

#BLACKLIVESMATTER—ONE YEAR LATER

BY REV. JENNIFER CHANNIN, ASSISTANT MINISTER

A little over a year ago, I started to see the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter show up on the internet. Ferguson, Missouri was erupting in protests after Michael Brown was shot and killed by a police officer in August, 2014, and more deaths of young black men around the country at the hands of police were making the headlines. By Christmastime, it was clear that people's grief and outrage over these and other deaths was turning into a nation-wide movement.

About a year ago I gave a sermon in which I said, ". . . We're in the midst of an historical moment. One where people will look back and say, 'that was a turning point where the story of race in America changed,' or they'll say 'that was a lost opportunity'."

Now, seems like a good time to reflect on the past year, and whether we've taken the opportunity to face racism head-on, to transform ourselves and our society, and to determine what we must do next.

As a minister of this congregation I'm both very proud of what I've seen us do in the past year, and I know that we have a lot further to go. I'm proud of the Board of Trustees, which took several months last Spring to learn about the #BlackLivesMatter movement, and wrote a statement of support for the movement after doing the work of educating themselves and hearing from the voices of people of color in the congregation. I'm proud of the roughly 100 people who participated in the Courageous Conversations on Race, sharing their own stories and listening deeply and openly to other's stories.

I'm proud of the 30 people who joined the joyful Sunday afternoon march through our neighborhood in Hillcrest, chanting "When justice calls me, I will answer," and of the 59 people who flocked to the Courthouse wearing their Standing on the Side of Love

T-Shirts to protest the wrongful incarceration of 33 black men in San Diego due to a discriminatory penal code. I'm proud of everyone who, when we put up the #BlackLivesMatter sign in front of the church, took the opportunity to listen to each other's viewpoints and explore their own assumptions.



I'm proud of the young adult group that led an anti-racism workshop last spring (which they plan to offer again), and the Social Justice Ministry Team that added Racial Justice to their charge, the multiple book groups that have chosen books this year that explore race in America, the youth groups and children's RE classes that wove conversations about race into their curricula.

And, when people come up to me, as they frequently do, and ask "Why aren't we doing more to support #BlackLivesMatter?" I agree with their frustration that there is so much more we could be doing. There is untapped energy among us to organize, to educate, to empower, and to witness. This work doesn't belong to just one group in the church. It's not Social Justice's work. It is not ROAR with SOUL's work. It is not the ministers' work. It's everyone's work. And, it's work that I look forward to doing together with you in the years to come.

Also in this issue:

- Generosity and Thanksgiving [Pg 2](#)
- November's Sermon Messages [Pg 2](#)
- Creating Generosity [Pg 3](#)
- Death Café [Pg 4](#)
- Music Notes: "New Perspectives" [Pg 5](#)
- Why Unions Matter to UUs [Pg 5](#)
- "Slices of Life" from Looking Glass Theatre [Pg 6](#)
- New Shopping with Scrip Program [Pg 7](#)



GENEROSITY AND THANKSGIVING

BY REV KATHLEEN OWENS, LEAD MINISTER

Fall is here! The air is starting to be cooler in the evenings, nightfall is arriving earlier each day, plans and preparations for holidays are beginning. For many, November is the beginning of our biggest holiday season. In this climate of growing seasonal cheer, we're often reminded that folks are in need. Already, I've received many requests from different organizations to contribute money to help feed folks at the holidays. And I do give—for many reasons. I can't believe that, in this country of such plenty, we have hungry people in our neighborhood. I give because this holiday isn't about gifts, but rather about remembering all for which we're grateful and wanting to share with others. I give because when I do, I feel a small connection with more folks in this community. I give because it feels good.

Generosity is the monthly theme of our worship services and wisdom circle discussions. There are many ways to be generous, in this month but all year around. I think in our material world, we often forget that the giving of our presence is a huge gift to those around us—that our showing-up is meaningful to others unknown by us. The giving of our care and attention can make an important difference to someone who is feeling lonely or isolated.

