs)

We recently sent \$1000 from fundraising events to Camp de Benneville Pines. Thanks to all who bought Entertainment Books.



Partner Church Committee: (Dan Ratelle and Len Pelletieri, co-chairs)

The January concert of early music by Michael Collver was a fundraiser for our partner church in Brasov, Romania. We also have a partner UU congregation in the Philippines.

UUSC: (Kathy Smith, chair) In 2013, UUSC is teaming up with UUs across the country who are committed to ethical eating and to promoting the human rights of workers in the food system. You can join [here](#). This effort is headed up by Rev. John Millspaugh, former First Church intern.



Unitarian Universalist
United Nations Office

UU United Nations Envoy: (Everardo Aguilar) Inter-generational Spring Seminar occurs annually in April in New York City. This multigenerational event draws people from across the United States and Canada (and beyond!) to tackle different international human rights issues. Would you or your youth like to go? Learn more about this fantastic opportunity and register today!. The title this year is Sex, Love, and Violence: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in a Globalized World.

To find out more about these and our other Ministry Teams please visit our web site at <http://www.firstuusandiego.org/ministry-teams>.

Staff

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 Rev. Kathleen Owens, Associate Minister
 Rev. Jim Grant, Affiliate Minister
 Emily Webb, Intern Minister
 Robie Evans, Director of Operations
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 Käthe Larick, Youth Program Coordinator
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 South Bay Campus: <http://www.firstuusandiego.org/uus-of-the-south-bay>

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