



First
Unitarian Universalist
Church of San Diego

ANNUAL REPORT 2020 to 2021

**This document captures the activities of this
UU Congregation between July 2020 and June 2021.**

**Our Mission is to create community, to nurture spiritual
growth, and to act on our values to help heal the world.**



firstuusandiego.org

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The Mission of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego is to create community, nurture spiritual growth and to act on our values to help heal the world.

COVENANT OF GOOD RELATIONS

Preamble:

We members, friends, staff, and ministers of First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego covenant to treat ourselves and one another with respect. We vow to live our values, to learn, and to serve in ways that are fulfilling and responsible.

We respect and honor ourselves and others when we:

- listen, speak, and act with integrity and compassion;
- communicate openly without anonymous criticism; and express gratitude and appreciation.

We value ourselves and others when we:

- invite and welcome into our church the diverse populations and cultures of the wider community;
- enjoy each other with playfulness and good humor; act with awareness of ecological issues.

We learn when we:

- educate ourselves about church structure and governance, and the responsibilities of ministers, staff, and volunteers;
- appreciate our own limitations as well as those of others; and
- practice the established process of resolving differences.

We serve when we:

- contribute our financial resources, time, and skills according to our ability, whenever possible;
- model Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values; and strive to reflect more accurately
- the demographics of the wider community in our Church.



First
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Church of San Diego

Approved by the Congregation on June 8, 2008

Journey Toward Wholeness

Purpose of the group:

The Journey Toward Wholeness Core Team was created as an adjunct, **advisory group to the Church's Board of Trustees in 2018** for the purpose of promoting the centering, inclusion, and integration of Black, Brown, Indigenous, and other People Of Color (BBIPOC) into every **aspect of the Church's life; monitoring the progress of the congregation toward true multiculturalism; and assessing the state of progress of our congregation toward these goals.**



Major Accomplishments/Activities (July 2020 through June 2021):

- ◇ Restorative Justice training with the Board and Ministers
- ◇ Addressing the resolutions of microaggression/macroaggressions that have occurred within the last year and a half
- ◇ Updating our vision and scope of our responsibilities

How JTW's activities integrate with the Church's Goals:

- ◇ Goal 1. Cultivate inspiring worship and programing that includes community outreach, fosters enriching and empowering UU values-based living, and reflects the diversity of our campuses and the larger community.
 - **List of books about diversity and inclusion in children's books.**
 - **We continue to address "What can I do?" in The Window.**
 - The First Words articles have continued to be shared to the congregation from a lens of diversity, inclusion, and multiculturalism.
 - We continued to encourage people to sign up and participate in Beloved Conversations. This year we have had over 100 congregants participate in both the Fall and Spring sessions.
- ◇ Goal 2. Promote opportunities within and beyond the congregation for acts of justice-making and wholeness.
 - We worked to connect and nominate organizations in the larger San Diego community for partnership in the generosity offering.
- ◇ Goal 3. Create opportunities to extend care and create opportunities for meaningful connections.
 - Co-Liaisons have been meeting regularly with the Congregational Assistant for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to address immediate change that can be done from the organizational side of First UU of San Diego. For example organizing the COIC study group, change in membership document to add waiver information, creating FAQs for new members, and brainstorming a new Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression training for Lay Leaders.
- ◇ Goal 4. Provide opportunities to nourish and deepen spirituality to ensure it thrives and grows.
 - JTW collaborated with members of BLUU to create an MLK Service this year which celebrated Black excellence.
- ◇ Goal 5. Provide for and coordinate increased congregational growth
 - Due to the Pandemic, we lost many opportunities to reach out to congregants and provide educational experiences. We hope to make up for this within the year as we are also looking to update our webpage.

Journey Toward Wholeness

Here are some of the voices of JTW reflecting on the past year:

“The work of the JTW Core Team was greatly derailed and stunted due to the focus by the Collective Team on the perceived harm caused by the public disclosure of an assault on a non-binary young adult of colour. After the Annual Meeting in June through December, the environment was unhealthy and unproductive.”

“In response to the attempted apology for the assault that the church sent out to all congregants, a letter was drafted detailing the shortcomings of the apology itself and of the timeliness and efficacy of the church’s response to the assault. Discussions were had about how best to present this letter to the congregation, resulting in a blog post on the church’s website and an e-mail from Reverend Kathleen referencing the blog post.”

“As the Funding Our Future group noted in their capital campaign research, we have seen a decline in membership and donations over the past two years. The causes are no doubt complex but believe that our congregation’s general inability to sustain a nurturing space for Black people, indigenous people, and people of color has contributed to stagnation – not only in simple numbers, but also in the evolution of this community. Our Black members and friends in particular have left our congregation in growing numbers over the past two years. We should move from not only nodding to the words during worship about welcoming all, but showing in our actions – including in our reception of new attendees, in our advocating for fair hiring practices, and in work on implementing a method for addressing harm – that First UU can truly provide a place of belonging for all Black people, indigenous people, and people of color.”

“The past year has been eye-opening in realizing that the FUUSD culture needs to address issues of subtle and systemic microaggressions so that BIPOC members either feel comfortable returning, or feel included, validated & acknowledged. It is important that BIPOC members feel confident in knowing that leadership has set in place a protocol where microaggressions are addressed in a timely manner and repair work has been established. Instead, the focus has needed to be on internal repair work regarding communication and relationship repair between JTW and the Collective Team over harms highlighted at the 2020 annual meeting. My hope is that JTW, the Collective, and the Board, can now move forward in creating concrete practices that define a path of how we care for our members when microaggressions and conflicts occur. Can we grow and learn from each other while making our membership a priority in how we attend to one another when harm occurs? Can we each genuinely examine our own implicit bias and change the focus from ourselves in order to attend to the members who are harmed? My hope is for FUUSD to move from words to action in defining protocols, integrating tools & language that addresses harms in a timely manner, and implements repair practices that moves us all forward together.”

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Journey Toward Wholeness

Anticipated projects for next year :

- ◇ **“Race -The Power of an Illusion”** Three part movie. A study group and discussion will be planned for later in the year.
- ◇ Continuing the study group of the COIC Report and delivery of recommendation of actions to the congregation.
- ◇ Supporting Anti-Oppression/Anti-Racism and other training for Lay leaders in support of the need for Diversity, Inclusion, and Multiculturalism in our congregation.
- ◇ Program for Restorative Justice process to address ongoing harms done in our congregation.
- ◇ Introductory training on understanding different terms and oppressive action.

Lay leadership:

Maggie Marshall (*Left in Feb 2021*)

Jan Garbosky (*Left in Jan 2021*)

Isaac Castro (*Left in Jan 2021*)

Steve Howard (*Left in Mar 2021*)

Kia Bordner

Jennifer Clay

Honor Mosley Bell III (*Left in Nov 2020*)

Issel Tapia Martinez (*Current Co-Liaison*)

Kiona Daelyn (*Left in Apr 2021*)

David Rogers

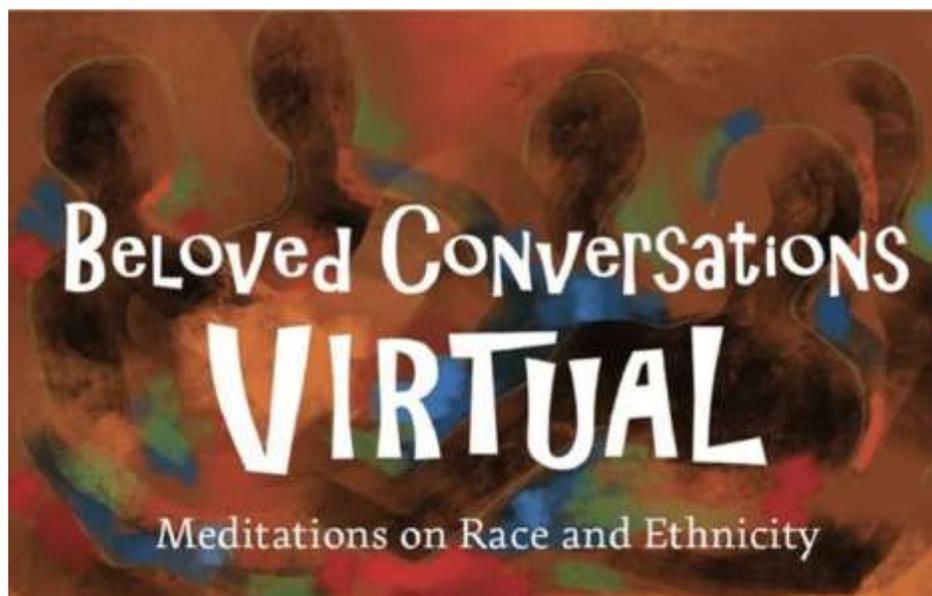
Maggie Frank-Hsu

Alan Hsu

Christina Imhoof

Valerie Jacques (*Current Co-Liaison*)

Andrea Gonzalez



Rev. Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

Church: an Outside-the-Box Experience this Year

It's been an extraordinary church year. One of the biggest accomplishments this year has been to survive this year of pandemic. While there have been approximately a dozen deaths of church members and we have mourned them, to my knowledge, none were due to the pandemic. The pandemic has changed us in many ways – we've spent the last 15 or so months physically separated from others, living with a sense of caution about other people and our physical safety. We haven't met in person for worship since March 2020 and we've found new ways to connect. Through the use of Zoom and broadcasting our worship services online, members who have moved away during this year, to Arizona and Colorado, to name a few places, have been able to still participate in social hour and choirs. Being online, in some ways, has been a gift. And through it all, the congregation has continued to live out its mission in different ways and find ways to be of service, to one another and to the greater San Diego region.



July 2020 was the beginning of this church year and we were still making adjustments to recording and broadcasting services online. Various worship services included lay leaders' involvement and we were still recording from inside the Meeting House. With the rise of COVID cases and hospitalizations, and with the change in technical help, we would move to recordings the services from our homes and broadcasting the recording on Sundays. This allowed more lay leaders to participate and saw us welcoming some guests to our pulpit, including the Rev. Bill Sinkford, Paula Cole Jones, and Rev. Carlton Smith. We hosted a UU-UNO forum with speakers from Boston, had a virtual presentation from the League of Women Voters on the upcoming election, and various vespers services, honoring Día de muertos, Trans Day of Remembrance, Thanksgiving, Blue holiday service, Yule, Christmas Eve and more.

August saw Intern Minister Matthew (Matty) Waterman joining us this year, having a completely virtual internship. Matty participated fully in many areas of congregational life: creating worship, participating in the TransInclusion workshops, leading a Big Questions group, participating in virtual Beloved Conversations, along with 50+ from our congregation, and so much more. Because the congregation's life happened exclusively online this year, his online internship fit.

The fall saw many in the congregation active in the UU the Vote campaign, writing letters and postcards and more to encourage people to vote in the November elections. Concern that the pandemic would decrease participation, First Church joined other UU congregations across this country and helped, along with many other non-profit groups to help turn out the largest participation in an election in our country's history. Your care team, staff and ministers delivered various care and holiday gift bags to many in our congregation living alone, making a connection and reminding folks in the congregation of our care; the Family Ministry team had a Halloween drive-through with staff in costume and the ministers and staff and lay leaders hosted a Holiday drive-through gift bag distribution. The fall also saw the creation of a Re-opening team to begin to contemplate and prepare for re-opening the Hillcrest campus for possible in-person, socially-distanced and masked gatherings. Our South Bay campus continued to serve the larger South Bay community with the Food Pantry, while maintaining safety protocols for food distribution.

In the winter months of 2021, we saw the rollout of vaccines and the Caring Ministry Team organized vaccine navigators to help eligible people make their appointments. We also held a virtual Dining for Dollars which brought in almost \$32,000 to help with the operating budget of the church. Your Board, Journey Towards

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Rev. Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

Wholeness team, Staff and Ministers participated in an eight-week workshop to learn about restorative processes and practices to address harm and repair. We worked with Leonie Smith from The Thoughtful Workplace and later, with Ashley McGuire from the National Conflict Resolution Center in San Diego. Listening circles and other restorative practices will engage the congregation to address and heal from the conflict that arose due to the destructive behavior and removal of a member from membership. There were many eblast communications to the congregation about this and I'm grateful for all of the support First Church received from our UUA Pacific Western Regional staff, especially from the Rev. Sarah Gibb Millspaugh, our Regional contact and from the Rev. Carlton Smith, our Regional Lead. They will continue to offer support as First Church moves through the Interim ministry.

In February, Rev. Tania announced to the congregation that she would be leaving parish ministry at the end of June, fulfilling her contract with the church. Rev. Tania explained that her call to ministry was evolving into something beyond parish ministry. While deeply saddened by this news, the congregation also celebrated with Rev. Tania's ministry.

In early April, after serving First Church for fourteen years, I announced my resignation. This was a most difficult decision and my letter to the congregation found at https://www.firstuusandiego.org/uploads/1/2/7/6/127676152/owens_resignation_letter_04-09-2021.pdf and then sermon on April 11th shared the various reasons <https://www.firstuusandiego.org/messages>. These days, fourteen years of ministry in one congregation is considered a long ministry. The stress and pressure of the pandemic had a large role in my decision. I felt I was no longer able to serve First Church as it needed. With my announcement, the Board began the process of searching for an Interim Lead Minister.

