New Teams for Visioning the Future

By Rhiannon Smith, Board President & Rev. Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

This fall and winter, our congregation has a unique, exciting and challenging opportunity before us. We’re choosing to face this opportunity from our values and mission, and not from fear. We’ve three major issues that must be considered as we live out our mission in a variety of ways in the San Diego region. The issues include: our mortgage, diminishing parking lot income and UCSD’s campus remodeling and offer to purchase the Hillcrest property.

In response to these issues, the Board has directed two areas of work to be done: 1) the creation of a new strategic plan, based on our values and the responses from the work led by Angela Garcia-Sims and the Revisioning team, focusing on what we appreciate about our church and what our dream church will be; 2) the Board has approved a new structure for congregation members to engage in the work of information gathering, planning and deliberating together about possible options regarding the Hillcrest campus.

This new structure is called “Visioning the Future” (VTF) and its objective is to provide to the congregation one or more feasible recommendations for the future physical location of our Hillcrest campus, whether it remains in place, or moves to a different location. Congregation members are encouraged to engage in many aspects of the work through serving on or contacting members of various subcommittees. There will be a Central Core Committee and four Subcommittees.

The Central Core Committee will, among other tasks, help ensure communication and the scheduling of forums, monitor the VTF page on our website and serve as points of contact for the congregation. The Subcommittees are: Stay, Go (when and how), Real Estate (where to go), and UCSD Negotiations. The Stay committee will focus on what it means to stay in this current location including mapping out a trajectory of parking and other revenues, exploring how other income might be created from other sources, assessing options with a smaller budget and what the costs of staying will include, i.e. major maintenance issues and mortgage payoff.

The Go (when and how) committee will focus on aspects of a possible move in regards to when (timing of move) and how – what would be involved to make a move (organ, Memorial Wall, Memorial Garden, etc.) This committee will also need to consider our South Bay campus and its needs (becoming too large for current space). The Go (where) committee would assist in the search for a new location and work closely with the Real Estate and Go committees.

It’s understood a potential place would need to be found before the Central Core committee could make such a recommendation to the congregation. The UCSD Negotiations team is already formed and its work is to simply negotiate the best possible deal if the congregation decides to go. This team cannot make any agreement or decision; it’s only able to create a possible informed option, should the congregation choose to do this.

Please see the VTF announcement in the Window (link) or visit the VTF page on our website (the link is on the homepage) for more details about these subcommittees and the various skills and talents needed for these subcommittees and this work. We know we have what it takes to explore together, learn together and deliberate together to create a church that continues our legacy and expands our mission in new and bolder ways.

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Brave, Honest Community
By Rev. Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

Welcome to a new season and some changes in our congregation this year. Our worship theme this month is Brave, Honest Community. It’s a theme that speaks to the needs of our congregation right now—honesty in who we are; what our needs, dreams, and resources are; and how we’re being called to serve in the greater San Diego region. Brave in engaging with the important work of a new strategic plan, grounded in our values and principles that will help shape our various conversations about the opportunities for our future.

All of this and more are only accomplished through Community. Remembering we’re a community that cares, that dreams, that listens, that deliberates and acts is crucial in our work together. This theme calls us into deeper relationship as we engage in the Beloved Conversations program.

We welcome Lara Korneychuk, our new Interim Music Coordinator for our Hillcrest campus, and Chase Pado, our Interim Pianist/Organist. Lara will direct our Chalice and Youth choirs and work with our other choir directors (Tony Bianca, Lorelei Isidro-Garner, and Andrea Newall-Locket) to ensure our music ministry continues to thrive.

Another change is going from three ministers to two—which means both Rev. Tania and I will preach at both campuses regularly, and we’ll both co-lead some services with lay leaders. We’ll also have some guests in our pulpits to expand and build on the diversity of voices on Sunday mornings. We’re excited about these changes.

Another change this year: Nationally, there was a very small pool of applicants of ministerial interns, so like many other churches in our denomination, we won’t have an intern with us. This means there are more opportunities for lay leaders to participate in a variety of ways. The Board and a Core Central team will lead several forums regarding our various options for our future.

