



First
Unitarian Universalist
Church of San Diego

FirstWords

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DINING FOR DOLLAR\$ 2016 - THE BIDDING BEGINS MAY 1ST

BY LAURIE CREHAN AND ROBIE EVANS, DINING FOR DOLLAR\$ CO-CHAIRS

- Learn to make Italian appetizers ...
- Attend a Padres game ...
- Spend an afternoon lunching and relaxing poolside ...
- Go bowling with your First Church staff...
- Sail the San Diego Bay...
- Enjoy poetry, wine, Karaoke, hiking, birding, desert geology ...
- Family fun at the pool, or around a campfire ...
- Backyard BBQs or pancakes ...
- Gourmet meals from around the world ...

These are just a sample of the Dining for Dollar\$ (D4\$) events being hosted this upcoming year! Bidding starts on Sunday, May 1st and continues May 8th and May 15th in Bard Hall on our Hillcrest campus after each worship service.

Twelve years ago, we started this amazing fundraiser extravaganza at First Church. Over the past couple of years, we've raised as much as \$60,000 towards the church's general operating budget in the yearly Dining for Dollars bidding. But, that's not the best part! The social and community-building aspects of the events hosted by members and friends of this congregation overshadow the fact that it's a major fundraiser. Working with others to dream up, organize, and co-host events; meeting new people; 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 are the things that have left last impressions and made people come back to bid again, and again, and again.

So, now it's time for the "bidding frenzy" to begin, after each worship service on May 1, 8, and 15 at both campuses, following a "Silent Auction" bidding process. Folks from our South Bay campus and others who can't make it to the bidding tables are

encouraged to make "remote bids" by contacting Sylvia Ollinger at 858-232-6056 or sjolling06@hotmail.com (preferred). Also, there will be lots of D4\$ volunteers onsite available to help with bidding and/or to answer your questions.

This year, there are 104 offerings—including classes, outdoor activities, family events, tours in and around San Diego and the county, as well as lunches, teas, and dinners. You won't want to miss bidding on a fun time with the great people in our church community.

To participate you'll need two things:

1. Your personal Bid Number (which you'll receive by email or when you stop by the Dining for Dollar\$ table on May 1, 8, or 15) and
2. Your [Bidding Booklet](#) (available online on the church [website](#), sent to you via email upon request, or available for pick-up at the Dining for Dollar\$ table).

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



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FAITH AND POLITICS

BY REV. KATHLEEN OWENS, LEAD MINISTER

It seems like our country is at a political crossroads. The primary season has been broadcast over the news for months and the extremes from both ends of the political system have gained a lot of attention and crowds. I hope this says we acknowledge that our established practice of governing has left too many people under-served and without a voice.

I hope it means that more people will remain engaged in the democratic process—because it's not a spectator sport. And yet, in between all of the rallies, speeches, promises and more, a spirit of divisiveness has crept in, exacerbating differences into the extremes of either/or thinking, i.e., 'right' or 'wrong,' 'good' or 'bad,' etc. I think a good debate is important—but it needs to be a debate on issues and ideas, not based on personal attacks or fears.

As a people of faith that affirms and promotes the use of the democratic process in society at large, we can get easily caught up in 'either/or thinking', forgetting that people with a variety of political identities belong to our congregation; that we are a diverse community practicing respect and that we want to be open minded to differing ideas. Our own state's primary is coming up soon and there are some very important issues on the ballot.

When preparing to vote, I try to study the issues to the best of my ability and then spend time reflecting on the values of justice, equity, and compassion—among others—before going inside the voting booth. There's a great deal at stake in our primary and then again in the national election. Your ministerial team is already thinking about and planning ways for us to be responsive and supportive, specifically in this time.

Our country, state, and city are in need of thinking, engaged, and active people to participate in our democratic process, and our faith can help support you as you discern what you can do in this election season. May we all do our part to ensure our system of governance at all levels is inclusive and just for all.