In looking to the future, a Funding Our Future team was created and deep appreciation to Isaac Castro, Craig Darling, Robie Evans, Jan Garbosky, Dave Hunt and Ray Sims, the Associate from Jim Klote Inc. This team, with the Board's approval, created a presentation that focused on the congregation's needs and asked if this was the time for a capital campaign. They hosted over 20 small groups, a few in-person and most online, to engage in conversation about the needs of the Church and the dreams and hopes from members and friends. A report summarizing the work and their findings was presented to the Board in early June. The report offers a lot of information and recommendations for the Board's consideration when thinking about the immediate future of First Church and moving forward in its mission.

This has been a year like no other and it's required a lot of out-of-the-box thinking, planning and doing to ensure the Church continued its work in fulfilling its mission and staying connected during a pandemic. The pandemic has changed our world and the way we interact with one another. The pandemic has changed how we do church and requires that we adapt to a new way of being. It's important to acknowledge that the way we used to do church, in some ways, is coming to an end. In many ways, endings are hard; there can be a feeling of uncertainty and some anxiety of what's coming next. But endings also mean new beginnings; and there's a space between an ending and a new beginning – that in-between space can be a time of deep innovation and creativity. First UU Church of San Diego has a long and rich history, has experienced hard times before and had wonderful new beginnings. It's been a true honor to have been a part of First Church's history and played a part in its story. Thank you for all the love, the worship, the conversations, the heartache and the joy we've shared. Remember that you make a difference and are needed in the San Diego region. You have such opportunities ahead and I will be cheering you on as First Church continues to shine a beacon of inclusive welcome, care and liberal faith that saves lives.

Abundant Blessings to you



Rev. Tania Márquez, Assistant Minister

The current church year started right in the middle of the COVID pandemic and the anti-racist and anti-oppression protests. During the summer of 2020 we had already figured out a rhythm to create online worship but were also aware of the increasing needs in our community for meaningful connections.

Our caring ministry team led the efforts of contacting our members and friends by phone and the group expanded to include other lay callers. Many of them checked in with people regularly. This also allowed us to update our database with the information received from members about new addresses, phones, updates on membership status, etc.

I worked with a small group of lay leaders to plan, create, and deliver Halloween care bags to members of our congregation who either lived alone or for whom the online format of our church activities prevented them from participating. The success of this event moved us to plan a larger event during the holiday season. We prepared 600 holiday bags and advertised a drive-through event at the Hillcrest campus.



Our Wisdom Circles were central to keep members connected and all groups have continued meeting, even during the summer months. Both facilitators and participants expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to continue their connections and discussions through the pandemic.

Our Lay Ministers continued meeting as well. After the phone calls stopped, we moved on to replicate the Sunday listening they were providing by offering the zoom compassion corner after the service. Since it conflicted with social hours and, sometimes, other meetings, the compassion corner moved to Mondays. Beginning in July, the Lay Ministers will also be in charge of the Pastoral Care phone to ease the transition for the new minister and to make sure our community continues to have a resource to go to when in need.

I also offered, for a few months, a drop-in space in English and Spanish called “El Puerto / The Harbor.”

Upon request from South Bay members, I began to offer a South Bay social hour that has been regularly attended by some of our South Bay members. On May 22nd, Kay Phillips, Lynda Gilgun, Pat Schmidt and I hosted a South Bay retreat online. After the retreat, most of the attendees met in person at the Bayside Park in Chula Vista.

At the beginning of the year, and after a long period of discernment, I announced that I would not be renewing my contract with First Church as my call to ministry was shifting and I felt the need to explore it more. I leave with gratitude for all the learning, the growth, and the support received.

Rev. Tania y Manu

Matthew Waterman, Intern Minister



This year, I have been so fortunate to be your Intern Minister while I completed my last year of seminary. I came to First UU San Diego for a variety of reasons – the great **things that I have heard about this community of amazing people, the congregation's** commitment to UU ministry as a whole (including the number of ministers that have come from FUUSD!), and the amazing ministers and staff. During this time, I have been able to learn so much about ministry, myself, and working as part of a congregational system. I have had the blessing of meeting many of you, albeit virtually. I have had the pleasure of being a part of the Worship Team, lead a Big Questions Group, enjoyed the Lay Ministry Team, partaken in the Finance Committee, grown with the Emerging Young Adults and Young Adults, answered the Pastoral Care Line, joined in Beloved Conversations, gone deeper with the Journey Toward Wholeness Collective Team, learned and grown with the Board and staff, supported the Care Team, and delved deeper into a variety of other church activities. I have been able to witness the compassion and love from South Bay and Hillcrest. I was blessed to learn through being a part of Las Posadas. I even got to expand my commitment to social justice through the Social Justice Executive Team (SJET) and compiled a variety of the Social Justice Newsletters.

This has been a year. This has been a year of growth – for me, and for you. We have grown together, learned together, and created community together. We have shared worship in a variety of ways. We have co-created groups and worship and this to me was one of the greatest learning tools that a person could ask for. I have learned how it feels to have shared power and shared leadership. Collectively, we have enriched our UU values through inspired worship and expanded our capacity to reaching others through interpretation and a year of being together, virtually.

During the past year, we rethought the way that we can adjust our thought on culture, moving from a traditional Thanksgiving service to a Thanxgrieving service that allows for the understanding of the honoring of the first peoples of these lands and the oppression that has been placed upon them. I was able to be a part of the Trans Inclusion training to uphold the values of a Welcoming Congregation and assisted with the Trans Day of Remembrance. And, because we understand that we are all connected, we understand that oppression to others is oppression to ourselves.

We also have trained together in a variety of ways. As groups, we learned through Beloved Conversations and the ways that we can start to rethink the ways that we have been encultured. While this is not a stopping point, this is a marker on a journey, a journey that will be never-ending. And, with this in mind, we also explored the implementation of Restorative Justice as a congregation, as a covenantal community. We learned how to come back together and create reparations for harms that we have done to others. We have created the starting of justice for ourselves and each other in so many ways. And through our own journeys of countering oppressions, we have started down a path to adopt the 8th Principle. This, like our faith, is a journey. One that is not a one-and-done, but a journey to nurture the spiritual growth of this community and act on our values to help heal the world. This, my beloveds, is a journey that I am excited to see this congregation continue. I am hopeful that while I step away to make room, I will get to watch this community adopt the 8th Principle and live the values that this brings with it. You, my friends, are the keepers of this light and the ones that will see the work through.

Together, we have grown. We have grown separately and collectively and for this, neither of will ever be the same, and that is an amazing blessing.

I will finish by simply saying “Thank you”. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this family, of this community. Thank you for the blessings and the areas that both made and allowed me to grow. Thank you for your love and compassion and support. Thank you for being you.

May love bless you and may the gifts of this community thrive as you venture into the future. You will forever be a huge part of my heart.

Robie Evans, Director of Operations

1 — *Worship, Celebration and Rites of Passage*

Goal: Cultivate inspiring worship and programming that enrich and empower values-based living.

- ⇒ Participated in Ardor Trio video for the prelude in a September worship service
- ⇒ Recorded a violin part to be combined with a choir piece video for worship service
- ⇒ Participated in the December Music Sunday worship service playing her violin with the choir
- ⇒ Cultivated a backup livestream tech consultant who stepped in to help for the worship service on Jan 17th.
- ⇒ Performed with Ardor Trio for worship on Easter and on **Mother's Day.**
- ⇒ **Performed on violin with Chase on piano for worship "Skye Boat Song."**
- ⇒ Currently working with a team for a Farewell Party for Rev. Tania on Saturday, June 19 from 2pm to 4pm.



2 — *Action and service*

Goal: Promote opportunities within and beyond the congregation for acts of justice-making and wholeness.

- ⇒ Attended and completed Beloved Conversations Fall Virtual 2020 to continue the work started in January but was suspended when pandemic began
- ⇒ Attended AUUA Board Retreat for visioning and goals work, including centering AR/AO/MC Inclusivity work
- ⇒ Facilitated and led AUUA Good Officer Training for six administrators
- ⇒ **Facilitated staff meeting with focus on Staff's Restorative Justice draft document**
- ⇒ Discussed possibilities for winter Interfaith Shelter
- ⇒ **Completed "Inviting All Voices" through The Thoughtful Workplace with Leonie Smith; a four-week leadership course for "Collaborative Leadership for Diverse Teams at Work"**
- ⇒ **Attended "Restorative Justice Process" multi-week workshop with Leonie Smith of The Thoughtful Workplace created for staff, board, and JTW leaders**
- ⇒ Robie, Rose and Ame - Month of February Black History Month Social Media Campaign for both Facebook and Instagram created by Ame Stanko
- ⇒ As President of the AUUA (Association of UU Administrators) are cocreating (with the UUMA) a Caucusing Opportunity through a reach-out to all national Admins and received a response from 55 individuals. We will have approximately eight White Caucus groups and one People of Color Caucus group. Working on training the facilitators now with co-collaboration with ARE (Allies for Racial Equity).
- ⇒ Robie and Ace Parking were approached by the Burn Institute to provide three-hour parking vouchers to their patients who cannot afford the parking fee. They are paying a slightly-reduced rate on a month-to-month basis.
- ⇒ **Updated the church's Inclusive Hiring Process document with information from the workshop I attended on "Inviting All Voices" by Leonie Smith of The Thoughtful Workplace.**
- ⇒ **Attended the "Blame Free Feedback" multi-week workshop with Leonie Smith of The Thoughtful Workplace.**

Robie Evans, Director of Operations

3—Connection and care

Goal: Create opportunities for meaningful connection and extend care to members and friends.

- ⇒ Attended Beloved Conversations Virtual 2020.
- ⇒ **Continued “Join Robie” Zoom Room**
- ⇒ Dropped in to meet our newest members at the last session of Building Sacred Ground with Jenner and Matthew.
- ⇒ **Hosted a D4\$ event, with Ray, via Zoom out of our home “Garnishes with Chef Ray” and it was really fun.**

Other

- Continuing COVID-19 Pandemic Strategies
 - * Virtual 2020 Annual Meeting How-To's / **Learnings** – was a success! 20 panelists participated either on camera or behind the scenes. So grateful for everyone who participated. Also, voting went well and the Ballot Committee did great work (George Klinke, Julie McKane and Rose Van Oss). Now working on 2021 Virtual Annual Meeting to be held on Sunday, June 20.
 - * Reopening Team member and support. This work will be very full with research, trends, safety procedures, on-campus protocols and so on.
 - * Attended periodic SD County COVID response meetings for faith-based organizations
 - * **Helped to create event for Mama's Pies drive-through distribution site** (our turnaround and driveway – safely) with Rainbow Action group in November
 - * Met with Stephanie Webber, Ray Evans and our HVAC vendor, Astro Mechanical, to walk campus and determine the best, most cost-effective way to make our campus healthier through ventilation and filtering processes. Working on HVAC estimate for filters inside and/or outside plus room air sanitizers.
 - * Attended legal seminar regarding mandatory vaccinations and ramifications.
- Development Work
 - * **Continued monthly email update campaigns for pledge “statement” at 6 months and 11 months**
 - * Researched and implemented a text-to-give platform for an easy way to give during our livestream services. Was not popular, so discontinued after a few months.
 - * Onboarded our new intern minister, Matthew!
 - * Co-prepared thank you letters for major gifts received
 - * D4\$ - Implemented new virtual events, and logo gifts for participating, to reach goal of \$30,000. Many thanks to D4\$ Coordinator, Dave Hunt! Ordered four types of logo gifts for D4\$ participants.
 - * Met with Fundraising Team to debrief D4\$ Virtual 2020 and discussed upcoming pledge drive strategies. Worked with Fundraising Team and outside consultant for a possible capital and pledge campaign in the near future.
 - * **Upon Rev. Kathleen's direction, I engaged the AUUA listserve regarding a fundraising consultant;** received references, talked directly with the consultant and I am setting up a meeting with the firm **to meet with the church's core fundraising team.**
 - * Started distribution of D4\$ gifts to donors; very engaging drive-thru events with about 50 cars participating over two sessions.
 - * Support work for the Funding Our Future Team and outside consultant for the Readiness Assessment and possible capital and pledge campaign in the near future. Developed list of capital needs.

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Robie Evans, Director of Operations

- Finance

- * Attend and help facilitate monthly Finance Committee meetings with Treasurer.
- * SBA PPP Loan Forgiveness application process, loan funding and forgiveness application. We are 100% forgiven.
- * Contracted with a CPA firm to determine tax liability for non-business related income over several past years. Completed facilitation of filing tax returns and paying taxes for non-business related income over several past years
- * FY 21-22 Budget process was extremely complicated this year



Playing for worship service!

