



FirstWords

A publication of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego

LOOKING GLASS THEATER PRESENTS: THE ENCHANTMENT OF BEAUTY AND BEAST

By Gay Hybertsen

The Enchantment of Beauty and the Beast

Directed by Mark S. Butterfuss
May 9, 10, 16 & 17, 2014
8:00 PM

First Unitarian Universalist Church
of San Diego
4190 Front Street (at Arbor)
Hillcrest (Free Parking)
www.LookingGlassSD.org

Coming this Fall:
The Laramie Project:
Ten Years Later

Come to see your UU friends in a unique version of the classic fairy tale. This is a truly intergenerational cast featuring actors from seven to seventy.

Everardo Aguilar returns to LGT in the starring role of the Beast. Come hear him roar! Ginny Mabrey, who will play Beauty, is new to our group. Her clear, lovely voice and sweet demeanor brighten our stage.



In this play, we get to meet Beauty's family: her loving, if somewhat overwhelmed mother, played by Maxine Levaren; her shallow, acquisitive sisters, played by Jordan Fraser and Rosalie Riedel; and the aptly named brothers in law, Greedo and Grasp, hilariously played by Roy Attridge and Evertt Howe.

We love it when several members of one family participate in our productions. This year Ginny, who plays Beauty, is joined by her mother, Beth, playing Helen the housekeeper, and her father Eric on drums in the orchestra. The Riedel family also has three members in the cast: mom Rosalie as Marguerite; one son Alexander as the wolf; and the other son, Tony as a dancing vase.

The vase isn't the only example of household goods that move, talk and sing. You must see Carol Angell as a talking chair, Kelly Noelle Henry as a clock with no hands and young Catherine James as a "moving" picture. Kate Webb has been type cast as the Master Painter.

Andrew Ferrier will show us what a prince he is, and Paula Johnson plays Rose Legend. Joanne Ell is making her acting debut as the Old Woman, and Collette Lee is our youngest actor. Collette plays Bertha, Beauty's family dog.

The show will delight your whole family. You can buy tickets Sundays on the patio, on our website at www.LookingGlassSD.org or at the door. Buying advance tickets on the patio entitles you to a \$1 credit at the concession stand.

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Arvid's Arcana

By Rev Dr Arvid Straube, Lead Minister

In the waning days of my ministry with First Church, I'm reflecting on how Unitarian Universalism has changed in the 35 years I have pursued parish ministry. Many of these changes are positive. For instance, when I began studying for the ministry in 1975, I could have counted the active female ministers in the movement on one hand. My class was one of the very first to have a substantial number of women. Now, over 50% of our ministers are women, and 78% of the people preparing for UU ministry are women. While I wish now that more men would pursue UU ministry, there is no question in my mind that the UU faith has been enormously enriched by women entering the ministry. Similar things can be said for the acceptance of gay and lesbian ministers that has occurred since then.

Another good thing is that the UU movement has actually begun to live up to its message of theological diversity and tolerance. When I began, many UU congregations allowed only a militant humanism to be spoken from pulpit or pew. Theists, especially Christians, were referred to scornfully. UUs were not living their beliefs! This problem still exists, but there is a much greater tolerance of theological diversity in the movement now.

One thing I do worry about is that the history of the Unitarian Universalist faith is not being told. It is an inspiring one, with heroes like James Reeb, killed at Selma while marching with Dr. King; John Murray and other early Universalist preachers who spread the message of universal salvation amid threats of personal harm; Olympia Brown, a prominent feminist and abolitionist who was the first woman to be ordained by a major denomination, before the Civil War. This list goes on and on. But a lot of preaching I see now makes little mention of UU history. As I write these words, many UU churches have celebrated a flower communion without referring to its founder, Rev. Norbert Capek of Prague, who was killed by the Nazis for standing up to tyranny.