Please pay attention to the Window and other announcements about these upcoming forums. We’ll also join with our UUA Regional staff for leadership development. This new program year will bring more opportunities for you to become more active and involved in the life and ongoing programs of our congregation and live our mission into our daily lives. Join in!

Faithfully yours,

Rev. Kathleen

September Sermon Messages

Worship Times:
Hillcrest Campus: Sunday, 9:30 am and 11:30 am (ASL Interpretation)
South Bay Campus: Sunday, 9:30 am (Intergenerational, Bilingual)

September’s Transformational Theme is “Brave, Honest Community”

September 1, 2019
Hillcrest Services—
"What Moves the World"
Rev. Tania Márquez, Assistant Minister

South Bay Service—
"The Community of Work"
Rev. Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

September 8, 2019
Hillcrest Services—
"What Truly Sustains Us"
Rev. Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

South Bay Service—
"The Changes That Move And Sustain Us" Coming of Age Service
Family Ministries Team

September 15, 2019
Hillcrest Services—
"Creating Vibrant Community"
Rev. Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

South Bay Service—
"(Big Questions Service)"
Rev. Tania Márquez, Assistant Minister

September 22, 2019
Hillcrest Services—
"Jewish New Year: The Art of Falling Forward"
Rev. Tom Owen-Towle, Minister Emeriti

South Bay Service—
"Creating Vibrant Community"
Rev. Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

September 29, 2019
Hillcrest Services—
"What Local Justice Looks Like"
Rev. Kathleen Owens, Lead Minister

South Bay Service—
Rev. Tania Márquez, Assistant Minister
Welcome to the New Church Year

By Kathleen Swift, Director of Family and Lifespan Ministry

Hello! My name is Kathleen Swift and I'm privileged to serve First UU as your Director of Family and Lifespan Ministry. Although that title encompasses religious education for the lifespan of each congregant, I've been asked to focus on the "family" and "children's" aspect of the position for the near future.

In my previous position, I served Chalice UU Congregation in Escondido as their Director of Family Ministries. Prior to that I held positions as a principal and teacher in several charter schools in southern California. I'm grateful I can use my education and experience within my beloved Unitarian Universalist faith.

For the rest of the summer, the religious education program for both children and youth will continue as they were before my hire on July 1st. This means there's a combined class for children ages 5 to 12 using a monthly theme (August is Sustenance and September will be Brave, Honest Community). As an example, at a recent session we discussed the importance of taking care of each other and how that sustains us. Children participated in several activities to reinforce the discussion, culminating in a creative activity.

Each Sunday, children go to the Meeting House with their parents for the first 10-15 minutes, then join at the front for a Time for all Ages. Generally, this is a picture book but sometimes we plan other surprises. After that, we recite our affirmation in English and Spanish and the children are invited to leave for religious education classes. Childcare is available during both services.

The middle and high school teens meet at 9:30 for a session of Popcorn Theology. This engaging curriculum uses an excerpt of a movie or television program to generate thoughtful discussion. The high school teens also meet during the 11:30 service.

As you're reading this, I'm in Borneo for a pre-planned vacation with my mother. Upon my return in mid-September, we'll will have an ingathering service. Fall religious education classes will start September 22nd. My next column will focus on a brief description of the hopes, dreams, and goals of each class.

I hope you'll consider volunteering to work with this amazing group of young people. Don't hesitate because you're new to our faith! Remember, there's no better way to learn about Unitarian Universalism than to teach it. I promise it will be rewarding and I'll make it as easy as possible.
New Life Reflection

By Rhiannon Smith, Board President

In thinking about the message of the April 14, 2019 service, and April’s theme of “New Life”, I keep coming back to a poem by the Reverend Theresa Inés Soto (permission to use granted by author):

“Bring your broken hallelujah here. Bring your broken hallelujah here. Bring the large one that is beyond Repair. Bring the small one that’s too soft to share. Bring your broken Hallelujah here. I know that people Have told you that before you can give You have to get yourself together. They Overstated the value of perfection by a Lot. Or they forgot. You are the gift. We all bring some broken things, songs and dreams, and long lost hopes. But here, and together, we reach within. As a community, we begin again. And from the pieces we will build something new. There is work that only you can do. We wait for you.”