- HR

- * All staff have completed creation of their Job Tasks and Processes document which outlines their **job duties and “how to’s” in case someone else (their job “buddy”) would need to step in and take over.** Kathleen will review these in August.
- * Discovered, researched and reviewed preparation of new Retirement program Participation Agreement for change made 07-01-2019 for employer benefit decrease from 11% to 10%.
- * Set up online training course for Harassment Prevention Training of all staff. Completed prior to 12/31/2020. The course is one hour for employees and 2 hours for managers. Purchased course through the company that our employment law firm works with.
- * Three staff updates: increased hours for three staff members, transfer of Scheduler duties and addition of program hours and new position for racial justice work
- * Worked on obtaining health care for out-of-town staff
- * Worked on obtaining additional voluntary life insurance for staff and their family at a low cost for employee over what the church provides. Six employees are participating!
- * Re-implemented weekly time sheet submissions for hourly staff
- * Viewed six webinars put on by our employment legal firm on various HR/COVID/Diversity topics
- * Organized Staff Holiday Gathering. We had a lovely entire Staff Holiday Zoom Lunch event with games and frivolity as well as some nurturing!
- * Updated Employee Handbook from Littler employment firm.
- * Viewed webinar from our employment legal firm on COVID vaccinations and the workplace.
- * **Discussed Staff Performance Reviews in time of a Pandemic. Implemented “Work and Goals Check -In during the Pandemic” which were completed by the end of March.**
- * Processed last day of work for Angela Fujii, our Social Justice Coordinator.
- * Updated job descriptions for Director of Operations and Maintenance positions.
- * Facilitated congregation-wide eblast announcing **Rev. Kathleen’s resignation.**
- * Prepared Employment Status Change forms for Lorelei (stepping down as Womens Choir Director) and Tony (promotion to Program Director).
- * Prepared and delivered Granting Letter to Jenner Daelyn for her pregnancy and bonding leaves. Jenner is planning to return to work on October 1, 2021.

Robie Evans, Director of Operations

- Facilities - Hillcrest
 - * Disassembled (Ray Evans) encampment on canyon plateau and filed Letter of Agency with the City of San Diego and **the SD Police Dept with posted "No Trespassing" signs (required)**
 - * Worked through mold remediation and partial reconstruction of womens and mens restrooms near admin building due to water leakage over some time in the inside walls. Affected both showers and interior walls.
 - * Started an application and research process for the addition of electric vehicle parking under a special grant program through the California Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project.
 - * Vandalism occurred on 12/5; repair of plate glass window in Bard Hall
 - * Ray Evans has been babysitting the sewer ejector pump system again and repairs have been made by our vendor on the motor for pump #1. Have obtained bids to replace both pumps.
 - * Ray Evans has investigated and worked with Andy French regarding Meeting House dampers in heating system and Emergency Lighting system failure in Welcome Center. More research is being done.
 - * **Worked with Memorial Garden artist to begin work on the garden's "River of Life" brick pathway.** Work will commence June 2021.
 - * **Robie and Doug Diamond met with UCSD via Zoom to discuss UCSD's street vacation and needed street underground work for switch of utilities.**
 - * Programmed new key cards for the parking lot; Completed Friday, March 19th.
 - * **Met with UCSD to discuss possibility of their Emergency Department's use of our parking lot.** Very complex matter with much discernment. Concern now is with possible underground sewer trenching that church needs to do in the near future.
 - * Obtaining bids for underground sewer trench work.
- South Bay and Food Pantry
 - * We printed 230 newly-published SB Food Pantry Cookbooks (thank you Rose Riedel)! Created by Jan Carpenter-Tucker, Laurie Gerber and Maureen McNair,
 - * Worked with Maureen to create an incident report for the food pantry procedures guide,
 - * Continued work through donations and facilities needs for food pantry,
 - * Met to discuss food pantry communications flow.
 - * **Met with landlord to begin lease negotiations for July 2021.** They've presented the church with very favorable terms if we sign on for the next five years.



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Robie Evans, Director of Operations

- Other
 - * Helped with Livestream Worship service production and logistics
 - * Prepared updated Board of Trustees binder documentation for distribution
 - * Preschool opened on July 6th 2020 with a diminished number of students. They have capacity now for 45 and 23 students are back. Registration for Fall 2021 is at capacity and is great news!
 - * Attended AUUA 2020 ProDays which included AUUA Board Retreat via Zoom one week and then AUUA 2020 ProDays over two days the following week.
 - * Attended 2020 GA, including opening and closing worships
 - * **Attended a webinar facilitated by Mark Bernstein for AUUA Administrators: "Accepting Chaos: A Conversation Among AUUA Members"**
 - * Researched and facilitated linkage to congregation after hearing about the security breach from our database provider.
 - * Preschool asked for a couple of modifications during this time of COVID and their attendance is at just over half: Exec Team decided that we will postpone the 4% increase which is due to start on August 1, 2020 until such time as their enrollment reaches 90% capacity (either COVID @ 46 or Regular @ 63) or August 1, 2021, whichever is sooner.
 - * Completed Transgender Inclusion for Congregations training sessions
 - * Finished PCI Compliance with IT provider for credit card security
 - * Facilitated staff meeting with AR/AO work introducing 8th Principle
 - * Monthly marketing/publications meeting
 - * AUUA Board Retreat agenda-setting meeting
 - * Attended monthly Board Steering meetings
 - * Monthly meetings with Preschool Director
 - * Met with Living the Homestretch Core Team to discuss future programming for our Seniors
 - * Troubleshooting with IT on slowness of my computer; very problematic. Internet slowness turned out to be a failing modem from Cox, who is our Internet Service Provider (ISP). Modem was replaced 1-15-21 and everything seems to be working really well (much faster) now!
 - * Creating Social Media posts for Instagram and Facebook
 - * Completed annual UUA Certification process



Rose Riedel, Office Manager

There are many tasks I am responsible for here at First UU, including the following:

- ◆ **Compilation of the church's various publications**
 - The Weekly Order of Service
 - The Weekly Newsletter, *The Window*
 - The Monthly Magazine, *First Words*
 - The Quarterly Membership Directory
 - The Annual Report
- ◆ Administrative support to our ministry teams and lay leaders
- ◆ Managing supplies on our church campus
- ◆ Sorting and delivering phone bank messages
- ◆ Researching and utilizing publication software systems
- ◆ Assisting in facilities management where needed, and assisting in interacting with vendors
- ◆ Entering donations into our database management system
- ◆ Sending out monthly letters to congregants
- ◆ Creating Award letters and check requests for our Generosity Offering recipients
- ◆ Troubleshooting issues as they arise
- ◆ Scheduling duties in the interim



This year has been quite different for so many of us, and it was certainly a different year for Office Management. For the majority of this year I was telecommuting solely from home. I relied greatly on the rest **of the staff, especially Robie, when it came to managing "in-house" duties** – particularly the printing and mailing of *The Window*. Robie has truly kept the good ship First UU sailing, for all of us.

In the past few months, I have transitioned to working in the office two days per week and telecommuting **from home three days per week. I will say it has become significantly easier to manage the office now that I'm** spending some time in it! It feels good to be on campus, surrounded by familiarity, and yet strange to not have the hustle and bustle of other folks in the office and visitors coming and going.

I think that which I miss the most are our front desk volunteers. For years they have helped keep the office running smoothly and been the friendly voice on the other end of the phone line. Being here without them is surely different and I miss each and every one of them greatly. In this past year some of our volunteers have **moved away and some of our volunteers have passed on, it's difficult to know that I will never see them** sitting behind the desk again, and I am forever grateful for all the time, effort, love and laughter they provided to our office.

This year, for me, like so many others, has been a year of personal growth and reflection. I am so inspired by our community. I am so grateful to the members of our community who work so diligently to make not just our church, but the world, a better place. I have begun seminary at Starr King School for the Ministry this summer and I would like to thank our entire community, but especially Robie and Rev. Kathleen for their support (and gentle nudges of encouragement), and never fear – I will still be your friendly neighborhood Office Manager!

Caring Ministry Team

Purpose of the group:

Provide opportunities to strengthen our church community via mutual care, support and service. Also, to provide practical care information and resources available from First Church and the county.

Reflection on the past year:

The pandemic has challenged every aspect of our individual and collective lives. Our ministry team found ways to continue our mission, and was perhaps busier than ever.

- ◊ We continued to provide loaner medical equipment to members and friends.
- ◊ Lay Ministers met monthly, virtually (led by Gay Hybertsen) for skill building & had their annual retreat in virtual format. Sunday listening went online, with Lay Ministers opening private Zoom rooms after the Sunday service (called compassionate corner) to provide a listening ear. Many Lay Ministers facilitate support groups and were active in telephone outreach activities.
- ◊ Support groups also continued online with Zoom. Most reported increased attendance.

Coping with Chronic Conditions support group had increased **their meetings to weekly for the first 2-3 months** of stay-at-home orders, now meets twice monthly. Facilitated by Chris Smith and Marilyn Hanson.

Living the Homestretch (for older adults) is still ongoing, with monthly meetings covering a variety of topics for discussion. Joan Helland is lay leader, and credits Marv Pulliam, Caroline Clark and Eli Shefter for their ongoing planning of programs.

Memory Matters, a twice monthly meeting for folks with memory issues and their loved ones, continues to meet twice monthly, and is well attended. This group is led by Gay Hybertsen and Kathy Gilbert, who report that the past year they brought in outside speakers on a variety of topics to the meetings, resulting in rich discussions.

Caregiver support group is on hold while we are seeking new facilitators. Grief support education/support group has not met during the church year.



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Caring Ministry Team

Outreach

Starting March of 2020, Connections and Lay Ministers provided regular phone and email outreach to all church members. That wound down in October 2020.

As COVID vaccinations became available January of 2021, we coordinated outreach to all folks eligible for vaccine to offer assistance obtaining appointments and transportation. That outreach was well-received, and many folks benefitted. **We also put together a team willing to help secure vaccine appointments (Navigators).** That assistance was (and continues to be) posted in Window and First UU Website.

- ◇ Practical Care Group. There are approximately 70 church members who continue to be willing to provide rides, meals, errands, etc. for folks in need. Those requests slowed during the stay-at-home period, except for rides to critical medical appointments, and essential needs like food shopping. **All requests have been quickly fulfilled.**
- ◇ **Education and resources.** We continue to be available to assist church folks find resources for variety of needs. Sometimes we direct people to our FaceBook Community Page. Other times we **provide county resources of which we are aware of.** We've helped with housing needs, caregiver needs, end-of-life resources.

How our work and goals reflect church Strategic Plan:

The activities of Caring Ministry Team specifically reflect Goal 3 (Create opportunities to extend care and create opportunities for meaningful connections). Every time a support group meets, a person provides a ride, a Lay Minister lends a compassionate ear, an outreach phone call is made, potential deep, meaningful connections can occur.

Anticipated goals/projects for next year:

There are a few BIPOC lay ministers, we hope to recruit more. When campus reopens for Sunday services, we plan to resume a **twice-monthly resource table set up for outreach.** We'll be seeking one or two people for **set-up and staffing.**

Lay Leaders: John Holl, Peggy Holl, Gay Hybertsen and Chris Smith are current lay leaders of Caring Ministry Team, and continue to meet quarterly.



Larger UU Connections (LUUC) Ministry Team

Purpose: The purpose of the Larger UU Connections Ministry Team is to connect and coordinate First UU Church with the larger UU Community including:

- ◇ Pacific Southwest District (PSWD)
- ◇ Camp de Benneville Pines
- ◇ Pacific Western Region (PWR)
- ◇ Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)
- ◇ UU United Nations Office (UU-UNO)
- ◇ UU Service Committee (UUSC)
- ◇ Partner Churches in Romania and the Philippines

Noteworthy achievements in 2020-2021 (for more detail see individual reports which follow)

- ◇ First Church committed to donate \$5000 to Camp de Benneville Pines from 2021-2022 budget
- ◇ Encouraged and increased the number of Monthly Givers to Camp
- ◇ Raised money and sent scholarships for 46 students for our Partner Church in the Philippines

In January the Sunday morning Generosity Offerings are collected to support outside Unitarian Universalist organizations. **Each Sunday's offering from both services goes toward a different group. In 2021 the organizations supported were :**

- ◇ Camp de Benneville Pines
- ◇ Partner Church Philippines
- ◇ UU Service Committee

All of our activities support the goals of our Strategic Plan:

- ◇ Goal 1: Our activities provide spiritual connection between members of our congregation and the larger UU circle giving a sense of meaning and relevance to UUs as a whole. We provide bold and engaging worship and programs by supporting Camp de Benneville Pines financially, with volunteer **participation and promoting camp events e.g., children's, youth and adult camp opportunities.**
- ◇ Goal 3: We provide awareness of the poverty problems at our Partner Churches in Romania and the Philippines and raise funds to aid their members. We provide scholarship funds for our camps at de Benneville Pines.
- ◇ Goal 4: We support leadership in the district, region and UUA by encouraging volunteer participation in various opportunities to serve. We support the UU Justice Ministry of California and their Social Justice Leadership Development programs. Youths bloom with positive camp experiences.

Future Plans:

- ◇ LUUC will continue to strengthen connections with UUA and its suborganizations.