The Unitarian Universalist faith and its congregations will need to change in major ways if they are to address the spiritual needs of an increasingly secular culture. In order to do that, and maintain that authenticity, UUs need to know and hold fast to their history, their roots.

May Sermon Messages

Celebration Times:

Hillcrest Campus: Sunday,
9:30a and 11:30a

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

The May Transformational Theme is
Compassion.

Sunday, May 4:

New Member Blessings

Hillcrest Services—

"You Have a Soul ... But It's Not What You Think,"

Rev Dr Arvid Straube.

South Bay Service—

"The Dew of Compassion,"

Rev Kathleen Owens.

Sunday, May 11: Mother's Day

Hillcrest Services—

"The Dew of Compassion,"

Rev Kathleen Owens.

South Bay Service—

"Divine Feminine,"

Elizabeth Bukey, Intern;

Kristen Kuriga, Coordinator.

Sunday, May 18:

Hillcrest Services—

All-Choirs Spring Music Sunday.

South Bay Service—

"You Have a Soul ... But It's Not What You Think,"

Rev Dr Arvid Straube.

Sunday, May 25:

Hillcrest Services—

Annual Youth Service.

South Bay Service—

"Internship Farewell Sermon"

Elizabeth Bukey, Intern.



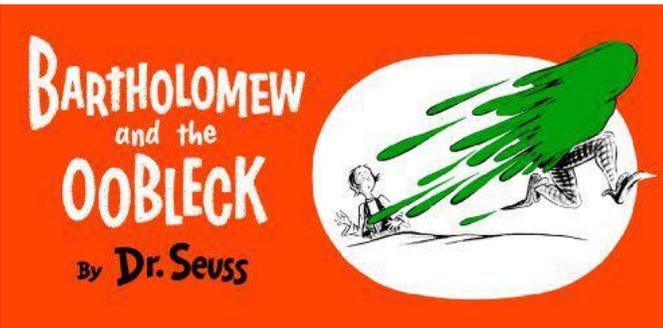
It's a Seuss Summer!

By Liz Jones, Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry

The regular Religious Education Program for our children is coming to an close at the end of May and we're planning a special Seuss-filled summer!

Summer is a special time in our children's programming year when we take some time to play while we learn. Both the younger and older children's classes will be using programs based on Dr. Seuss books. We all know that even adults can find meaning in Seuss books!

The younger grades will use a program called Fun with Dr. Seuss. Each session will focus on one of the books with special activities related to the stories. The class leaders will help the children identify which of the UU principles is exemplified in the story.



The older children will also use Dr. Seuss stories, but the focus will be on science and the scientific method. There will be some discussion of the scientific method, and then exploration of ideas raised by the stories. With Bartholomew and the Oobleck, we'll make oobleck. With Horton Hears a Who we will explore the very small with magnifying glasses and microscopes. There will be much more!



How Summer RE can be a special place for Adults!

Summer is a great opportunity for people who have never taught in our children's program to get a taste of what being with our children is like. We only ask that you make a commitment to teach one Sunday at a time (No whole program commitments.) This gives you the opportunity to try your hand at teaching. We provide the lesson plan and all the supplies. You come prepared by having read the lesson and tried your hand at the activity so you can lead the children. There will be plenty of help available if you need it. Look for the sign-up table on the patio and pick a date and story that works for you. We need at least two adults for each class session, so you are needed.

Help make this a great summer for all our children –

In Faith



DINING FOR DOLLAR\$ 2014

BY ROBIE EVANS, DINING FOR DOLLAR\$ TEAM MEMBER

Learning to make tamales or dance or create a work of art

Hiking, birding, desert geology . . .

Family fun at the pool, beach, or
backyard BBQs or picnics . . .