The Thanksgiving holiday is my favorite holiday because it calls us to reflect on those people, events, experiences and things in our life that have made an impact, that have been a blessing, that have helped us grow into who we are now. One of my hopes is that this congregation is one that also helps you reflect on what's most important in your life. I hope it's a place that encourages you to celebrate life's bounty and offers you an opportunity to give to others. May we find ever more ways to live our mission into reality—creating more community, nurturing a deeper sense of spiritual growth, and acting on our values to help heal the world. May it be so for you and for all of us in the coming season.

Faithfully yours,
Rev. Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

November Sermon Messages

Celebration Times:

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

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

The November Transformational Theme is Generosity

Sunday, November 1:

Hillcrest Services—

"Come Spirit Come,"

Rev Jennifer Channin, Assistant Minister

South Bay Multigenerational Service—

"The dead are not under the earth: Día de los Muertos,"

Rev Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

Megan Dowdell and Tanya Marquez, Interns;

Kristen Kuriga, South Bay Ministry Team

Coordinator

Sunday, November 8:

Hillcrest Services—

"The Giving of 4 Ts,"

Rev Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

South Bay Service—

"A Generous Comfort,"

Megan Dowdell, Intern Minister

Sunday, November 15:

Hillcrest Services—

"Kindness as a Saving Spiritual Practice,"

Rev Ian W Riddell, Minister of Music and Worship Arts

South Bay Service—

"The Giving of 4 Ts,"

Rev Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

Sunday, November 22:

Hillcrest Multigenerational Services—

"The Name of the Tree,"

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

Dr Melissa James, Director of Children and Family Ministry

South Bay Service—

"Taking the Leap,"

Rev Jennifer Channin, Assistant Minister

Sunday, November 29:

Hillcrest Services—

"Faith at Five Thousand Feet,"

Megan Dowdell, Intern Minister

South Bay Service—

"Kindness as a Saving Spiritual Practice,"

Rev Ian W Riddell, Minister of Music and Worship Arts



CREATING GENEROSITY

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

We don't talk much about virtues and vices in Unitarian Universalism, yet many of our monthly themes and much of what we hope to instill in our children are rooted in classical virtues, like generosity. This gets me wondering about questions like: What does generosity look like for children? How do we learn to be generous? What are the roles of virtues in a Unitarian Universalist context?

I'm an applied ethicist by training, so I tend to relish questions like these. When thinking about how to become virtuous, I find myself returning to my good pal, Aristotle, and two parts of his virtue theory. First, virtue theory is the "fake it 'til you make it" model of ethics. You practice the virtues you wish to embody, with the hope that some day, they simply become part of who you are. Second, you surround yourself with friends who are just and virtuous. Their influence will help you become just and virtuous as well.

What does this have to do with UUs? As we think about the monthly themes and our values in general and how we live them out in a multigenerational context, I think we have a lot to learn from virtue theory. How do we create a community where children learn to be generous? We create opportunities for them to practice generosity over and over again. Generosity is not simply about giving financially (though this is a part of it). Generosity can look like being generous of spirit and time, through patience and understanding of those older or younger or different in any way from oneself. It can also look like being generous with one's talents.

We need to build time into our community and our families to practice generosity. Our 5th and 6th grade leadership academy is an excellent example of young leaders being generous with their talents as they meet various needs around the campus on Sunday mornings. Involving children and youth in social justice actions is an excellent example of providing them with the opportunity to practice generosity of spirit, in learning to act against injustice. At home, practicing generosity may look like dinner conversations about how each person helped someone else that day or participating together in programs like the UNICEF Halloween boxes and Guest at Our Table boxes.



Friendship, according to Aristotle, is just as important as practicing one's virtues. This is key for our community. What are we trying to do in becoming a truly multigenerational community? We're forming friendships that are deep and meaningful, that cross age divides, so we're surrounding ourselves with people who help us live into our values.

The friendships we create with those older and younger than us are not simply about making people feel comfortable or finding simple joy. **These friendships are essential if we're to live into who we are as individuals and a community.** So next time you sit down with a youth or a child, take a moment and practice being generous of spirit and thank them for the friendship they afford you and the way they are helping you take one more step toward becoming virtuous. They may not immediately return your thanks but as you watch them grow in our community, you'll see how the favor is returned.