Denominational Relations

The purpose of the Denominational Relations Team is to solicit, select and orient members to attend Annual UU District Meetings (DA), Annual UU General Assemblies (GA) and UU Regional Meetings (RM). Active members include John Schaibly and Jan Garbosky.

Pacific Southwest District and Camp (PSWD)/de Benneville Pines (dBP) meetings and the General Assemblies were held by ZOOM in 2021 because of the Corona virus social distancing requirements. Ten members served as delegates to the former and we expect a full slate of 12 delegates and several observers will attend the online General Assembly June 23-27.

The most significant outcome of the PSWD/dBP annual meeting was the announcement that the PSWD has voted to dissolve like all other districts of the UUA. They are being replaced by four regional organizations. This means

Larger UU Connections Ministry Team

that what used to be the PSWD, Pacific Central District, Pacific Northern District, and the Mountain Desert District will be consolidated into the Pacific Western Region. This UUA reorganization will reduce UUA costs by avoiding redundancy and staff. A final PSWD vote to dissolve will take place in a special meeting in October 2021.

De Benneville Pines amended its bylaws to disavow any ties to the PSWD and redefined its scope of activity to be the **“Pacific Southwest Service Area”**. **This change is not expected to change any operational aspects of the camp .**

For more information about these events, call John Schaibly at 858-453-5990 or email him at john@schaibly.com.

Friends of Camp de Benneville Pines (FdBP)

Purpose: To support Camp de Benneville Pines (our UU Camp and Conference Center in the San Bernardino Mountains) through fund raising, publicity and hands-on work projects and to provide support for scholarships for All Church Camp and youth camps.

Major Activities and Accomplishments (July 2020 – June 2021)

- ◇ Continued to hold monthly ZOOM meetings and promoted raising of emergency funds sufficient to sustain the Camp in closure, mitigate effects of the **September 2020 El Dorado Fire’s smoke damage and protect against potential mud slides –**
- ◇ (See uucamp.org for updates and pictures in News from the Mountain Top by Camp Director Janet James and registration for attending virtual events)
- ◇ Publicized a generous matching gift of \$350,000 from a member of FUUCSD, designated a January 2020 generosity offering for de Benneville and thanked Rev. Kathleen and Robie for approving a substantial budget increase of annual support for de Benneville Pines, \$5,000, approaching the goal of \$10 per member
- ◇ Volunteered labor onsite (with COVID precautions), filling sandbags, cleaning, office help, grant writing, errands – with enormous support from PJ MacPhee
- ◇ Installed flood/mudslide prevention methods using straw bales, silt fencing, trenching and K rails – ably overseen by Andy French
- ◇ Applauded Pat Gordon as new President of the de Benneville Board of Directors.



How our activities integrate with the Church’s goals:

- ⇒ Goal 1. Support to preserve de Benneville Pines will aid its reopening to resume providing inspiring UU communal activities and youth programming.
- ⇒ Goal 2. Scholarships provide affordability and enlarge attendance.
- ⇒ Goal 3. Friends of de Benneville Pines extend care and meaningful connections within our open circle beyond Camp business.
- ⇒ Goal 4. The natural environment and retreat programs inspire spirituality for our All Church Camp and other **congregations’ activities.**
- ⇒ Goal 5. Youth and Young Adults often credit their de Benneville experiences for their UU identity.

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Larger UU Connections Ministry Team

Projects for next year:

- ◊ Preserve the Camp - Sponsor a new matching fund drive during June - December 2021 to prepare for gradual safe reopening of Camp and pay for fire insurance increased cost.
- ◊ Recruit summer volunteers to clean cabins, rake and prune vegetation
- ◊ **Host "60 Years of Love", the postponed celebration of the Camp's 60th anniversary and Janet James' 26 years as Director at FUUCSD on December 4, 2021**

Lay Leadership: Ardath Schaibly and Mac Downing, *Co-Chairs*



Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)



Many of our usual activities were curtailed or reduced due to COVID. We did, however, benefit from the UUSC resources via online activities.

GOAL 1 Engaging Worship

The CEO, President of UUSC, Rev. Mary Katherine Morn, was invited by Rev. Kathleen, our Lead Minister last year to lead our services. She spoke of the founding of the UUSC with the reaching out to save children from the perils of the Holocaust.

GOAL 2 Opportunities for Justice Making and Wholeness – Immigration Justice

In the area of immigration justice, there is a resource developed by UUSC entitled **The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's (UUSC) Congregational Accompaniment Project for Asylum Seekers is a new initiative** to support communities of faith as they host and support migrants through the process of obtaining legal asylum. It grew out of a collaboration among several organizations, beginning in the spring of 2018, to assist migrants from Central America by recruiting and supporting individuals and families to open their homes as sponsors of asylum seekers. UUSC coordinator, Kathy Smith attended a UUSC Stewardship Council online meeting introducing this program.

Our SOLACE PenPal Program is still operating under an all-volunteer community-based leadership team including 2 members of our church. Occasionally some of our volunteers offer transient housing for asylum seekers on their way to their sponsors, or simple resources needed along their journeys. Our main emphasis is to keep the friendly presence of someone who cares in the Outside world via letters or video calls. Some of us try to communicate in various languages aided by our smart phones in handwritten letters to our friends inside.



One of the ways our program informs our volunteers is to produce a newsletter of resources and announcement with graphic illustrations of campaigns, as well as, informing volunteers about upcoming speaker meetings. One of our popular Zoom Virtual meetings included Christopher, Kai Medeiros, of the American Bar Association's Immigration Justice Project. They have a free hotline consultation number for detainees at the Otay Mesa Detention Center in lieu of the physical presence that all attorneys used to have at OMDC.

The Rights Now Quarterly Newsletter is the way many of us are informed of UUSC's work. It is considered an educational benefit for those who gift \$40 to fund our work as we are not funded by the UUA nor accept government funding. This Spring Edition of the newsletter focused on Hurricane Eta and Iona which devastated Central America. Our partners in Honduras sprang into action. The Quarterly also focused on Action Items, Temporary Protected Status for Hondurans, and The Ending of Child Detentions and stopping Title 42 expulsions of asylum seekers.

The CEO, President of UUSC, Rev. Mary Katherine Morn, was invited by Rev. Kathleen, our Lead Minister last year to lead our services. She spoke of the founding of the UUSC with the reaching out to save children from the perils of the Holocaust.

Lay Leadership: Kathy Smith, *UUSC coordinator*

Larger UU Connections Ministry Team

Partner Church, Romania

Purpose of group: To sustain and nurture the relationship between First Church and our Partner Church, the Unitarian Church in Brassó, Romania.

Two major activities or accomplishments (July 2020 through June 2021)

There were no “Activities” in the usual sense, due to the Pandemic. There were no in-person meetings or Services at either Church, although the Brassó Church later began meeting outside, in distanced groups (see photo), and more recently has had some Services inside, with safety measures. The Clergy and Staff of both places was deeply occupied in learning technologies and finding creative ways to engage and serve their congregants. The Brassó Congregation faced additional challenges due to the number of families affected by COVID-19, who needed help, and in a sad number of cases, final arrangements.



Socially-distanced outside Service at the Brassó Unitarian Church

The best we could do was to maintain e-mail contact, exchange updates on our situations, and offer each other emotional support. In news and email, I did see some parallel trends, where the danger and high cost of cities, coupled with continuing remote work, has led to a migration to small towns and more remote areas, both in the US and in Transylvania, where nearly abandoned villages are suddenly vibrant again. I have shared these communications and reflections with our Partner Church e-list .

How your activities integrate with the Church's Goals:

Goal 3. *Create opportunities to extend care and create opportunities for meaningful connections.*

In a Partner Church relationship, every experience brings an opportunity for a deeper, broader connection. Just discovering that there even IS a Unitarian denomination in other countries opens our mind to a larger **definition of 'UU.'** Learning more about the lives and spiritual practices of our spiritual and historical kin continues deepening that sense of connection, which is further enhanced by conversations and visits

Projects or goals for the next 1 to 3 years:

- ◊ As the world moves toward some kind of normal, we hope to re-ignite this Partnership, with written and video messages between our congregations. Further dreams include a Youth pilgrimage and/or service projects, and perhaps another Church Pilgrimage.

Lay leaders: Dan Ratelle, *Chair.* Resource People: Ken Herman, Liz Jones

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Larger UU Connections Ministry Team

Partner Church, Philippines



Malingin Students 2021

Purpose – The Purpose of our Committee is to coordinate efforts to connect with and support the members of our Partner Church in Malingin on the island of Negros in the Philippines.

Activities or accomplishments:

We continue to expand how we are able to share the lives of our congregations with each other. This year we sent greetings to the Congregation in Malingin on their 40th anniversary. We have followed their progress from severe lockdown due to the Covid 19 pandemic to their being able to meet in person again. And, we have shared about the life of our congregation; our meeting virtually since last Spring, and now the news of our upcoming ministerial transition.

Our major project has been the continued scholarship support of the children in the congregation. We have provided scholarship funds for 43 children and youth. WE have kept the congregation informed about our work through the newsletter, short videos during services and a First Words Article.

How your activities integrate with the Church's Goals:

- *Goal 1. Cultivate inspiring worship and programing that includes community outreach, fosters enriching and empowering UU values-based living, and reflects the diversity of our campuses and the larger community.*

- * Our work helps our congregation expand how we see our community and what it means to be Unitarian Universalist. It helps open our eyes to the diversity of expression within Unitarian Universalism and allows us to envision how we can move forward into the future.

- *Goal 2. Promote opportunities within and beyond the congregation for acts of justice making and wholeness.*

- * We believe that our work in helping provide educational funds for these young people is a form of justice making.

Anticipated projects for next year:

We will continue raising funds to provide scholarships for the children and youth of the UU Congregation of Malingin. In addition we will begin making plans for a congregational visit to Malingin in 2022 (with all things going well) that **will coincide with the ordination of the Congregation's minister, Noe Castaneda.**

Lay Leadership: Liz Jones, Rev. Carolyn Owen-Towle, John Schaibly, Rick Zemlin



Easter Service 2021



New Year's Service 2021

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Larger UU Connections Ministry Team

Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office Envoy (UU@UNO)

The UU@UN Envoy is the local representative of the UU@UN office. UU@UN tries to promote the goals of the 6th principle to build a global community.

I continue to participate as a Board Member of the local San Diego Chapter of the United Nations Association. We met on-line quarterly.

Rev. Kathleen Owens and I co-hosted a virtual discussion via Zoom on a video about the impact of Global Warming. About 10 people joined the Zoom meeting. We were also joined in the discussion by Bruce Knotts, the Director of the UU@UN office. The event was held on Oct. 18, 2020 as part of our UN Sunday observance.

UU@UN Envoy also attempted to support UNICEF's Trick or Treat program. We did not have a Halloween Carnival this year and we did not distribute UNICEF coin collection boxes this year since we were not meeting in person on campus. Through announcements in the Window, I encouraged members and friends to collect their loose change daily during the month of October and to donate their change to UNICEF through putting their change into Coin Star and selecting UNICEF for a donation. I asked people to send their receipts to the church to document their participation. To my knowledge, I don't know if anyone did that. I, myself, did collect change and I sent in a check directly to UNICEF as a donation.

UU@UN continued to sponsor a youth forum on line instead of in person in New York City. The last time our church sent youth to New York City was in 2017. That was also the year we achieved the "blue ribbon congregation" designation from UU@UN. No youth signed up for the seminar on-line for 2020 or 2021. I'm hoping youth will be interested in registering next year. I think the UU@UN will continue to offer a virtual version of the seminar as well as a live seminar in New York City.

The UU@UN continue to hold monthly Zoom meetings with their Envoys. Since they've worked remotely for more than a year, the UU@UN have decided to give up their offices at the UN Faith Center and continue to function as a virtual office to reduce costs.

This year, UN Sunday will be on October 24th, the actual United Nations Day, the day the UN was founded. I'm hoping that we will be meeting at church in person and that I will have an active part of the service, even if it is contributing to the flowers or having a reading. Halloween is also a Sunday and I hope the children and youth will be able to once again host a Halloween carnival.

This October marks my 29th year as Envoy. I have been honored to serve in this capacity but I would like to have the Board appoint a replacement for me by 2022. I think 30 years is long enough to serve in this position.

~ Everardo F. Aguilar, *UU@UN Envoy*

Family Ministry Team

The COVID-19 pandemic created a great deal of uncertainty in how we would meet the needs of families, as well as creating a huge budget crunch at the beginning of fiscal year 2020-2021. The diminishing income streams and the uncertainty about them meant that several different cuts in staff had to be made; these cuts included letting go of the Director of Family and Lifespan Ministry position. This was an extremely difficult decision. As a result, Rev. Kathleen Owens joined the Family Ministry team and has been meeting regularly with Tony Bianca, Program Director and Käthe Larick, Youth Programs Coordinator, as well as meeting with the newly formed Family Advisory Board (FAB). As a former teacher, and with her experience in religious **education, Kathleen's experience, interest and care offered needed support to the staff and some of the parents** involved in FAB. The rich discussions between FMT and FAB, and the intentional inclusion of and integration of racial justice in our programs, stories and worship services have helped many see in our families themselves in worship and program life for the first time. Joining the Family Ministry Team (FMT) also allowed Kathleen to get to know more of the families involved in the congregation and engage in a variety of activities (Halloween treat bag give-away, the Winter Holiday bag give-away, the Scavenger hunt in Balboa Park), to name a few. In a year that had the congregation meeting mostly virtually, the FMT also served a need for connection and relationship.