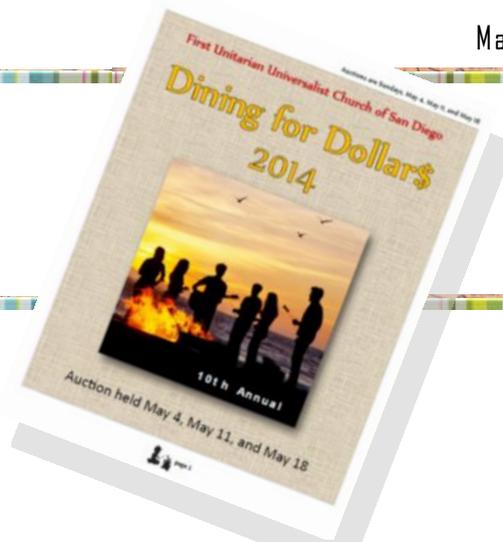
Gourmet meals from around the world . . .

These are just a sample of the Dining for Dollar\$ events hosted over the past few years!

Ten years ago, Arvid brought the idea from his former congregation in North Carolina. Because it sounded like so much fun, Bonny Russell offered to organize the very first D4\$ fundraiser at First UU. When Bonny talked with the North Carolina church's fundraising coordinator, their enthusiasm for the social and community-building aspects of the events overshadowed the fact that it was a major fundraiser—working with others to dream up, organize and co-host events; the new people they'd met; deepening existing relationships while attending events with friends; doing things they'd never done before; and finding ways to ensure everyone was able to participate on some level, regardless of family or financial issues.

And, that's true for First Church as we get ready for our tenth year of Sunday "bidding frenzy" on May 4, 11, and 18—between services and after second service. Over the years, more than 356 folks have hosted a Dining for Dollar\$ event and more than 700 have attended events. While the first annual Dining for Dollar\$ events raised about \$12,000, last year it raised \$50,000—making Dining for Dollar\$ a major contributor for our general fund.

This year, there are more than 120 offerings—including classes, outdoor activities, family events, tours in and around San Diego and the county, plus lunches, teas, and dinners.



To participate you'll need two things:

- Your personal Bid Number (which you'll receive by email or when you stop by the Dining for Dollar\$ table on May 4, 11, or 18) and
- Your [Bidding Booklet](#) (available online on the church [website](#), sent via email, or can be picked up at the Dining for Dollar\$ table)



Kathleen Russum at Safari Park

Bid early, bid late, and bid often to make sure you and your family don't miss out on the fun.



Crafting



Making a chandelier



Rev. Jennifer Channin
Assistant Minister

As I prepare to move 3 thousand miles to start my new position as your Assistant Minister, I've been invited to introduce myself to you. I won't try to

tell you what sort of minister I'll be to you, or guess what kind of congregation you will be to me. We'll have years to discover that about each other, and half the fun is in the surprise! Instead, I'll share with you some things that excite me about moving to San Diego, and some things about this move that will be very different for me.

First, here's what I'm most looking forward to:

Food! I've lived in some cities with great food cultures – New York and Montreal in particular. I will definitely miss "real" pizza and bagels. However, on my recent trip to San Diego I ate the best taco, and the best ceviche, that I've ever had. One of my favorite hobbies is cooking, and I am very much looking forward to having excellent year-round fresh produce, and living in a city that clearly takes great pride in its food.

Living near "The Other Border." I started my ministerial career as the intern for two UU congregations in Ottawa, the capital of Canada, and years earlier I had lived in Montreal while attending college there. That choice - to study and work in another country - was one of the best decisions I ever made. I learned French, I made friends with people from a variety of cultures, and I live through some major events in US history - 9/11, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the birth of the Occupy movement, and 2 presidential elections - with both an insider and outsider perspective. Montreal and San Diego are on opposite ends of this continent, but they are both border cities. I am excited to once again stretch my cultural understanding, improve my Spanish, and get a broader perspective on what it means to be American. As a 2nd generation immigrant from Latin America - I am half-Brazilian and a dual-citizen - I am also curious to discover the similarities and differences between Mexican culture and my own Latina roots.