DEATH CAFÉ

BY MARLA ENGLISH

*"What is it you plan to do with your one wild
and precious life?"*

- Mary Oliver

Who wants to talk about death? Many want to, but often cannot find the means of addressing it **with family or friends.** "Talking about dying helps people to prepare for their own or other family members passing so that they live life more fully . . . the Death Café breathes life into the topic of death," says Death Café San Diego founder, Karen Van Dyke. The movement also notes that "Death is not our enemy, it is part of the cycle of life." To learn more about this movement, go to deathcafe.com.

First Church and the Caring Ministry Team will sponsor its first Death Café on November 7, 10 a.m. to noon in the Common Room. Rabbi Alexis Pearce, Chaplain and Grief Counselor with Silverado Hospice, will be our facilitator as First Church joins the Death Café global movement, providing a relaxed and nurturing setting to discuss life and death over a cup of coffee and tasty treats.

The objective is to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives. A Death Café is a group directed discussion of death with no agenda, objectives or **themes.** It's a discussion group rather than a grief support or counselling session. Death Cafés are always offered on a not-for-profit basis, in an accessible, respectful and confidential space, with no intention of leading people to any conclusion, product or course of action.



The Death Café model was developed by Jon Underwood and Sue Barsky Reid in England, based on the ideas of Bernard Crettaz. The idea has since spread around the world. Lizzy Miles, who ran the first Death Café in the U.S. and Megan Mooney who runs the Death Café Facebook page have played a significant role in Death Café's development in the United States.

Congregants and community members (age 18+) are encouraged to come to the First UU Death Café but you must sign up on the Death Café' Website at <http://deathcafe.com/deathcafe/2477/>. Due to the nature of the conversation, attendees are asked to arrive within 10 minutes of the start time. All are welcome, but seating is limited to the first 30 who RSVP. Again, the Death Café is not a therapy or a grief group. **It's a pop-up event** to facilitate open discussion about death and dying.

If you have questions, please e-mail location host Marla English at marlajeanenglish@gmail.com.

Please sign up for this important event in the life of our Caring Community.

MUSIC NOTES: "NEW PERSPECTIVES"

BY REV. IAN W. RIDDELL, MINISTER OF MUSIC AND WOSHIP ARTS

It's hard to believe it's already November. Our church year is off to a powerful start. All of our music ensemble are deep into rehearsing and making music together – and building community. As I've been getting to know our music leaders, I've had many conversations with them about the meaning and importance of music and music making in the lives of those they share music with. I want to share some words with you from Lynn Mendoza-Khan our director for Emerging Voices (Children), Voices in Unity (Youth), and Women's choirs. I asked Lynn why Emerging Voices was important in the life of the community:

"As children explore their world they experience a range of emotions that they don't always know how to process beyond laughing, crying, yelling, stomping etc. I've introduced a new song called, "Cooroo Cooroo" a gentle song which begins, "Look to the sky, close your eyes; feel the snowflakes fall. All around, there is no sound but a lone bird's call..." The words and tender accompaniment evoke a magical winter scene.

The symbolism of a cold barren winter scene and a lone bird singing a comforting refrain opened up a great conversation with the children about how overwhelming upset feelings such as loneliness, frustration, sadness can be. The lone bird is a symbolic reminder that peace and love are always possible. I asked them to try singing to help them work through an upsetting emotion and see if it helped them see their issue differently. Often, singing can give you just enough time and shift for a new perspective to emerge. In this way, using music to have meaningful conversations about life is what I love the most during Emerging Voices rehearsals. We build these tools in the hopes that we all will emerge empowered while we work through our problems."

What a powerful experience for our children to have! Don't forget that our children's choir – Emerging Voices – rehearses on Sunday afternoons from 2:30 to 3:30. If your young ones haven't tried it yet, you should see Lynn or drop in to a rehearsal soon.

More new music and worship opportunities are bubbling up in the next months. Stay tuned and keep an ear out.