Faithfully yours,

May Sermon Messages

Celebration Times:

Hillcrest Campus: Sunday, 9:30a and 11:30a (ASL Interpretation)

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

May's Transformational Theme is Creativity

May 1, 2016

Hillcrest Services—

"What Makes America a Good Country!"

Rev. Dr. Thomas A. Owen-Towle,
Minister Emeritus

South Bay Service—

"Crafting a Life"

Rev. Ian W. Riddell,
Minister of Music and Worship Arts

May 8, 2016

Hillcrest Services—

"Becoming Creative in Conflict"

Megan Dowdell, *Intern Minister*

South Bay Service—

"Arise, Women of this Day"

Rev. Kathleen Owens, *Lead Minister*

May 15, 2016

Hillcrest Services—

"A Festival of Music"

Rev. Ian W. Riddell,
Minister of Music and Worship Arts

South Bay Service—

"Finding Our Voice:

A Service of Music & Poetry"

Kristen Kuriga,
South Bay Ministry Team Coordinator
Lorelei Isidro, *South Bay Music Coordinator*

May 22, 2016

Hillcrest Services: Child Dedication—

"Expanding Life"

Rev. Kathleen Owens, *Lead Minister*

South Bay Service—

"1000 Beautiful Things"

Rev. Jennifer Channin, *Assistant Minister*

May 29, 2016

Hillcrest Services: New Member Blessing—

"1000 Beautiful Things"

Rev. Jennifer Channin, *Assistant Minister*

South Bay Service: New Member Blessing—

"God Is an Adventure"

Megan Dowdell, *Intern Minister*



PLEASE DON'T SIGN UP TO WORK WITH OUR CHILDREN

BY DR. MELISSA JAMES, DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY

As you consider your connection to the mission and community here at First Church, please don't sign up to work with our children if:

- your spiritual growth is not worth an hour some Sunday ...
- you already have all of the answers to your questions and no longer need to grow ...
- your life needs no more wonder ...
- you can't use an experience that gives you hope in our community and, more broadly, the world ...
- you can't remember any mentors or teachers in your life that inspired you (or you don't want to form new memories) ...
- you have no desire to be a part of a vibrant and essential ministry in our community.

If these things are true for you, then working with our children at First Church isn't a good fit for you. If, however, you're looking for a way to nurture your own spiritual growth, wrestle with meaningful questions, and be delighted by the abundance of wonder and joy that comes through walking with young people on their path, it's a wonderful fit for you. Family Ministry is a whole-church ministry and counts on all of us to intentionally grow with one another across generations. Whatever your passion, whatever your experience level, we're counting on you!

One of the many key elements of family ministry is our children's religious education and multigenerational religious education programs. When you become a leader or classroom assistant in one of these programs, you're not simply filling a volunteer need (though you're definitely doing that), you're opening up your own journey for new delights and challenges. I've been a teacher for many, many years. In those years, I've learned that needing to find a way to communicate a concept or experience to people of different ages fills my world with the opportunity to think more deeply and clearly about whatever I'm teaching. That's why I'm confident—when I invite you to teach or assist in our classrooms (which I am)—I'm not only meeting the needs of our children and families, I'm offering you an opportunity to grow and shine.

This summer is a great time to jump in because we'll be running two exciting classes for our lower-elementary- and upper-elementary-aged children:

- **Hogwarts is back!**
Back by popular demand, this curriculum transforms our classroom into Hogwarts SchUUI for Witchcraft and Wizardry. Throughout the summer, our older children will explore Unitarian Universalist principles as they explore the world of Hogwarts. Their world will be filled with wonder through lessons in subjects such as potions, herbology, astronomy, and our very own Quidditch cup! Professors (you'll become an honorary professor) needed for all.
- **Beary UU Summer**
Our Beary UU Summer is an imagination-based curriculum that fosters empathy, ethical thinking, and understanding of our UU principles through the use of stories and activities. Children are invited into the adventures of two of our bear friends. All of these stories are interpreted through the lens of Unitarian Universalist principles as our leaders and children wonder about the feelings and actions of the characters in the story.