Here's a couple things that will be strange or different for me:

Car culture. My entire adult life I've lived in cities with dense public transportation, walkable neighborhoods, and bike paths. For that reason, I haven't owned a car since the beat-up, hand-me-down, 1985 Audi that I owned for 2 months when I was 17, before it creaked its final creak in the parking lot of a supermarket in central New Jersey. This time around, I'll try to get a car with working air-conditioning, that doesn't complain loudly when put into reverse, and with windows that stay shut without tape.

Sunshine. I'm currently enjoying one of the first warm and sunny spring days of the year here in Boston. As such, the ability to sit on my patio, mid-day, wearing a T-shirt, feels like a rare luxury. My sun-starved pores are bewildered, as if woken up from a long sleep. What will happen to me when I live someplace without a 6-month indoor season? What will I do with all my scarves? My cynical New Yorker side worries that I'll become boring - or worse, chipper! - but my friends who have lived out West reassure me that I will still find plenty of things to be serious and cynical about, even in Southern California.

Finally, the thing that I am most excited about, and most looking forward to, is meeting all of you. I cannot imagine a congregation that better fits my vision for my first parish ministry than First UU San Diego. I feel tremendously lucky that we were in search the same year, and I have a very good feeling about what is to come.

Until we meet in August...Hasta Luego...Au Revoir...and Tchou Tchou!

Rev. Jennifer Channin

Jennifer



At Jennifer's Ordination

ADAM DYER, INTERN MINISTER FOR 2014-15

BY MAGGIE MARSHALL, INTERN COMMITTEE MEMBER

When asked by Alice Diamond, chair of the Intern Ministry committee, who would like to volunteer and write an article introducing our upcoming 2014-15 Intern Minister, I quickly raised my hand. The committee is delighted to announce that Adam Dyer will be joining the First Church's ministerial team. Adam is moving from the Bay area where he will begin working with us by mid-August.

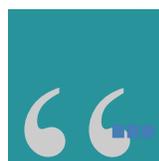
It is clear Adam is committed to lifelong learning on how to deepen our connections to one another. As a poet, vocal musician and composer he grasps the significance of music as a vital bridge to uniting people and how it opens our hearts wider. He understands technology and is an expert in Mac and PC plus the changing world of social media.

Adam is interested in the future of youth and young adults in the larger UU movement, religious education, working with boys and men of color, gay and lesbian (LGBTQ) issues, economic justice and how congregations grow through cross cultural development. He has been a world traveler, knows conversational French and is committed to improving his rudimentary Spanish. There is a warmth and compassion that Adam will bring to his ministry with us. I invite you to reach out and welcome him early in his internship. When he was in San Diego to attend and participate in Emily Webb's Ordination (our former Intern Minister), I asked him "What calls you to the ministry?"

Adam said, "I love people and I believe that everyone deserves to be loved and "held." But this is because I grew up surrounded by people of deep faith. My Jamaican grandfather was a United Church of Christ minister in New York City during the Civil Rights Movement and my mother was a graduate of Harvard Divinity at the age of 62...it is in my blood. "

"Although I had been personally interested in ministry from the age of 13, it was when I attended All Souls Unitarian in Washington, D.C. in 2005, and when I was surrounded by people of multiple faiths and world views all worshipping together, that I realized I had a spiritual home that spoke to universal love. I always found myself in "ministerial" roles in my previous work, both in the travel industry and in the wellness business, but it was when I discovered Starr King School for the Ministry that I was able to actually put a name to it and see myself in that role."

When asked about Adam's appointment, Rev. Kathleen Owens said "I am delighted that Adam Dyer will be our intern for the 2014-15 church year. I appreciate the energy he brings to his ministry and am especially excited that he will share with us his work with men and boys of color. When I consider our strategic plan and its goals, I am especially thrilled that Adam's work with us will bring First Church more fully into engagement with our work and help us to realize more deeply our goals. I hope you will join me in welcoming Adam into our community as we grow together in the wider ministry that awaits us all."