In love and peace,
Rev. Ian

WHY UNIONS MATTER TO UUs

BY JILL HANSEN

A program on Unitarian Universalists and Unions will be held Saturday, November 21, 2015 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. in Bard Hall at First Church. The program will illustrate how UU principles resonate with the work of unions to help bring workers out of poverty and restore their dignity.

Mickey Kasparian, a charismatic union leader in San Diego and President of UFCW Local 135, will be the keynote speaker. Following Mickey's address will be a panel discussion moderated by the Reverend Jim Grant on "Why Unions Matter to UUs." Included on the panel will be Johanna Hester, the dynamic leader in the United Domestic Workers of San Diego (UDW). Other panelists include a local union organizer and a union member who will share their life-changing stories.

Two UU ministers, Beth Johnson (Palomar UU Fellowship) and our own Jennifer Channin, will also join the panel to highlight the link to Unitarian Universalist principles. Beth serves as co-President of the Board of Directors of the Interfaith Center for Worker Justice (ICWJ) and has vast knowledge of the labor movement. Jennifer leads the Social Justice Ministry Team at First Church.

Come with open minds and loving hearts. Childcare will be provided if requested by November 7. Contact Jill Hansen at (619) 543-9798 or Joan Cudhea at (619) 255-2304 for more information.

UNION YES

**UU's and Unions:
Why Unions Matter to UUs**

Saturday, Nov 21 2015 at 8:30 to 11:30 am
First Unitarian Universalist Church in Hillcrest

- Learn how unions make a difference in the lives of workers and their families.
- Hear personal stories from workers about the need for dignity and respect on the job.
- Discuss the similarities between UU principles and the goals of unions.
- Find out how to support workers in their struggle for justice.

Keynote Address: Mickey Kasparian, a respected union leader in San Diego and President of UFCW Local 135

Panelists:
Johanna Hester – Leader in United Domestic Workers San Diego
Mandi Skovron – union organizer
Riva Lopez – IBEW janitor
Rev. Beth Johnson – Minister at Vista UU
Rev. Jennifer Channin – Minister at 1st UU
Rev. Jim Grant – Affiliated UU/Minister

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"SLICES OF LIFE" FROM LOOKING GLASS THEATRE

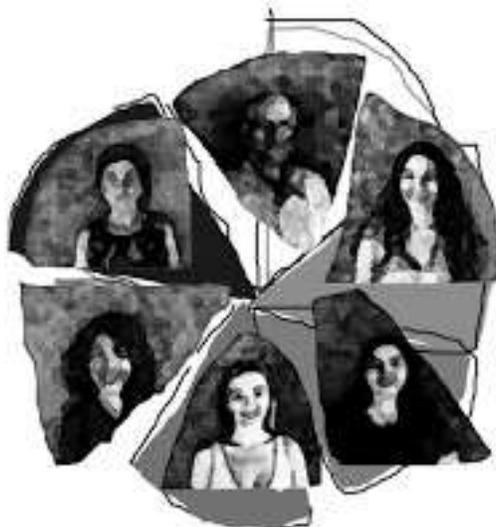
BY JOHN WEAD

Looking Glass Theatre (LGT) starts its thirtieth season this fall with a collection of short plays. "Life Slices" is a series of 5 short plays which explore, in fun and meaningful ways, the variety of connections that occur between people. They reveal authentic moments in everyday lives. These brief comedy/dramas are performed by a dozen actors and three directors. The show is also assisted by two muses, who help guide the audience through the experience.

When LGT had to cancel its plans for a spring musical this last January, Rolly Fanton, long time church member and professional thespian, came forward with the idea of hosting a series of acting workshops on campus. With the rousing response and growing attendance with each succeeding class, a "Theater Games Night" was produced in May and performed in Bard Hall. It was well received and the actors were encouraged to continue performing.

Then Rolly suggested doing an evening of short, ten minute plays. This gives each actor a part with meaningful lines but without having to learn a big show with a large time commitment. It also allows several people to direct simultaneously. Rolly selected three of the plays she wanted to see performed and offered to direct one of them. Gay Hybertson and John Wead stepped forward and also picked a play to direct. Auditions were held in September and then rehearsals began. Over half of those who auditioned were new to LGT and the church.