So—can I count you in? Will you sign up for our summer session? Whether you've logged hundreds of hours working with children or this would be your first, you're invited to sign up to lead or assist in our children's programs. If you're less inclined to work in the classroom, no worries, there are plenty of behind-the-scenes opportunities for you!

Sign up on Sundays at the Children and Family Ministry Table or online:

For Hogwarts at
<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0c4ba9aa2ea3fc1-hogwarts>



For Beary UU Summer at
<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0c4ba9aa2ea3fc1-teddy>



MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

BY SUSAN GREGG-SCHROEDER, COORDINATOR OF MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRIES

People with mental problems are our neighbors. They're members of our congregations, members of our families; they're everywhere in this country. If we ignore their cries for help, we'll be continuing to participate in the anguish from which those cries for help come. A problem of this magnitude won't go away. Because it won't go away, and because of our spiritual commitments, we are compelled to take action. (Rosalynn Carter)

Did you know:

The magnitude of mental illness in this country is staggering. According to the Surgeon General, one in every five Americans experiences a mental disorder in any given year, and half of all Americans have such disorders at some time in their lives. These illnesses of the brain affect all of us, regardless of age, gender, economic status or ethnicity.

Mental illness affects the mind, body and the spirit. It's a real, common, and treatable illness. Mental illnesses are far more common than cancer, diabetes, heart disease, or arthritis.

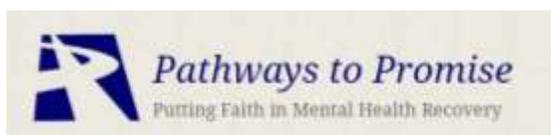
Our faith communities can be an important part of the recovery process through education, support, and by helping individuals and families feel part of a caring community.

Look for community events to highlight mental health issues affecting children, adolescents, adults, and older adults. This is an opportunity to educate your faith community about mental illness and help them become caring congregations for persons, and their families, with a mental illness.



Visit these websites for resources:

- NAMI FaithNet
www.nami.org/namifaithnet
- Mental Health Ministries
www.MentalHealthMinistries.net
- Pathways to Promise
www.Pathways2Promise.org
- International Bipolar Foundation
www.internationalbipolarfoundation.org



COPING TOGETHER: THE CHRONIC CONDITIONS SUPPORT GROUP CONTINUES

BY MEGAN DOWDELL, INTERN MINISTER

People of all ages with chronic and long-term physical conditions, face symptoms, limitations, and wellness in diverse ways. From coping with my own chronic illness after two thyroidectomies, and previous work as an in-home personal care provider, I know that too often individuals can suffer in silence and find themselves isolated from community groups or social activities, even in faith communities. Sometimes, pain, fatigue, or the other aspects of living with a chronic illness can prevent or limit someone's abilities to participate in certain activities.

People with chronic conditions can face questions or comments, which feel hurtful or insensitive, even if statements are unconscious. Despite these struggles, the need for social support and the healing power of community are equally as strong. The desire to stretch and extend ourselves to relationships with others poses a formidable challenge to our individual wounds and brokenness. First Church offers a support group for members and friends of the church who experience chronic physical conditions. It is "a place where I can be my authentic self and know that I can soar even with a broken wing," said co-facilitator and trained lay minister, Marilyn Hanson.

When I arrived here last August, I was pleased to learn there was a growing interest among our lay ministry team and members to have a support group for people of all ages and identities who experience one or more chronic physical conditions. With the blessing of Rev. Kathleen and Marla English, leaders of the lay ministry team, a support group was created. Chris Smith and Marilyn Hanson, two of our trained lay ministers, and I serve as peer co-facilitators of the group, which began meeting in January and will continue to meet after my internship ends in June.

