DINING FOR DOLLARS RETURNS – WITH A NEW LOOK!!

By Robbie Evans, Director of Operations and D4S Team

The 16th annual Dining for Dollars (D4S) returns! What’s this you asks? You host an event and others bid on your event in a “**NEW THIS YEAR**” ONLINE auction (more on that later). Your event can be a dinner, museum tour, park party, craft workshop, an outing or tour, game night, young adult gathering, donations service, creative workshop, poetry reading, or vacation getaway—or anything else you’d like to host. The best part of Dining for Dollars is the community-building you’ll experience—there’s nothing quite like it!

The bidding starts on May 18th with events scheduled for any time from the beginning of June 2019, until the end of May 2020. Over the past 10 years we’ve had over 1,000 events offered and raised close to $500,000 in winning bids for the church’s budget—our most important annual fundraising activity!

A number of people have enjoyed hosting their events so much they sign up every year to host again. D4S activities are a fun way to meet new people and strengthen community. Memories are made and stories are told for years to come.

This is the time to begin planning what you’d like to offer to host. You can also get together with others to co-host an event. Look for information about Dining for Dollars on the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego’s website. Throughout the year, the D4S team will be sending out announcements with details about the online bidding process.

You’re in charge of all the details, but we’ll help guide you through the process with detailed instructions and a “How To” video. Your event will then be printed in our colorful bidding booklet.

A Victorian Christmas was held at the home of Dan Heiserman and Kay Phillips last December. It was a wonderful event filled with friends, family and fun.

Click here to go to the church website to get an event submission form and more ideas for possible events. You can also email Robbie Evans at RobbieEvans@firstuusandiego.org.
Reflection
By Les GrantSmith, Board President

I’m occasionally asked, “So, so, how are you finding being Board President?” I usually reply, “Interesting!” This tends to get a chuckle, as most of us know the old curse, “May you live in interesting times!” But I—mostly—mean this as a straight-forward description. We’re all of us at First UU now faced with events which are often stressful, but also exciting and interesting, with a lot of potential for growth.

My family and I joined the church because we found a place where we could be our quirky selves in a safe, yet challenging, community. That sense of safety didn’t arrive accidentally. It had been deliberately cultivated, these efforts rooted in our first principle of affirming the inherent worth and dignity of every person. When I transitioned in the early 2000s, finally living outwardly as the man I knew myself to be inwardly, it was the decades this congregation had spent working to become an LGBTQ+ affirming space that made it a haven for my family. Without this foundation having been intentionally and lovingly laid, there’s is no telling how we would have been received by the congregation. Many congregations in our denomination have not done the years of work First UU did, and most UU transfolk do not feel completely safe and included in their community.

And still, our effort to make our community a place where we can bring our complete, authentic selves onto our campuses is on-going. We have some exciting opportunities before us. Our Journey Toward Wholeness Team is bringing us Beloved Conversations: Meditations on Race and Ethnicity this spring. This curriculum explores the role of race/ethnicity in individual and congregational lives, and will be another tool in laying the foundation that will allow People of Color in our congregation to feel as affirmed as I do. These are, indeed, interesting times, and as I have faith in you, I know we can meet their challenges.

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'A Deeper Blooming' Women’s Retreat

Come and be renewed! Join Rev. Kathleen and Rev. Tania for a weekend of community building, renewal, and deep reflection. We will gather together at the beginning of the Spring in beautiful Camp Stevens. Our retreat begins on Friday at 4 pm and ends on Sunday at 11 am. To register, visit our church's website or register every Sunday between services in Hillcrest or after service in South Bay. We hope to see you there!
On Microaggressions: Developing a Common Understanding

By Jan Garbosky

Last summer, at a Town Hall meeting, more than 100 of us learned of the pain and suffering many People of Color (POC) in our congregation have experienced at First UU, their faith community, through words and actions of us non-POC. It was uncomfortable and distressing and hard to listen to. But I believed them then and I continue to believe those POC who have chosen to stay at First UU despite continued pain and suffering.

The Board has revitalized First UU’s 50 year anti-racism program, Journey Toward Wholeness (JTW), in response to the Town Hall meeting and the platform for reform presented there. Honored to be nominated for JTW approved by the Board, I (along with Steve Howard) oversee educating our congregation on language and culture while others on the team work on policies, finance, worship and music, and building and developing relationships.