The play will be performed at 7:30 PM, November 20 and 21, 2015, in the Meeting House. Tickets are available for \$10 on the Patio starting November 1st. Tickets are available with credit card at www.LookingGlassSD.org. They will also be available at the door for \$14.



Rolly Fanton is an accomplished actor, singer and director and has appeared on stage in both New York and Los Angeles in "Company", "Oliver", "The Maids" and others. She has performed in films and sung in night clubs in New York. She directed and adapted four major productions at American Theatre Arts in Los Angeles.

Her TV Credits include "Barnaby Jones", "The Young and the Restless", "General Hospital" and others. Rolly appears on stage locally, and sings in our church services. Rolly will start the New Year in Los Angeles working on several scripts and performing improv. She will return to San Diego later in the year.

Looking Glass Theatre took its name from its first production, the West Coast premiere of "Alice in Blunderland", an antinuclear – big business musical allegory which ran for two years traveling throughout Southern California. "Life Slices" is LGT's forty-eighth production.

LGT has created many of its own musical variety shows. It has produced concert venues for local singers as well as for church members and youth. LGT prides itself on its intergenerational appeal and goal of finding a spot in a production for anyone interested.

NEW SHOPPING WITH SCRIP PROGRAM: TURN SHOPPING INTO \$\$ FOR FIRST CHURCH

BY KAREN LAMPHERE

Imagine a world where members and friends of First Church provide additional money to help carry out the church's mission without donating an extra dime or asking anyone for money.

It can happen! Here's how:

Many of you may remember the old scrip program, where people purchased paper "scrip" to use at grocery stores and a few other local retailers. We paid full price for scrip, and a percentage was donated back to the church by the retailer. Well, the Generosity Ministry Team is bringing scrip back at First Church—but in a whole new way!

The days of paper scrip are gone. Scrip is now available in the form of gift cards—just like the ones purchased at stores. Starting Sunday, November 8 through the end of the year, gift cards for selected retailers will be available for purchase on the patio *between services*. Don't find cards for the store you want? Complete an order form (choosing from a wide variety of retailers and gift card amounts) and your cards will be ready for pick-up the following week.

Scrip is not just for grocery stores any more. It's available for retail stores and online vendors like Bed, Bath, and Beyond; iTunes; Amazon; Macy's; Home Depot; Barnes & Noble; Starbucks; Target; See's Candy; movie theaters; and many more. Thinking of making a large purchase, such as computers, appliances, and TVs? Purchase large denomination scrip cards for Home Depot, Lowes, Best Buy, and more.

It makes sense to stock up on gift cards for your every day shopping. And, with the holidays coming, it's an opportunity to get some (or all) of your shopping out of the way and purchase gift cards you'd normally buy at stores. Since gift cards can be used at brick-and-mortar stores and online, you can also purchase cards to use on Black Friday and Cyber Monday.



Starting Sunday, November 8, a limited selection of cards will be available for purchase by cash or check only (see list below) on the patio between services and in the church office during the week. There will be order forms with a more extensive list of retailers available at the patio table that you can complete and then pay for your cards, which will be ready for pick-up the following Sunday.

The bottom line: You use scrip where you already shop, and the church benefits. How great is that? Questions? Contact Karen Lamphere (klamphere100@gmail.com or 619-220-8108)

Cards available for purchase on Nov. 8 (cash/checks only)*:

<u>Retailer</u>	<u>Percentage donated to First Church</u>
See's Candy (voucher for one lb. box)	20%
Gap	14%
Old Navy	14%
Bath & Body Works	13%
Honey Baked Ham	13%
AMC Theaters Gold Ticket	10%
Macy's	10%
Starbucks	7%
Sprouts	5%
Vons (Safeway)	4%
Amazon	3%
Target	2.5%

*You may also order cards from a wide variety of stores on November 8 and they'll be available for pick-up on November 15.

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

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