The support group for coping with chronic conditions gathers to share stories, get support, and build community. In this meeting space, the goal is to embrace all that we are: the ways we identify and name our conditions, and the choices and struggles each of us have faced. Chris Smith says "it's surprising to learn that despite the variety of challenges we face, how much we have in common."

Using parts of the "wisdom circle" model already a part of the church culture, the confidential group offers the opportunity for deep personal sharing, as well as discussions on topics of shared interest, such as: dealing with pain, self-advocacy, communicating with health care providers, accessibility problems, what makes us feel strong, responding to insensitive comments or misconceptions, and asking for help. Chris says, "Although living with a chronic condition is serious, we have experienced wonderful moments of shared laughter, music, and even games."

Coping with Chronic Conditions continues to invite members and friends of First UU to join the support group on the second and fourth Mondays of each month from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Common Room at the Hillcrest campus.



FOOD WORKER INJUSTICE AND HEALTHY FOOD DESERTS: WHAT CAN WE DO?

BY JOHN SCHAIBLY AND KATHY SMITH



A workshop on Food Justice entitled “Justice at Every Meal” was presented by the [Economic Justice Action Group](#) of the Social Justice Ministry Team on

February 27th. The workshop educated our congregation about the plight of food workers, the unavailability of healthy food in poorer neighborhoods (also known as food deserts), and suggested actions that UUs can take to correct these injustices.

Joanne Lo, Co-Director of the L.A. based [Food Chain Workers Alliance](#) (FCWA), was the keynote speaker. In addition, there was a panel of three local activists: Diane Moss, from San Diego’s [Project New Village](#); Katia Hansen, Executive Director of [UU RISE](#), an immigrant support organization located in Vista; and Roselda Gomez, fast food worker on the Executive Steering committee of the [Service Employees International Union](#) (SEIU).

Ms. Lo described the work the FCWA is doing in several areas, especially organizing work in a coalition of other nonprofits to enact the [Good Food Purchasing Agreement](#) which was recently adopted by the L. A. Unified School District and City Council. This document is based on 5 principles including: the ethical treatment of animals, fair wages for all food chain workers, the right to a safe workplace, support of small and midsized local agricultural and food processing operations, and environmental sustainability.

Diane Moss described the Community Gardens movement, in particular the [Mt. Hope Community Garden](#). This garden is part of Project New Village’s effort to give poorer people in the neighborhood the ability to rent their plots for as little as \$5 per month. Ms. Moss personally has been successful in reducing or eliminating the costs to rezone spaces owned by the city for gardens.

Ms. Katia Hansen spoke on the value of coalition building. For example, UU Rise and the North County’s [Farmworker Care Coalition](#)’s worked with the Red Cross to relocate worker housing after a devastating firestorm in San Marcos. She also described how workers are often afraid to complain about unjust working conditions because of their immigration status. The small group discussions afterwards suggested specific actions we can take to address worker injustices.

We all can:

- Support CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) activities. San Diego is one of the first California cities to endorse community gardens, although city and county permits that are difficult to obtain and expense of rezoning are stumbling blocks. We can help pressure the City Council. Project New Village (www.projectnewvillage.org) offers many opportunities for volunteers to work in community gardens. One easy thing you can do is to shop farmers’ markets for real quality and give support to urban agriculture in San Diego.
- Provide meals for the homeless. Members of our congregation support temporarily homeless individuals through the annual [Interfaith Shelter Network](#). Members of the Economic Justice Team provided Thanksgiving and Christmas meals for the homeless through our partner “Dreams for Change” www.dreamsforchange.org.
- Boycott farm products from producers refusing union workers. There are many offenders but one of the most notable is Driscoll Berries from Watsonville CA. Read about their cause at boycottsakumaberries.com/campaign-updates. Then, think twice before buying their products.
- Patronize restaurants that are doing right by their employees. ROC United offers apps for your Apple and Android smartphones rating the most popular chain restaurants www.rocunited.org/diners-guide.
- Sign a food petition for our next president. “Our food system is out of balance, and it’s time to take action. Current food policies prioritize corporate interests at the expense of our health, the environment, and working families. ...” Read more and sign the petition at www.plateoftheunion.com.
- Support Minimum Wage Legislation. Since the February 27th forum, Fight for \$15 won a remarkable victory. With little opposition, the California Legislature passed a minimum wage measure for \$15 by 2022. We encourage everyone to vote on the June 7 ballot for the [San Diego City minimum wage measure](#). This initiative will increase the wages more rapidly than the legislation and will also provide for five days’ sick leave instead of three days.