To gain an understanding of how we non-POC have negatively impacted the experience of our friends and sisters of color that led to the “Town Hall meeting, a series “On Microaggressions” has appeared in our newsletter, The Window. Microaggressions are what we heard about at the Town Hall meeting. It’s important that all of us non-POC STOP hurting our friends of color in our faith community and in the greater San Diego community.

Allow yourself to be uncomfortable. Allow yourself to learn what microaggressions are. Allow yourself to reflect on what you might have said or done that hurt, discounted, or disrespected a POC in your life. If you missed seeing them (six so far) or wished you could see them again, here they are:

1. Microaggressions are brief verbal and/or behavioral actions whether intentional or unintentional that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults that people of color (POC) endure every day—but usually aren’t noticed by white people (non-POC) who commit them. First UU POC report microaggressions happen often on campus causing pain and feelings of disrespect and attack. Microaggression of the Week: “I don’t see color.” Message: Race has no meaning. Racism doesn’t exist.

2. Non-people of color (white people) often don’t understand the pain experienced by people of color (POC) as a result of microaggressions. Gain insight from this short video (NOTE: Strong language at 100 seconds)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hD43baA7450


So, like, what are you?

4. Microaggression of the Week: You’re so articulate (to a person of color who shared a reflection during service.) Message: It’s unusual for someone of your race to be well-spoken, speak English so well. INSTEAD: Comment on the power of the speaker’s words, the importance or impact of the ideas presented, or the picture their words painted in your mind.

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Achieving Balance

By Tony Bianca, Interim RE Coordinator

“Scales,” so to speak, and merely attempt to redistribute the weight in a way that feels better. But sometimes just shifting the weight distribution isn’t enough. I’ve noticed recently that I’ve become better at taking things off the scale altogether. In the past, I often felt guilty about having to cut something out of my life or been afraid to do so because of some deep sense that, if I did so, I’d “miss out” on something. As I settle into middle-age, however, I’ve gotten better at saying no to things that I don’t think will add significant value to my life or, conversely, will take time away from other things that I value more. “No” is a complete sentence and I’ve grown better at using that sentence with age.

Finally, as I think about how my life is more in balance, I also feel a sense of gratitude for the ways in which that balance was achieved in ways far beyond my control. In many ways, the balance of my life has a lot to do with what’s not on my scales. I have enjoyed privileges others have not. I have, in some ways, lived a charmed life and my scales haven’t had to counter the weight of hardships and obstacles others struggle to endure. As I do the work necessary to find balance in my life, it’s important for me to do so with a sense of gratitude for the weights that I don’t have to carry and, as much as possible, to try to live in a way that helps others balance the weights they did not choose for themselves.
Ending My Two-Step Dance: A Reflection

By Jan Carpenter-Tucker

I’ve done anti-racism work at First UU for 30 years. I enjoy my fluid self-identity as a Black woman and Black-white cultural bridge builder. I marched for open housing in the now integrated community of Oak Park, Illinois, when I was 11 years old. I remember excited discussions with childhood friends as we wistfully wished we could go to Washington and raise our voices with Dr. King’s in protest of conditions for Black people, and in hope of a more promising future.

“Sankofa” is a term from the Twi language of the Akan tribe in Ghana, Africa. It means it is not taboo to fetch what is at risk of being left behind, or put simply, go back and get it. Its symbol is a bird that flies with its feet forward, while its head turns backward, carrying a pebble or seed of knowledge in its beak.

My personal acts of Sankofa have to do with dancing! I am swearing off a particular two-step dance of avoidance of the truth. Like Rosa Parks who refused to give up her seat on the front of the bus, I, simply too tired to fake the funk anymore, let me explain. There hangs in the air the stench of unacknowledged, uncomfortable, and ugly truths about the lived experience of people of color in these United States.

When we open our hearts and mouths to tell these experiences, too often we’re told by white folks that we’re being unkind, indiscreet, or rude to discuss such things. I’ve been asked or told, “Why does everything come down to race?” or “Well, it’s not that way anymore, right?” or “I don’t have a racist bone in my body!” or “I love all people, whether green, purple or polka dotted. I just don’t see color.”