In many ways, our understanding and practice of Family Ministry has grown over this year despite the pandemic. **Our Parents' Lounge has shifted from meeting once each month to meeting weekly for 90 minutes** each Sunday. Additionally, the virtual format has allowed for participation by parents who might otherwise not be able to participate because of time and/or transportation barriers.

This year has also seen the creation of a Family Advisory Board (FAB). This committee of interested parents meets monthly to help guide the Family Ministry Programs and advise the Family Ministry Program Staff as we co-create our Programming. Members of the FAB include:

- Rosalba Ciampi
- David Rogers
- Mindy Hochgesang
- Vanessa Poole
- Rhiannon Rhys Ryn Roselle
- Kia Bordner
- Maggie Frank-Hsu
- Alan Hsu
- Jamel Hall

It is also worth noting that several members of the FAB have also been nominated to positions on our Church Board, serve on our JTW Core Team and are weekly members of our Worship Planning Team. As is true for **our Children's RE Programming, the objective number of parents involved may have fallen this year, but the** individual parents who are engaged are engaging with an increased commitment of their time and talent across all areas of congregational life! The Family Ministry Team is extremely excited to continue this momentum and continue centering our families, and especially our families of color, within the life of the congregation.

Respectfully,
Rev. Kathleen Owens, *Lead Minister*
Tony Bianca, *Program Director*
Käthe Larick, *Youth Programs Coordinator*

Family Ministry Team

Children's Programs

The Mission of the Children's Ministry Program is to nurture and stimulate our children's spiritual and personal growth, and to teach and model the values that hold us together as Unitarian Universalists. The Family Ministry Staff Team also made it a goal this year to center our families, and especially families of color, in the life of the congregation. **All of the work we have done in the Children's Ministry Programming has been done with this goal in mind and through the lens of our Church's JTW, AR/AO work and goals. Our Children's Programming has changed significantly this year as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.** In consultation with an outside consultant, Aisha Houser, in September of 2020, the Family Ministry Team (Rev. Kathleen Owens, Käthe Larick and Tony Bianca) decided to refocus our programming to center the social-emotional needs of our children and to create virtual spaces for them to be together with each in a way that met whatever needs they had in the moment.



Two, half-hour, group sessions were held each weekend for children in grades 4 and under. Throughout the year, we have, at times, learned magic, read stories, played games, created art, made music and talked about our values and principles. This time together has allowed our children to deepen their relationships with each other, and it should be especially noted that the virtual platforms have allowed our children from both campuses to get to know each other deeply - something that may likely not have happened otherwise.

Additionally, the church offered 1-on-1 time with Program Coordinator, Tony Bianca for any children who wished to have it. Six individual children have taken advantage of this time and have met with Tony for a half-hour each week. These meetings, again, focused on the unique needs and interests of the individual children. Some used the time for homework help, others had private music lessons, and still others used it as a time to simply check in. From these 1-on-1 times, a new program has emerged. Three children have become quite proficient on the Ukulele as a result of their 1-on-1 time and now form the beginning of what we plan to develop into a full, multigenerational Ukulele Program when we return to in-person programming.

In addition to participating in Children's Religious Education Programming, our children have been actively engaged in creating elements for our online worship services. Some of our most creative and innovative elements have involved our children: stop-motion animation, group interviews, surveys created and analyzed by children, and, of course, our virtual retelling of the Christmas story! While the number of children in programs this year has fallen as a result of the pandemic, those children who continued to be involved are significantly more involved in RE Programming and the life of the congregation as a whole. Children who may have been with us for an hour or two each week have, in some cases, been at church activities for as many as 4 days each week.

Finally, we have hosted several off site and drive-through events for our children/families this year, and have **delivered packages to children's homes for seasonal projects.**

As we look to the future, we're excited to return to in-person/multi-platform programming, and we're also eager to continue to reimagine what RE Programming might look like.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tony Bianca
Program Director

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Family Ministry Team

Youth Programs



The mission of the Youth Program of the First UU Church of San Diego is to build community, lovingly embrace diversity and provide opportunities for personal and spiritual growth, leadership, and service. The program continues to encourage our youth to develop and refine their Unitarian Universalist theology, ethics, values, and leadership skills by attending youth group meetings, participating in District, Regional, and National conferences and events, partnering with local community organizations, and helping to create worship services for our congregation.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Youth Program began the year in July 2020 with a change in format and modality for both the Middle school (MUUGs) and Senior High (YRUU) groups. Both groups began meeting via Zoom on Sundays at 11:30 am for YRUU and at 2 pm for MUUGs. The Middle school group changed from their Lodestone curriculum to more online-friendly curricula, utilizing both **The Fifth Dimension and D’oh God Books 1 & 2, based on the Twilight Zone and The Simpsons**, respectively. Elements of the Lodestone curriculum have also been incorporated into the lesson plans, particularly utilizing parts of the Lodestone unit on race and racial justice. To coordinate with the monthly worship themes, many additional sessions were written by the youth program coordinator following the format for each curriculum. The YRUU group quickly expanded to meeting three times a week, adding Wednesday afternoons and Friday evening meetings to enjoy more discussions, play games, watch movies, and deepen community bonds. The Friday evening sessions slowly moved away from movie viewing and **have become “Deeper Dive Discussion” day, with topics chosen from the news and current events**, particularly about racial justice and racial equity. Meeting via Zoom allowed youth to join the group who might not have been able to otherwise, and the YRUU group size more than doubled as a result of increased accessibility.

In October 2020, the First UU youth program joined with religious educators from five other churches in the Pacific Southwest District to create our first ever virtual Coming of Age program. Plans are underway to partner with Summit UU Fellowship to create an online Coming of Age service in August 2021. In March 2021, Community organizer Cielo Garat from the San Diego Organizing Project met with the Wednesday YRUU group to talk about social justice issues that they are passionate about. In May 2021, the Wednesday YRUU group was opened up to youth from Escondido, and San Luis Obispo, who joined members of the 8th Principle Committee, Laura Ball and Michanne Hctor, to participate in the Project Octave Zoom escape room event. We hope to engage in even more social justice focused activities over the summer months.

Without the assistance of dedicated volunteer youth advisors, the past year would have been overwhelming. My heartfelt thanks go out to Kia Bordner, Scott GrantSmith, Eric Isaacson, and Sanjay Pulver who have navigated the weekly group meetings with me, and to Martin Arguelles and Laura Ball who served as substitute advisors when needed. I am also extremely grateful to all the youth and parents who have supported the program this past year.

Respectfully submitted,
Käthe J. Larick,
Youth Programs Coordinator

Social Justice Ministry Team

Social Justice Ministry Team – Acting on Our Values to Help Heal the World

Our purpose is to create justice and compassion in our community through spiritually-grounded action.

The Social Justice Ministry Team is led by an executive team (SJET). Current members of the team include Megan Horton, Erik Kaestner, Steve Gelb, Laurie Gerber and Rev. Kathleen Owens. Former members this year also included: Andy Nguyen and staff member Angela Fujii. SJET meets twice a month and oversees the larger aspects of Social Justice work in the congregation and members of SJET support lay leaders of Action Groups. The Action Groups within the Social Justice Ministry Team include: Clean Elections, Climate Justice, Organizing for Justice, Rainbow Action, Reproductive Justice, Sanctuary, SOLACE (Souls Offering Loving and Compassionate Ears), and UPTOWN Faith Community Service Center. Action Group reports follow the report from SJET.

Given the pandemic, this year saw all events, activities and discussions happening online. This year also allowed for desired revisions in how we work together and the guidelines for our Generosity Offerings. The executive team also had the following goals for their work this year:

- To work with the Journey Towards Wholeness team in a more collaborative way;
- To be more proactive than reactive;
- Create clearer communication within the executive team, ministry team and the ministry team with the congregation, and
- To engage in strategic decision-making.

One of the bigger projects this year was drafting a new Generosity Offering Policy. The previous practice included having 10 new local non-profits receiving our generosity offering, one organization per month. While this practice helped introduce organizations to the congregation, relationship building was limited given the monthly turnover. The executive team wanted a change that allowed for fewer organizations and deeper relationship building. The team also wanted to prioritize non-profits that were Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC)-serving and ideally BIPOC-led organizations. This change meant we also needed to understand what an accountable relationship would mean and how it would be practiced. In addition to providing financial support, we wanted there to be volunteer opportunities and ways to build and create a real partnership with the organizations. The executive team reached out to our Journey Towards Wholeness team for ideas, input on the revised policy and ideas and outreach to possible community partners. This is the revised policy and understanding of accountable relationships document are:

Generosity Offering Policy Change (9/5/20)

Drafted by the Social Justice Executive Committee (SJET):

Erik Kaestner, Megan Horton, Steve Gelb, Laurie Gerber, Andy Nguyen, Kathleen Owens, Angela Fujii

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for selecting organizations to receive First UU's monthly Generosity Offerings (GO). The following policy is a set of guidelines, not rules. The Social Justice Executive Team and the Ministers have authority to override this policy.

Protocol Change Rationale and Goals:

1. We are committed to dismantling white supremacy culture.
2. We need to rethink our relationships with generosity offering recipients to establish deeper, long-term involvement and reciprocity. The UUA Commission on Institutional Change (COIC) report urges us to avoid charitable, unidirectional relationships as these can be patronizing. The COIC also recommends to **“privilege those most affected in our justice work, which should follow the voices of those most at risk”** (p. 71).

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3. COIC also recommends that we ground choices of organizations in knowledge of the local history of income and racial inequality in areas we wish to serve.
4. **Our current protocol is democratic, but only a small percentage of congregants participate, and they're asked to make decisions based on little information in a short amount of time. By having the SJET do the "homework" it allows the broader congregation to have confidence in the GO recipients**
5. Criteria for selecting organizations for offerings are not clear beyond being in alignment with our 7 principles. We need to develop specific new criteria to meet the goal of centering the voices and interests of those who have been excluded and/or marginalized up until now.

New Protocol:

1. Three to four local, non-UU organizations (501c3 status required) will be selected to partner with each year. Part of the selection consideration process includes: which organizations should the church be in relationship with? What organizations does the Cluster have relationships with? Consultation with JTW.
2. The focus on a smaller number of recipients is to create more meaningful and accountable relationships with GO recipients. Congregants will be encouraged to have hands-on experiences to serve and learn with partner organizations. SJET and the Social Justice Action Groups will assist in determining ways to partner with each organization.
3. To be eligible a GO recipient organization must be: a BIPOC-serving and ideally a BIPOC-led organization; and either a local organization, or local branch of a national organization that serves the San Diego county community.
4. There will no longer be a limit to how many times an organization can be nominated. Each year, the recipients and our engagement with them will be evaluated to determine how to best manage these ongoing relationships.
5. Exceptions to the guidelines are that internal First UU groups or UU-affiliated organizations will be eligible for receiving generosity offerings on one-off Sundays (such as 5th Sundays).
6. Nomination Process: The first year will be open for nominations from the congregation and through consultation with JTW, Youth Ministry, and Social Justice Action Teams. After the first year, there will be an annual review meeting in which SJET would review the partnerships and invite new nominations if there are slots open.
7. Selection Process: SJET, along with Social Justice Action Teams, JTW, Youth Ministry, Ministerial **Committee, will "do the homework" and determine recommendations for a top tier of nominations. This top tier will be voted on at an open fall Social Justice meeting, where there will be a discussion and vote on the final recipients.**

After the first year - the above groups will act like the Nominating Committee - they will put forth recommendations on GO recipients to the congregation, who will then vote on it (2/3 majority required to pass).

What Are Accountable Relationships with BIPOC-Led/BIPOC-Serving Groups? Updated 11/23/2020

How might accountable relationships with Black, Indigenous and other People of Color (BIPOC) organizations work? Because mostly white congregations such as First UU are still working to dismantle White Supremacy Culture, we must be alert to the danger of reproducing the patronizing relationships that the COIC report warns against. Here are some ways we can create and maintain accountable relationships:

- Begin by asking organizations how we can support their work and accept any limits they may wish to place around white people's involvement in their work.
- Maintain "beginner's mind" as we seek to learn about the organization and its work.
- Focus on building relationships between one or more of our social justice leaders and a leader(s) of the organization. Remember that it takes time to deepen relationships.

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- **Proceed deliberately and patiently, without pushing to “get things done.”**
- Arrive at mutual commitments that spell out what each partner will be responsible for in the relationship. Put these in writing, if only in an email confirming understanding of what was agreed upon in a meeting, requesting any corrections of possible misunderstandings.
- Review the commitments and how they are being met at regular intervals.
- Communicate frequently in both formal and informal modalities

Because the new Generosity Offering policy didn't begin until February, our monthly offering recipients included the Unitarian Universalist Disaster Fund, the Kumeyaay Land Conservancy, Coalition for Reproductive Justice, and January's offerings were designated by the Larger UU Connections ministry team.