The Economic Justice Action Group encourages everyone to be aware and act to correct the food chain worker injustices presented in this excellent forum.

INSTEAD OF THE RUMMAGE SALE

BY PAM BATES, DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, AND REV. KATHLEEN OWENS, LEAD MINISTER

Every other year since 1996, First UU Church has put on a 1,000 Family Rummage Sale with funds raised divided between two budget years. This activity has been great for offering a way for people to clean-out and recycle items in their home or closets. The rummage sale has also provided a service to the larger community, has been an income-generating event for the church's operating budget as well as building community among the folks who worked . . . and worked . . . and worked to get the donated items and the campus ready for the big event. And, each time we've done a rummage sale, it's been more and more of a challenge to pull off. Time is more limited for many people, the majority of work must take place during the work day—tasks such as organizing, set-up, training, sorting, and pricing—up to a small committee of folks. Finding folks who have the time and energy needed to spend months of planning culminating in 8 consecutive, full days of work prior to sale day has become more and more difficult with each Rummage Sale.

So, earlier this year, the Generosity Ministry team (GMT) began discussing the possibility of not having a rummage sale this coming fall . . . at least not in the usual way. For a balanced budget, we still need to raise those funds (at least \$10,000 per year) so a number of lay leaders and the GMT have been brainstorming possibilities that would include ways to build community and offer a service to the larger community in addition to raising needed funds—just like a Rummage Sale does. More details about a new event planned for early fall that will be fun, create community, and raise funds will be announced here in First Words and in The Window.

GMT members also participated in an Internet Scavenger Hunt searching the websites of the 25 largest UU churches for new fundraising ideas—and found two very promising programs now under development. The first is a B&B (bed and breakfast) program, under the wonderful leadership of Jan Garbosky. First UU church members and friends will be able to almost effortlessly raise funds for our congregation without reaching into our own wallets! Officially, our B&B program will begin no later than July 1 with a goal of raising \$5,000 by June 30, 2017. If you have family or friends coming to San Diego who need accommodations, let them know members of our congregation will soon (hopefully even prior to July 1) begin hosting guests in their homes and providing a continental breakfast. Guests will eventually register and pay online. If you'd like to be a host, members of the B&B Team will be available between services and after second service on May 1, 8, and 15 to answer questions and help fill out host applications. Soon, information about our B&B program will be on our website as well as advertised in the [UU're Home Bed & Breakfast Directory](#) for UUs and Other Religious Liberals and in UU World.

Because it's still important to recycle our items, we plan on developing an E-Sales program. You'll hear more about it later this year. The program will allow you to de-clutter and downsize, help the larger community, and add to the church's operating budget to ensure we have the resources needed to fulfill our mission.

With your help and these new activities and programs, we can each find ways to become even more generous with our time, talents, and treasures!



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 Rev. Jennifer Channin, Assistant Minister
 Rev. Ian W. Riddell, Minister of Music and Worship Arts
 Megan Dowdell, Intern Minister
 Tania Márquez, Intern Minister
 Rev. Jim Grant, Affiliate Minister
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 Dr. Melissa James, Director of Children and Family Ministry
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To view sermon video casts, click on these

YouTube or Vimeo buttons:



Giving: <http://www.firstuusandiego.org/giving-overview>.

Click on these Amazon Affiliate or iGive buttons for your

online shopping and First Church receives a portion of the sales. Secure and private.



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