Hold it right there! I won’t do this dance again.

Before you step on my toes one more time, I’m here to tell you, “Stop! You’re hurting me. I’m telling my truth, not to hurt you personally, but to ask you to open your eyes to this nugget of knowledge I’m in great need of sharing. I’m fetching what’s at risk of being left behind and asking you to examine it along with me to see what we can do differently, to make our lives together less painful, more fulfilled, mutually caring, fully appreciated.

Earlier this week I sat in on a health assessment with my mother. The interviewer asked about her parents’ health, how long they lived, what they died from, and so forth. My mother started into that two-step dance around the ugly truth and I decided it was time to tell it like it is. My grandfather died of racism, I exclaimed. He was a Black man in the South, and when he fell ill he was turned away from the white hospital.

When they found a facility that would take him, it was woefully inadequate, understaffed, and unclean. My grandmother found old chicken bones in the drawer by his bed and had to clean them out herself.

My grandfather was Harvard educated with a doctorate, a well-respected professor of biology at a prestigious historically Black college, and had been a Quaker minister and headmaster of a school in Jamaica. Not that any of those facts should give him special privilege. Yet when it came to life and death for a Black man in the South in Louisiana, his life did not matter.

Here is what I ask of you. The next time someone tells you an ugly truth, listen respectfully, believe them. Black lives matter. Declare to do the two-step dance of avoidance and ignorance. Black lives matter. Go back and get it. Get the truth, examine it, understand it. Black lives matter. Do your part to change this system of things. Do your part to remember the past so we can correct our direction as we march on into a brighter future. Someone’s life depends on it.

By Christina Imhoof, Nominating Committee

Have you ever wondered who is in leadership positions at your church, or how to be considered for serving in a lay leadership position? One way to find out is to open our website, www.firstuuandsd.org, go to the drop-down menu under the heading “About/Contact,” and open the “Governance” tab. Click on “Board of Trustees” and any of the other tabs to learn how our congregation is governed.

The Nominating Committee is elected by First UU members at the Annual Meeting every June. Our job is to invite and identify a slate of candidates for the 9 Trustee positions on the Board, which carry three-year staggered terms, so that each year, we have three Trustee positions to fill.

Anyone who’s been a member for 12 months can serve on the Board. The more diverse the candidates are, the more democratic and issue-centered its agenda can be—young and old, People of Color and non-People of Color, disabled and abled, queer and straight—you name it, we’re always looking for people who want to help and make a difference. Our goal is to integrate the lens of total inclusivity into all our work, as we envision a community centered on a highly diverse culture, aware of and skilled in setting aside our individual biases—conscious and unconscious—as we search for our future leaders.

A candidate for the Board of Trustees or the Nominating Committee may also be nominated by a petition provided to the Nominating Committee and signed by 25 Voting Members. The petition must be filed with the Nominating Committee at least 30 days before the Annual Membership Meeting, in order for the candidate to qualify for the election.

The Nominating Committee usually starts its work in January of each year, publicizing to our Church members that they can find out more about what the Board of Trustees does, and how they can apply to be a Trustee. If you wish to know more, or if you have any questions about the role of the Board and its Trustees, or if you wish to apply for the job, please email us at nomcom@firstuuandsd@gmail.com.

Once you express interest in serving on the Board, we send you a Trustee Job Description, Qualification Requirements, and Candidate’s Information Statement which is your opportunity to tell us why you’d be a good person for the job. The Committee will also consider candidates who are nominated by petition filed with the Nominating Committee at least 30 days before the Annual Meeting. Once we receive all the Candidates’ Statements, we’ll meet with the Board and Lead Minister and determine the final candidates to be put up for nomination. If we’re unable to consider your candidacy in one year, you can express interest in being considered the following year(s). We look forward to hearing from you!

Top left to bottom right: Christina Imhoof (Chair), Kay Chandler, Alpa Patel, Isaac Castro, Kendric Hornsby, Sophia Lopez-Zimmer
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Achieving Balance

By Tony Bianca, Interim RE Coordinator

Balance can be a tricky thing to achieve. Often, when I think about balance in my life in general, I think about the many different things I want and need to include over the course of the week and, then, attempt to do so in a way that feels healthy, equitable, and, well, balanced. Thinking about balance in this way is, essentially, a matter of time management. How many hours do I need to work in order to make a living? What household and family responsibilities do I have? How much time do I need to dedicate to taking care of myself physically, emotionally, and spiritually? Am I taking enough time to just relax and do things I enjoy?