The new Generosity Offering policy started in February and the organization I Love to Glean received the offerings for the months of February and March. This organization was chosen after the SJET team heard a presentation and was in conversation with Maureen McNair who organizes and oversees the Food Pantry, located at our South Bay campus.

Church member Kathy Smith nominated Project New Village (PNV) as one of the Generosity Offering organizations. **SJET had the honor and pleasure of meeting with PNV's Executive Director N. Dian Moss and a relationship began. PNV received the offering for the month's of April and May.**

The executive team is reaching out to other BIPOC-serving and/or BIPOC-led organizations that have been nominated and realize that as relationships deepen, the organizations may receive other months in the same year as we continue to grow in service and partnership.

Another project of SJET was to have clearer communication within the executive team, the ministry team and the team with the congregation. SJET began using Slack as communication tool. This app allows for quick **conversations and sharing information. SJET member Erik led the effort of creating a SJET FAQ for church's website and to distribute to other groups. The team received helpful advice from Jenner Daelyn, the Church's Connections/Membership Coordinator.**

SJET collaborated with the Larger UU Connections ministry team in creating a process that would help First UU Church of San Diego learn about and vote on various Statements of Conscious (SOCs) approved at UU General Assemblies to empower Ministers and Lay Leaders to speak out on public issues on behalf of the congregation. Many thanks to Laurie Gerber, Kathleen McLeod, Kathy Smith, John Schaibly and Rev. Kathleen Owens for the work on this process. SJET looks forward to engaging the congregation in education of up-coming SOC's.

Other areas of focus for SJET included:

- Supporting UU the Vote
- Supporting the efforts of the Eighth Principle team
- **Reading the Commission on Institutional Change's report, Widening the Circle and thinking how its recommendations might be implemented within the Social Justice Ministry Team.**

At the annual meeting in June 2021, SJET will have a rotation of two leaders; we deeply thank Megan Horton and Erik Kaestner for their years of service on this team. They have made a lasting impact; we wish them well and hope to see them in future leadership roles in the larger congregation.

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Social Justice Ministry Team

Action Groups:

South Bay Food Pantry

Purpose: Provide individuals and families with nutritious food, free diapers, and other miscellaneous similar things to help improve their lives while acting on our aspiration that service is our prayer.

Reflection on the Last Year

The City of Chula Vista honored the pantry with a public service award during this first full year of operations. Here is what some of our amazing volunteers accomplished during the Covid-19 pandemic.



The South Bay Food Pantry continues to squat in the three suites that comprise the Chula Vista campus which has been closed to other uses during the pandemic. A team of over 50 volunteers have distributed over 300,000 pounds of free food and over 20,000 free diapers.

We are listed with 211, San Diego County Emergency Services. We belong to both regional food banks – Feeding San Diego and the San Diego Food Bank – as well as the Regional Diaper Bank. We also partner with a start-up food bank located in Chula Vista, I Love 2 Glean. In addition, we source food from a variety of other sources which Maureen McNair developed since the pantry’s inception.

In addition, we have provided food to the Deer Park Monastery and hosted program volunteers from Rady Children’s Hospital reading program and UCSD covid-19 vaccine trials.



We operate four main programs:

Saturdays

We hold a walk through food distribution for between 125 - 190 households. We regularly provide food for meals for over 500 people each week. We give away meat, poultry, artisan bread, food from Starbucks, shelf stable groceries, sundry refrigerated foods, and a wide variety of fresh produce.

Volunteers deliver meals to four households that are not able to pick up food at our Chula Vista location.

Sundays

We give away diapers for babies one hour each Sunday.

We give food to between 80 - 120 people experiencing homelessness who live on the streets downtown San Diego.

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Social Justice Ministry Team

Anticipated Projects for Next Year

- ⇒ Continue food and diaper distribution programs.
- ⇒ Before the South Bay campus reopens for worship services and programs, the food pantry needs to **rent a new location within a stone's throw of our current campus.**
- ⇒ **The pantry's entire operating budget is made up of donations. The poverty in this part of Chula Vista existed well before the pandemic and is likely to continue after it. The key to the pantry's continued existence is receiving operating funds from inside and outside the church.**
- ⇒ Since volunteers have distributed over 20,000 diapers in only one hour a week, we want to expand the days and hours the diaper distribution is open so the diapers are accessible to more people who need them.

List of Lay Leadership

Our food pantry attracts a diverse group of volunteers who are members and friends of FUUSD and has brought in new friends who are members of the wider community.

- * Maureen McNair, *Founder*
- * Bella Furth, *Food and Diaper Client Record System Creation and Upkeep; Home Food Delivery Coordinator*
- * Andrea Travers, *Food Inventory Record Creation and Upkeep*
- * Dan Ratelle, *Calendarizing Grocery Bagging Teams*
- * Everardo Aguilar & Megan Horton, *Bilingual Phone Message Center*

Food Program Volunteers

- * Laura Ball
- * Jared Blackwell
- * Amelia Bringas
- * Leo Casas
- * Kay Chandler
- * Karen Clay
- * Kate Collier
- * Mike Collier
- * Doug and Alice Diamond
- * James and Sarah Ferguson
- * Newt Ferris
- * Andrew and Liza Ferrier
- * Nancy Fisk
- * Bella Furth
- * Steve Gelb
- * Laurie Gerber
- * Lizzie Grant
- * Jennifer Green
- * Dan Heiserman and Kay Phillips
- * Bruce Higgins
- * John and Peggy Holl
- * Steve Howard
- * Valerie Jaques
- * Paula Johnson
- * Scott and Liz Jones
- * Anna Kelley



Social Justice Ministry Team

- * Heidi Kraus
- * Jeff Kline and Nina Douglass
- * Armin and Rhea Kuhlman
- * Kathe Larick
- * Deirdre Lonegrin
- * Elias Malouf
- * Deirdre McDonald
- * Andrea, Cali, Gene N-L
- * Jude Outwater
- * Katrina Peterson and Juliana Humphrey David Phillips
- * Vanessa Pool and family
- * Dan Ratelle
- * Lety and Manny Reyes and family
- * Darcy Rhodes and family
- * Rhiannon Smith
- * Ame Stanko and Anne Wolf
- * Arvid Straube
- * Lauren and Dana Tomlinson



Diaper Distribution Teams

- *Rosalba Ciampi and Fiamma Straneo
- *Mindy and Sebastian Hochesang
- *John and Peggy Holl
- *Armin and Rhea Kuhlman
- *Jude and Maren Outwater
- *Temperature Recording and Potted Plant Care
- *Lynda Gilgun
- *Fiance Team
- *James and Sarah Ferguson
- *John and Peggy Holl
- *Jeff Kline and Nina Douglas
- *Maureen McNair
- *Armin and Rhea Kuhlman
- *Vanessa Pool



Additional volunteers are being trained during the last 6 weeks of this fiscal year.

In faith,
Maureen McNair



Social Justice Ministry Team

Rainbow Action Group

Rainbow Action Group (RAG) is a coalition of members and friends of First UU who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other sexual minorities and their family and allies. RAG seeks to be as inclusive and encompassing of the wide spectrum for sexual identities and gender expression as possible.

The mission of the Rainbow Action Group is:

- ◇ To provide a specific, visual and candid welcome to all those who come to First UU, especially LGBTQs, their families, friends and allies.
- ◇ To continue to sharpen the inclusive posture for First UU within all its programs, committees and affiliated organizations so that LGBTQs and their allies will continue to be safe and comfortable as contributing members of our church community.
- ◇ To provide outreach to the community at large beyond First UU campus and events, by means of leadership, spokespersons and presence in the name of First UU.



Reflection on 2020 and 2021

- ◇ Continued monthly Coffee Klatch socials in person and then on-line every month of 2020-2021 fiscal year
- ◇ September-October 2020---Hosted 4th Transgender Inclusion in Congregation Discussion Workshop
- ◇ November 2020---**Participated in Mama's Kitchen Annual Pie Sale Fundraiser by selling Thanksgiving pies** and hosting the only Hillcrest Pie drive-through distribution site at the Hillcrest First UU campus.
- ◇ November 2020---Helped produce and present Transgender Day of Remembrance Vespers at First UU
- ◇ December 2020---Successfully completed Welcoming Congregation Recertification
- ◇ May-June 2021---Hosted 4th Transgender Inclusion in Congregation Discussion Workshop.

Anticipated projects for next year

- ◇ 2021 Pride Service
- ◇ **Continued support of Mama's Kitchen through pie distribution**
- ◇ Continued support of AIDS Walk
- ◇ Participation in Light up the Cathedral
- ◇ Pride Rally, Parade and Service
- ◇ Trans Day of Remembrance Vespers
- ◇ Trans Inclusion in Congregations Discussion Workshops
- ◇ Contributing to Our Whole Lives trainings
- ◇ Staffing a patio table when possible
- ◇ Monthly brunch



Lay Leaders: Pat Gordon, Co-Chair, retiring; Louise Titlow, Co-Chair; John Keasler, Co-Chair

Social Justice Ministry Team

Palestine-Israel Justice

The Palestine/Israel Social Justice Team strives to educate and mobilize First UU members to work for the human rights of all people in Palestine/Israel. We strive to create opportunities for informed, respectful dialogue about ongoing injustice and seek to promote a just peace that upholds the human rights of both Palestinians and Israelis.

Two Major activities or accomplishments (July 2020 through June 2021)

1. The team held three virtual book discussions for church members. These included two personal, historical accounts of Palestinian dispossession: *The Lemon Tree* by Sandy Tolan, and *Blood Brothers* by Father Elias Chacour, and a historical novel, *Mornings in Jenin* by Susan Abulhawa.
2. It also held two educational events around the May 15 observation of the expulsion of Palestinians from their homes in 1948, known as the *Nakba*. The first was a presentation entitled “**Why Remember the Nakba**” by political scientist **Dr. Farid Abdel-Nour** and a related book discussion of *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, by Ilan Pappé.

How Our Activities Integrate with Church Goals

The P/I Social Justice team fosters deeper understanding and appreciation of Muslims and Arabs, two groups that have faced substantial discrimination since the events of 9/11. Given the restricted and biased nature of media reporting on the conflict in Palestine/Israel, promoting historical accuracy and dialogue around Palestinian as well as, in the US, far better known Israeli perspectives, supports diversity and the larger community. By keeping congregants abreast of issues and legislation affecting Palestine/Israel and by its engagement with elected representatives at the local and national level provides opportunities for acts of justice making and wholeness.

Anticipated Projects for Next Year

The team will be active in mobilizing support for the “McCollum Bill” which aims to protect Palestinian children from abuse in Israeli military prisons. We will meet with elected representatives and work to mobilized church members and others to speak out in favor of this bill and any others that seek justice in the Middle East.

When the church reopens for in person events we will resume sales of Palestinian olive oil and za’atar.

We will continue to hold film screenings and book discussions on the Palestine/Israel conflict.

Lay leaders: Cathy Pfister and Steve Gelb (*co-chairs*), Beth Chopp, Kathy Hughart, Kathleen McCloud, Kathy Radinovsky

Social Justice Ministry Team

Climate Justice

Purpose: The Climate Justice Team's purpose is to create a spiritually grounded, informed and action-oriented community that provides hope for all beings through systemic action that stops climate change and heals our planet.

Two major activities or accomplishments (July 2020 through June 2021)

1. Held monthly meetings through Zoom to grow our membership and increase our visibility in the church and the wider community. Discussions included ways to help elect candidates who would take action to reduce climate change, impact of the military on fossil fuel use and climate change, reduction in use of plastics (letter writing campaign), restoring Mission Bay wetlands, **ways to restrict idling, benefits of active transportation, San Diego's gas and electric franchise agreement.** We put monthly environmental tips in the Window and Social Justice News
2. Collaborated with SDOP in a candidate forum, and with San Diego 350, Climate Action Plan, the Climate Reality Project, the Sierra Club, I Love a Clean San Diego and Veterans for Peace on various actions and talks. Joined SD Building Electrification Coalition. Co-sponsored a film on Native Americans and Environmental Justice, along with two other churches in the San Diego Cluster, shown by the UU Ministry for the Earth. We provided Spanish translation for all, through the services of Everardo Aguilar.

How our activities integrate with the Church's Goals:

Goal 1. Provide bold and engaging programs to meet the needs of a diverse, intergenerational and multicultural community that focuses on the interconnected web of life.

Our work is grounded in the ethics of caring for all beings, including the earth.

Goal 2. Challenge systemic environmental oppression to transform San Diego into a region that is more just, equitable and compassionate.

We support and educate ourselves in the ability to identify areas of systemic oppression of neighborhood environments here in San Diego, primarily South San Diego, and beyond.