**everyone
deserves to be
loved...**





If Your Only Prayer is "Thank You" ... , Rev Dr Arvid Straube, Nov 24 2103 sermon

IF YOUR ONLY PRAYER IS "THANK YOU" ...

EXCERPTS FROM A SERMON BY REV. DR. ARVID STRAUBE

...As the centering thought by the medieval preacher and theologian Meister Eckhart says, "If the only prayer you ever say is 'Thank you,' that will suffice." Recently, I thought, what were the most important things I've learned in 61 years of life and 34 years of parish ministry, and I realized that they were things that we all know. Things that create happiness for ourselves and other people if we just practice them. And in order to practice them, we need to remember them because we already know what these things are. They're not complicated.

...Today, I want to talk about gratitude. I want to talk about gratefulness, because that makes other people happy. We ourselves become happier, when we notice the wonderful blessings that are in our lives.

...In our country, we don't believe in happiness; we believe in the pursuit of happiness. If we believed in happiness and not in the pursuit of happiness, we wouldn't postpone happiness all the time. What we do though, is think about what we need to be happy. We'll be happy when... "I'll be happy when I get a better job." "I'll be happy when we get a better house." "I'll be happy when I meet the right life partner. Having met that life partner, I'll be happy when my husband or wife really shapes up." "I'll be happy when I get a new car." "I'll be happy when I lose weight."

Meanwhile, the ingredients of our happiness are all around us, everywhere we could look, enough food, clothing and shelter, friends, family, loved ones, a blue sky in a beautiful San Diego day, and a sky full of stars at night. You know, thanksgiving is the ability to enjoy what is right before us. Happiness and gratitude do go together, and to be grateful is to be happy. And gratitude is possible with the feeling that we have enough...

...But what about when life has dealt us a hard blow? That happens to all of us. Serious worries and problems come to all of us. What about when we're in deep pain, physical and psychological, when we're ill when our life threatens to fall apart on us? Doesn't that preclude gratitude?

Actually, gratitude makes those moments easier to bear. When you're laden down with troubles, if you can find just one thing that makes you feel good, one thing that makes your heart sing, and concentrate on that, that gratitude could save you...

...My good friend, the late Forrest Church, wrote a book in the final days of his life, called "Love and Death" and in that book he said "The glass through which we look unto the world is like a lightly stained glass window. Each pane looks out on some aspect of our life, our vocation and avocation, our spouse, our companion, if we have one, our parents, our children, our health. At any time, some of these panes are likely to be rosy and translucent. "

"Imagine, however, that one pane in the window that looks over our life suddenly grows cloudy. What was translucent becomes opaque and almost impenetrable. The tendency is to press our nose up to that one frame, desperately trying to see through it. When we do this, we lose all sense of proportion. Our entire world goes black. " His advice in the face of certain suffering and death is "Want what you have. Do what you can. Be who you are."

...Every single moment that we have is one of a few and those moments will end.

We need to cherish them and pay attention to them. They are irretrievable and they are precious. May I suggest this time is blessed for you. This time is blest and shining and almost blinding bright. Just turn your head and you'll begin to see the thousand reasons that are just beyond your sight, why I suggest to you that this is the best part of your life. Blessed be.

To listen to the full sermon, go to <http://www.firstuusandiego.org/if-your-only-prayer-is-thank-you>.

To view the full sermon, go to <https://vimeo.com/76287092>.

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 Rev. Jim Grant, Affiliate Minister
 Elizabeth Bukey, Intern Minister
 Robie Evans, Director of Operations
 Liz Jones, Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry
 Käthe Larick, Youth Program Coordinator
 Chris Christenson, Communications / Adult Ed. Coordinator
 Kristen Kuriga, Social Justice and South Bay
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 Suzette Southfox, Director of Membership and Development
 Alice King, Young Adult and Campus Ministry Coordinator
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