Another way I often think about balance, however, is the slightly different way of thinking in terms of how they impact the quality of my life. Every life will, I think, require a certain amount of necessary drudgery: dirty dishes, laundry, and dusting. But I don’t think anyone would argue that we’d want to strive for our lives’ scales to be evenly balanced without an equal amount of drudgery and fun. On the contrary, I think the goal here (at least my goal) is to try to tip the scales as much as possible to one side. How can I get the majority of what I do in life over to the “fun” side? Have I chosen a career that feels enjoyable rather than feeling like “work”? Can I find a way to eat well and exercise that doesn’t feel like I’m constantly denying myself things that I enjoy? Is there a way to make dusting fun?

I also find it important to examine the way I go about trying to achieve balance. Often, we can get caught up looking at what’s already on our ‘scales,’ so to speak, and merely attempt to redistribute the weight in a way that feels better. But sometimes just shifting the weight distribution isn’t enough. I’ve noticed recently that I’ve become better at taking things off the scale altogether. In the past, I often felt guilty about having to cut something out of my life or been afraid to do so because of some deep sense that, if I did so, I’d ‘miss out’ on something. As I settle into middle-age, however, I’ve gotten better at saying no to things that I don’t think will add significant value to my life or, conversely, will take time away from other things that I value more. “No” is a complete sentence and I’ve grown better at using that sentence with age.

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Reflection

By Les GrantSmith, Board President

I’m occasionally asked, “So, so, how are you finding being Board President?” I usually reply, “Interesting!” This tends to get a chuckle, as most of us know the old curse, “May you live in interesting times!” But I—mostly—mean this as a straight-forward description. We’re all of us at First UU now faced with events which are often stressful, but also exciting and interesting, with a lot of potential for growth.

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First UU Women's Retreat
March 22 - 24, 2019

Come and be renewed! Join Rev. Kathleen and Rev. Tania for a weekend of community building, renewal, and deep reflection. We will gather together at the beginning of the Spring in beautiful Camp Stevens. Our retreat begins on Friday at 4 pm and ends on Sunday at 11 am. To register, visit our church's website or register every Sunday between services in Hillcrest or after service in South Bay. We hope to see you there!
The 15th annual Dining for Dollars (D4$) returns! What’s this you ask? You host an event and others bid on your event in a "**NEW THIS YEAR**" ONLINE auction (more on that later). Your event can be a dinner, museum tour, party, craft workshop, an outing or tour, game night, young adult gathering, donated service, creativity workshop, poetry reading, or vacation getaway—or anything else you’d like to host. The best part of Dining for Dollars is the community-building you’ll experience—there’s nothing quite like it!

The bidding starts on May 18th with events scheduled for any time from the beginning of June 2019, until the end of May 2020. Over the past 10 years we’ve had over 1,000 events offered and raised close to $500,000 in winning bids for the church’s budget—our most important annual fundraising activity!

A number of people have enjoyed hosting their events so much they sign up every year to host again. D4$ activities are a fun way to meet new people and strengthen community. Memories are made and stories are told for years to come.

This is the time to begin planning what you’d like to offer to host. You can also get together with others to co-host an event. Look for information about Dining for Dollars on the church website or email info@firstuusandiego.org for more information.

This year we’re changing over to an online bidding system! Over an eight-day “auction open” period, you’ll be able to make your bid from anywhere you have internet access. And, you can still make your bids at church on the two bidding Sundays in May when we’ll have trained assistants standing by with computers to help you make your bids. In addition, we’re also planning a very special Kicks Off gala event to be held in Bar Bred on Saturday, May 18th from 5 pm to 7 pm in Bar Bred, where the new online bidding process will be demonstrated and people can start their bidding. Stay tuned!

Click here to go to the church website to get an event submission form and more ideas for possible events. You can also email Robbie Evans at Robbie@firstuusandiego.org.

Dining for Dollars Returns — With a New Look!!

By Robbie Evans, Director of Operations and D4$ Team

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