Anticipated projects for next year

These planned programs were canceled due to Covid-19 social distancing recommendations, and we **hope to present them through Zoom if it's not feasible in person.**

1. **"Drawdown Solutions: Can We Stop Climate Change?"**
2. **"Weather and the Changing Climate of Southern California"** by Matt Moreland, director of the San Diego office of the National Weather Service.
3. Fast Fashion and Its Impact on the Planet
4. Industrial Agriculture, Plant Based Diets, and their Impact on the Planet

We plan to continue to work with other organizations on climate change, support the work of UU the Vote and support candidates for office who believe that the climate emergency is real and who will take leadership on this issue. We will continue to be both educational and action oriented.

Lay Leaders: Rhea Kuhlman and Armin Kuhlman, Co-Leaders

Worship and Program Ministry Team

In some ways, it's hard to believe that we've been offering worship online for 15 months. Over this time your worship and music staff have grown in understanding, use of technology and more. We are deeply thankful to Anna Liza Smith and Ame Stanko who were our first tech experts and guided us through the early months of online worship. At that time, we were recording in the Meeting House, with rehearsals on Saturdays and then broadcasting on Sundays. Tony Bianca and Angela Fujii shared the captioning responsibilities. We eventually began recording on Saturdays, still in the Meeting House and streaming the recording live on Sundays. As the COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations number rose, it became important for the health and safety of the worship team to record the service from our individual homes. In January we welcomed Joe Cantrell as a new technology person, specializing in audio, and he began recording the worship team on Saturdays. Tony Bianca also became our Sunday live-stream person.



It's good to note that in the midst of this pandemic year and technology challenges and learnings, we've never missed a Sunday service. And we've had some wonderful services including:

Streaming the General Assembly service

PRIDE service highlighting Lay leaders

We celebrated our Youth in the Bridging

We honored Indigenous People's Day with a meaningful worship service

The Earth Centered Spirituality Circle offered two rich worship services this year, one in October, honoring the ancestors and one in May, acknowledging Beltane.

Because we've been online, we were able to collaborate and have two San Diego Cluster services

Intern Minister Matthew Waterman with lay leaders led our first Thanksgiving service to acknowledge the trauma of white colonialists against Indigenous Americans.

Rev. Katheen and many people from our LGBTQ+ community offered a TransDay of Remembrance service.

It was such a pleasure to have our December Music service, "Songs of Comfort" as well as our online version of our Christmas Eve service. This service allowed for children's participation in the telling of the traditional Christian Christmas story.

We had an important service in January celebrating Martin Luther King service from many Lay Leaders.

Rev. Bill Sinkford, from the Unitarian Church in Portland, OR preached in March.

We celebrated Easter online in worship for the second time. Pictures of congregants with flowers was once again a highlight of the service.

We welcomed Paula Cole Jones in May who preached an important message on the 8th Principle.

Our worship team meetings were made available to the congregation to come and share, listen and offer ideas as the worship team created various services. In our services we enjoyed and learned together through the Time for All Ages, with stories centering families and children of color, more diverse music and important rituals.

Worship and Program Ministry Team

Music Ministry

Tony Bianca, *Handbell Programs Director, Chalice Choir Director, Children's Choir Director*

Lorelei Garner, *South Bay Singers Director*

Andrea N-L, *JUUL Tones Director*

Chase Pado, *Pianist / Organist*



Children's Choir

The Children's Choir has not met this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. We have, however, offered a weekly Movement and Music program on Zoom each Saturday Morning at 9:00 AM. Children gather in Zoom with Program Director, Tony Bianca, for 30 minutes of singing, dancing and playing simple, home-made instruments. **We plan to resume Children's Choir Rehearsals when it is once again safe to meet in person.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

Tony Bianca, *Program Director*

Chalice Choir

As the Pandemic resulted in the cancellation of indoor gatherings, the Chalice Choir began meeting for an hour each Wednesday on Zoom for socialization. After a several months and the loss of our Choir Director, Lara Korneychuk, it became clear that in-person gatherings would be impossible for quite some time, and several choir members expressed an intense in continuing to make music virtually.

Program Director, Tony Bianca, volunteered to lead Chalice Choir rehearsals on Zoom for the summer months **and, at the end of summer, Tony's hours were expanded to allow for him to continue directing the choir.** It is understood that, eventually, as our campuses reopen and the ability to hold in-person rehearsals returns, the church will revisit the needs of the music program and likely hire another music/choir director, but Tony will continue directing the choir until such time when the church is in the position to do so.

The choir continues to meet for virtual rehearsals each Wednesday from 7:00 - 8:00 PM and has produced roughly 3 video/virtual choral pieces per month. It is also worth noting that several choir members have been able to continue to perform with the Chalice Choir despite having moved out of state.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Tony Bianca, *Program Director*

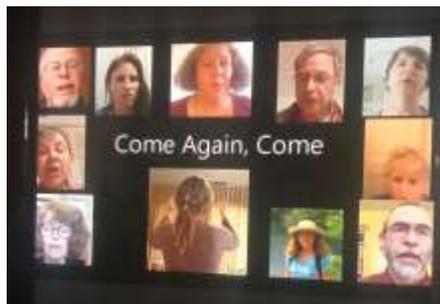
JUUL Tones

The JUUL Tones have continued meeting together on a weekly basis via Zoom and creating digital music recordings for worship services. Andrea, the JUUL Tones director, coordinates with First UU worship staff, researches and makes music selections for the group, seeks copyright permissions, creates and uploads practice tracks, uploads sheet music, collects recordings, troubleshoots technical difficulties, and has continued to develop her video and audio editing skills as she crafts the music videos from the digital recordings. She also collaborates with other music and worship staff to

provide additional vocal and instrumental music for Sunday services, including solo, duet, and ensemble pieces.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea N.L.



Worship and Program Ministry Team

Women's Choir and South Bay Singers

This year has been quite a challenging year for choirs and their conductors. Maneuvering through the pandemic and doing what we could to maintain some form of normalcy highlighted a resilience in our community that helped hold us together.

Although our numbers dwindled a bit, the Women's Choir and the South Bay Singers dug their heels into the ground despite tech challenges and having to adapt to a new way of doing things. Through the year we have continued to rehearse online via Zoom and created wonderful music videos for our church services. It was quite a feat and I am proud of their perseverance and willingness to try new things.

Concerning the worship team, I am continually astounded, in awe, and in appreciation when I take time to think about how innovative, creative, and proactive everyone has been and continues to be during this time of online- everything. Chase, Tony, Andrea (the music team) have been such a great pleasure to work with. We are very lucky at First Church to have such a talented music staff putting together music for Sunday's services and I am proud to be working with them. We have put together many music videos, which in itself entails so many steps and tasks such as creating sing-along tracks, editing video, teaching the choir how to use the software and applications, recording and mixing everyone's parts together, etc. I know I definitely have learned a lot thanks to the support of the music team and worship team.

Blessings,
Lorelei

Handbells Programs

During the COVID-19 closures, the Handbell Ensembles have not met in-person. Instead, the Director, Tony Bianca, distributed our Chimes to any members of either ensemble who had an interest in continuing to make music virtually. We have performed 2 pieces over the course of the year that have been used in services.

In March of 2021, the program mourned the death of Katie Jaques, a long-term member of both Handbell Ensembles. Katie will be deeply missed. This year has also seen the Handbell Program grow by two members despite the Pandemic. Two people who are new to the area reached out to inquire about our handbell program and have played with the group in our virtual performances.

As the reopening committee releases guidelines for the return to small group, in-person gatherings, the **Handbell Ensembles look forward to resuming rehearsals. We'll begin with one weekly, outdoor rehearsal** until it is deemed safe to return to indoor gatherings.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Tony Bianca, *Program Director*



Worship and Program Ministry Team

UU Men's Fellowship (UUMF)

Purpose of the Group

Our mission is to support men in the quest for lives of compassion, integrity, responsibility, and balance. We are a caring, intentionally diverse brotherhood, committed to social justice, and offering opportunities for intimate sharing, personal growth, and spiritual deepening. The fellowship encourages men in their development as sons, fathers, and brothers.

UUMF is an active and vital organization of men in our church, both members and friends, who participate in our many activities and who are committed and **aspire to do men's work**. New men and all men friends and members of the church are always welcome. A Steering Committee is the organizing body of the group.

Activities:

To a large extent the number and type of activities the group could hold was severely limited by the restriction imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite these restrictions the group was still able to meet on Zoom. Here is a list of what we have done over the past year.



UUMF Renewal Planning Committee

- Fourth Monday Potluck and Discussions: A topic pertinent to men was discussed each month with about 15 men attending on Zoom.
- UUMF currently sponsors thirteen Support Groups of five to eight men each that meet twice a month on Zoom.
- Several Meetings were held on Zoom to organize two Renewal Weekends: one in the fall and one in the spring.
- Because of the Covid-19 pandemic the Spring 2021 Renewal Weekend, which was to be held at DeBennville Pines was replaced by a Zoom Meeting (2 days, 3 sessions, 5 and a half hours) to discuss the topic Finding Courage. More than 50 men participated. The Fall 2020 Renewal Weekend, originally scheduled at Camp Stevens, was replaced by a zoom meeting, drew more than 40 men. That Renewal had the topic: Who Am I, Who Are We
- Our mailing list of approximately 150 men and UU Churches within the Cluster and the old PSWD serves as the primary communication link to the fellowship.

Integration with Outcome Statements: The mission and purpose integrate well with the many of the stated outcomes of First UU. Specifically:

- The UUMF provides programs that appeal to our hearts, minds, and values of our members,
- We are an intentionally diverse, multicultural, and welcoming community where gifts can be discovered, nurtured, and shared.
- We create a space that fosters growth in spirit, person, knowledge, and skills in a safe environment,
- We are generous with our resources, time, and talents both to our church and to others in need; and finally,
- We cherish compassionate relationships that enable us to care for and support each other in times of joy and sorrow.

Worship and Program Ministry Team

Support of Strategic Plan

In place of collecting fees for our Renewals, the UUMF requested the men to make a donation to deBenneville Pines. Andy French has contributed significant time and labor to work at deBenneville. Members of the UUMF often help with needed minor repairs and improvements at First Church. We have offered substantial support at other activities described above. The UUMF receives no funds from First UU, but does receive support through the administrative staff and the use of church facilities without cost.

Goals for the next 1 to 3 years

Encourage younger men, 21-40, to join and participate in the UUMF. Outreach to other UU men in the San Diego cluster and encourage them to participate in UUMF activities. Continue development of an annual **men’s issues forum funded by bequests from former UUMF members. As part of our outreach program and to attract younger members** Les Vivian and John Keasler have worked with the young adult group at church and increased our exposure on Facebook.

Lay leadership: Co-conveners for the Fellowship are Kim Cohn and Andy French. The steering committee includes Denny Braun, Kim Cohn, Mike Dorfi, Ron Evans, Andy French, John Holl, John Keasler, Armin Kuhlman, Jason Leichter, **Derek Staats, St Jerry Olinger, Les Vivian, and Peter Woodbury. The Mens’ Support Groups are organized by Armin Kuhlman.** The patio table is maintained by John Stende and Mike Dorfi, the 4th Monday meetings are supported by Andy French. Andy French oversees organizing our support for Social Hour at both Sunday services.



UUMF Spring Renewal 2020 on Zoom

Worship and Program Ministry Team

Archives Committee

The Purpose of the Church Archives is to preserve the history of our Church Community here in San Diego, and make the material available for members and researchers now and in the future.

Activities or accomplishments:

During the early part of this year the archives was closed. Once access to the archives room was available, the two major projects were:

- ◊ The continuation of the transfer of church records from three ring binders into archival storage boxes. Not only does this provide safer long term storage for our materials, it allows us to visually inspect our files to identify missing material. Work is being done to locate copies of the few missing documents noted.
- ◊ Research support was provided to both church staff and outside researchers. In particular a listing has been started of all Social Justice stands that the church has taken over the years so there is an accessible record.

How your activities integrate with the Church's Goals:

Goal 1. *Cultivate inspiring worship and programing that includes community outreach, fosters enriching and empowering UU values-based living, and reflects the diversity of our campuses and the larger community.*

Within this goal, the Archives team works to assist individuals and institutions in the larger community providing both good will and spreading a better understanding of who we are as a Faith Tradition. We also maintain the record of this institution and its groups to ensure that the history of the life of this congregation is maintained.

Goal 2. *Promote opportunities within and beyond the congregation for acts of justicemaking and wholeness.*

The work we have done this year to begin a listing of the stands this congregation has taken over time in the area of Social Justice will allow both staff and members to speak with confidence about the issues in which we believe.

Anticipated projects for next year:

It is our plan to continue the work of transferring our materials into archival storage boxes, and to create a database of what we have that will allow items to be located more readily. We are looking for new members to join us in our work.



Committee Membership

Liz Jones, *Chair*; Betty Boone, *Past Chair*

Worship and Program Ministry Team

Living the Homestretch

Living the Homestretch is a program designed for older adults to encourage living the senior years of our lives to the fullest. Each month we gathered at 10:00 am on the third Saturday through Zoom to learn about a topic of interest and to share relevant experiences. Lively discussions in Breakout Groups contributed to a sense of community among attendees.

We covered a range of topics from practical everyday needs to spiritual and emotional support for living our lives to the fullest. Topics from April 2020 through March 2021 included Healthy Resilience during Covid-19, Activities to do While Staying Home, October Traditions related to the Day of the Dead and Earth Centered Spirituality, 8th Principle, How to be a Friend to Someone with Dementia, February Report from the Re-Opening Committee, and Technologies for Seniors.

During the past year, Living the Homestretch programs were planned by:

Marv Pulliam, Caroline Clark, Eli Shefter, Matthew Waterman and Joan Helland who served as chairperson.

In addition to planning programs, we provided publicity for each program with announcements in the Window, South Bay Newsletter, Order-of-Service and emails to attendees. We also have a page **on the Church's website that archives material related to recent programs.**



Worship and Program Ministry Team

Earth Centered Spirituality Circle

The purpose of the Earth Centered Spirituality Circle (ECSC) is to create Pagan community, nurture Pagan spiritual growth, and act on our Pagan values to help heal the world. In doing this we provide a safe space in which individuals, families, and groups can explore and deepen their spiritual growth within Pagan and Earth-Centered traditions.

This past year (7/20 - 6/21), we continued to offer all Sabbats (holy days) of the Pagan Year: Litha (summer solstice), Lammas (first harvest), Mabon (autumn equinox), Samhain (final harvest), Yule (winter solstice), Imbolc (first planting), Ostara (spring equinox), and Beltane (May day) and weekly Pagan Conversations via Zoom. The Leadership Circle of ECSC also created two church services: 1) on 10/25/20, Many Paths to the Ancestors, 2) 5/2/21, Creating Ourselves.

Our members were eager for new information, so we created an online book club that ran from February 2nd through April 14th, 2021. A second book was chosen and the new book club began in June.

In March we added new members to our Leadership Circle: Fernando Martinez, Issel Martinez, and Kira Cooper.

In the coming year, while we look forward to in-person opportunities, we are also researching ways to provide a hybrid model to serve the wider circle that might not be physically able to join us on campus.

Lay leadership:

Fernando Martinez

Issel Martinez

Jenner Daelyn

Kiona Daelyn

Kira Cooper

Nancy Jo Mackey

Rhiannon Rudisill Roselle



Worship and Program Ministry Team

Looking Glass Theatre

Purpose of Group:

Looking Glass Theatre (LGT) builds community, fosters spiritual growth, and promotes UU values by producing and performing plays and musicals. It is intergenerational in nature and invites the community to both be involved in our productions as participants as well as audience.



Major Activities:

Looking Glass Theatre supports the San Diego Performing Arts League (SDPAL) with an annual donation from donations we receive from our patrons. SDPAL operates ArtsTix, the only not-for-profit ticket vendor in the San Diego region, and hosts the Star Awards - SDPAL's tribute to theatre volunteers.

Zooming In: A Compilation of Short Plays for the Virtual Stage

This was Looking Glass Theatre's first all virtual performance. We are so grateful to the wonderful performers and crew who helped us create while learning; and created such a fun and successful production. This production was created with the idea of keeping theatre alive through the pandemic and was free to view.



Worship and Program Ministry Team

Our activities integrated with the church's goals by:

Goal 1. Being open to anyone who wants to participate.

Goal 3. Fostering an intergenerational community.

Goal 5. Reaching out to the greater San Diego community by having our productions and auditions open to all.

Anticipated Projects for Next Year:

When the Church reopening team determines that we can safely resume in person activities we hope to provide live theatre productions to our community.

Lay Leaders:

Chair – Elsie Sleeter

Past Chair – Gay Hybertsen

Treasurer: Rose Riedel

Publicity: Jordan Fraser



Worship and Program Ministry Team

Meditation Groups

Purpose: The mission of the Meditation Sangha Group is to provide members and friends of the Church a space for meditation and discussion of Buddhist oriented tissues and to coordinate and publicize other Buddhist groups meeting at the Church.

This year has been a year of Zoom encounters. There have not been any pre-service meditations or on-sight sangha meetings. Currently, we host [Open Heart Sangha](#) on Sunday afternoons a meditation Sangha led by John Holl on Wednesday morning. The former is quite active while the latter is faltering as there has been no easy portal to attract new attendees.



Integration with the Church's Goals:

- ◇ Goal 1. Reestablish a meditation prior to the Sunday morning service at the Hillcrest campus and host the meditation groups that had been meeting prior to the Covid 19 pandemic shutdown.
- ◇ Goal 2. Open all meetings to all people regardless of race, sexual orientation or gender.
- ◇ Goal 3. Advertise meetings in the Window, the Sunday announcements and in local Buddhist publication to raise awareness of programs.
- ◇ Goal 4. Increase the leadership responsibilities and recruit more individuals in leadership roles.

Anticipated projects for next year:

As of the time of this writing, it only speculation to know when or if the on-campus meditation/sanghas will return and in what format. Until that time, we will continue our meditation utilizing Zoom.

Lay Leadership:

John Holl (Wednesday and Sunday) 619-546-6525

Diana Grove (Wednesday) .. 608-347-3596

Marge Wurgel (Open Heart) 619-263-2165

Open Heart Sangha

Purpose: The Open Heart Sangha is a weekly Zen Buddhist Meditation group that meets together to **support each other's practice of mindfulness, meditation, loving kindness, and engagement in creating a more loving and joyful world.** The practice is based on the teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh.

During 2020 and 2021 the sangha met weekly, including on holidays, and shared walking meditation, sitting meditation, singing, Dharma lessons, and deep sharing among members. Since the church closed its doors due to COVID, the sangha met virtually every week on Zoom.

Sangha members also had the opportunity to participate in single day and multiday retreats with other sanghas in the county, the country and internationally.

(continued on next page)

Worship and Program Ministry Team

Integration with the Church's Goals:

- ◇ While the Open Heart Sangha practices meditation in the Plum Village Buddhist Tradition, it is open to all people and does not ask people to be Buddhist. It honors the various spiritual paths of people and includes non-Unitarian Universalists in its gatherings. Some people have become involved with the church as a result of being introduced to it through the sangha.
- ◇ We teach meditation techniques and mindfulness that encourage spiritual deepening and care of the world.
- ◇ Social justice, diversity, equity, inclusion and community activism are deeply embedded in the sangha, and participants are encouraged to act on their values in the broader world.
- ◇ We honor the earth and promote practices to care for this precious planet.
- ◇ We work to promote close relationships, loving connections and deep bonds.

Lay Leadership:

Leadership is shared among many facilitators and members of a Care Taking Council, and some of those leaders are:

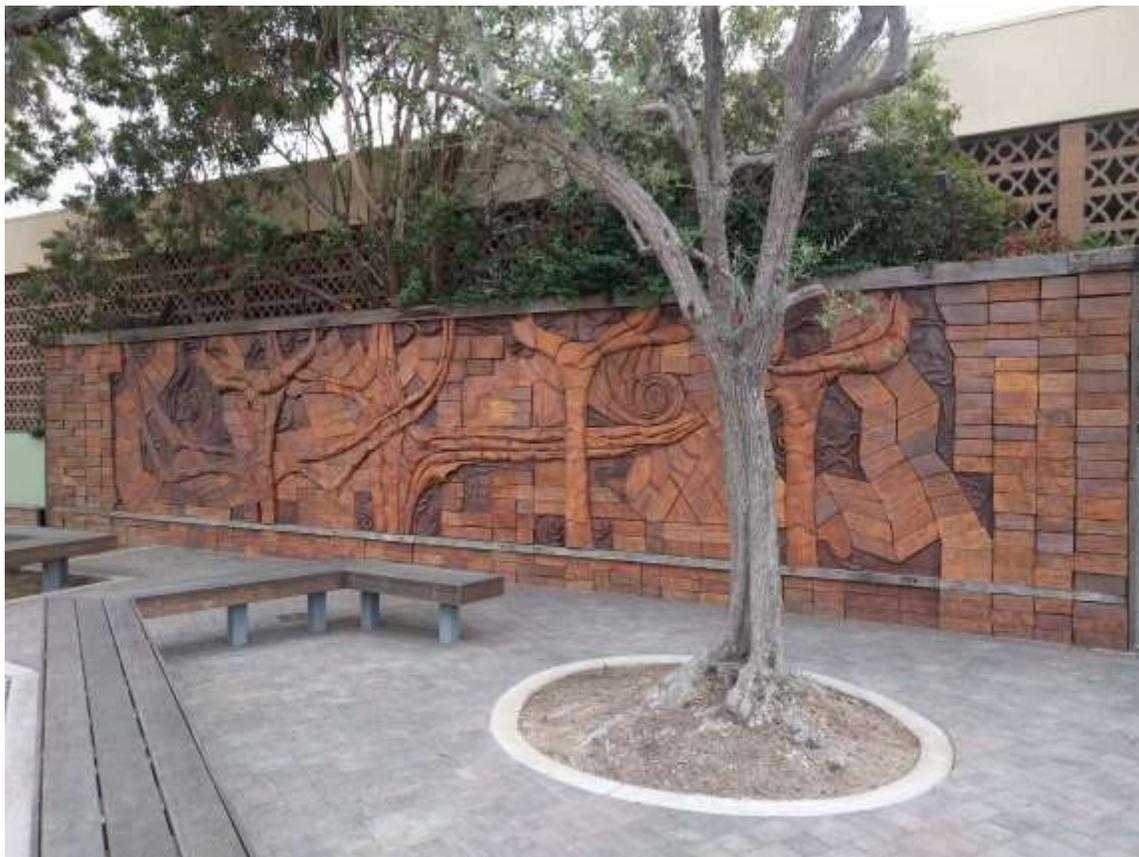
Marge Wurgel
Keith Mesecher
Loretta Solsbery
Rick Zemlin



Worship and Program Ministry Team

Memorial Wall/Memorial Garden

The purpose of this committee is to act as liaison between the artist, the church staff, and the church member who wishes to purchase a brick as a memorial for a deceased member, and to keep current and accurate records of such.



Bricks may be purchased by current church members, for future use by themselves, or for members of their immediate families. The artist installs bricks once each year shortly before Easter. This year two new bricks were added.

The projects and goals for the foreseeable future are:

1. Continued placing of bricks for members who have previously purchased them, on the Memorial Wall.
2. Make available and sell bricks for the six new Memorial Garden Walls.
3. Creation of a new spreadsheet for the Memorial Garden Walls.
4. Add to and maintain the waiting list for the six Memorial Garden Walls.
5. Obtain executors names and contact information for members who have purchased bricks but have not yet died.
6. Installation of bricks for members long passed. For the past several years Betty Boone has provided invaluable assistance in procuring information accomplishing this goal. Her time and effort is greatly appreciated.

Contact: Elaine Durson
619-518-4383
eballerinad@gmail.com

Worship and Program Ministry Team

UU Christian Study Group

Purpose of Group:

We are a multigenerational adult religious study group within our congregation that focuses on Jesus, Christianity, and all religious traditions from the perspective of the ever-changing Unitarian Universalist perspective of the 21st Century. Till Covid-19 shut us down, we met in the flesh three to four times a month. Since then, we have stayed in touch via e-mail, phone calls, Facebook and our congregation's Sunday Morning live-stream worship services.

Reflection on the Past Year:

In Traditional Christianity, the weeks before Easter called Lent, are a period of discipline, introspection, and reflection. This year has been the long Lent of 2020, a full year and it isn't over yet. A time when we have been cut off from the world and each other and can focus on our inner journey. We are ready to return from exile and once again share the joy of fellowship.

Looking Ahead:

A just and compassionate life and world is the very core of a Unitarian Universalist spirituality. The UUCSG provides thoughtful and challenging workshops and discussions to support individuals and the whole community in traveling this path with Jesus, Buddha, Moses, Jung and/or the Goddess. In this coming year, we plan to meet on the second and third Sunday each month. The focus of the second Sunday will be an academic approach to the history of religion and its place in our lives and in the world. The next Sunday will focus on the inner work of our spiritual journey with workshops on prayer, mediation, and worship.

Lay Leadership

Hosted by Curran Jeffery



Worship and Program Ministry Team

Cosmos

Purpose of Group:

Cosmos explores the intersection of Science, Cosmology and Spirituality. We look to learn from the story of the universe, coming from our best science, how we might live in a mutually enhancing, harmonious relationship with the whole earth community and thereby participate, as best we can, in the evolution of the universe.

Reflection on the Past Year:

We have been watching Brian Swimme's series Cantic to the Cosmos, discussing it, and enjoying meditations to deepen our appreciation of this astounding universe we are a part of. We meet on Zoom from 1:00-3:00 pm on the first Sunday of every month.

Lay Leadership

Keith Mesecher, James Long and Bruce McGraw

Book Lovers Affinity Group

The Book Lovers Affinity Group remains on hiatus from church until the Hillcrest campus reopens for indoor meetings. The members who belonged to this Affinity Group will then decide when everyone feels comfortable meeting in person again inside on the Hillcrest campus.