I wonder who we could be if we were more willing to embrace the mess, the discomfort. I wonder how close we could come to truly living our values and being a just, equitable, and welcoming community if we were more willing to be vulnerable and to make mistakes.

When we talk about engaging in racial justice work and confronting the biases and prejudices that systems of white supremacy have instilled in all of us, I wonder how much change we could effect if people were more willing to be uncomfortable, to let go of the need for perfection. Because, what might matter more than how we messed up, is how we find our way back into community.

We must be accountable for our words and actions (or inactions). And we must also trust we are loved by those around us and that yes, things get hard, but if we’re willing to be imperfect and vulnerable with one another, we open ourselves to deeper, stronger relationships. We are the gift. And, together, we can build something new.
Specialty Bazaar: SATURDAY - OCTOBER 12, 2019 - 8 AM-1 PM

Come one, come all for fun, food, and festivities! On Saturday, October 12, First UU will hold a Specialty Bazaar from 8 am to 1 pm, to raise money for our operating budget. For sale will be fabulous art and collectibles, fine and costume jewelry, stylish hats, scarves, and handbags.

Are you moving? Are you redecorating? Donate the art and collectibles you no longer need to the church.

Are you doing some fall cleaning or even just re-accessorizing? Your excess jewelry, hats, scarves, and handbags in good condition will be welcomed here.

Your donations will be gratefully accepted in Room 115 beginning Friday, October 4.

Donation Collection Times - Room 115
Friday, October 4: 1 pm – 6 pm
Saturday, October 5: 10 am - 4 pm
Sunday, October 6: Between services, 10:30 am – 11:30 am
Monday, October 7: 10 am – 4 pm
Tuesday, October 8: 10 am – 4 pm
Wednesday, October 9: 10 am – 4 pm

Do none of those times work for you? Contact Rhea Kuhlman at rheakuhlman2@gmail.com or 619-491-0664 to arrange an alternate time.

What You Can Donate
- Art
- Fine and Costume Jewelry
- Accessories:
  - Hats
  - Scarves
  - Handbags
- Collectibles

So, what’s a “collectible,” anyway? We’re defining it as:
- something small enough it doesn’t need a truck to deliver, and
- valuable enough it might sell for $40 or more if sold on E-Bay.

Examples include: Hummel figures, Franklin Mint collections (plates, cats, etc.), Lladro figurines from Spain, Waterford ornaments, Disney memorabilia, Coca Cola memorabilia, Jack Daniels memorabilia, fancy theme salt and pepper shakers, Bing and Grondahl collectible ornaments, statues, sculptures, figurines, fine pottery, fine silver and other metal items, pop culture items (Hollywood, etc).

No fine china, please, as we’re not equipped to handle it, and no clothing. If you’re not sure it’s a fit for this sale, please contact Rhea Kuhlman to discuss it.

Unique Holiday Gifts at Great Prices
If you’re looking for a unique holiday gift for a special friend or family member, there’s no better place to find interesting, creative items donated by fellow First UU members than at the Specialty Bazaar. Whether you’re seeking a sculpture from Ethiopia, a piece of Mexican pottery, a Guatemalan wall hanging, an African mask, or a stunning framed painting, you’ll find it at the Specialty Bazaar. Are you hunting for a hand-crafted necklace, fine gold earrings, a funky hat, a colorful scarf, or perhaps a designer handbag? The Specialty Bazaar is the place to go! All items will be priced well below retail value, and you can be sure of bargains galore.

Succulent Snacks from our Youth Group
Our Youth Group will be selling delicious snacks at the Bazaar, so bring your appetite! Proceeds will be used to send youth group members to General Assembly in Providence, R.I. next year. Selling snacks at the Bazaar will be the kickoff of their fundraising efforts!

Volunteer Pre-Sale Friday, October 11, 5 pm -7 pm
Would you like first dibs on the items for sale? Specialty Bazaar Volunteers get the first shopping opportunity at the Volunteer Pre-Sale on Friday, October 11, 5:00 to 7:00 pm. We need all manner of volunteers to help with publicity, social media, pricing, sorting, set-up, and to work on the day of the sale—so sign up to take part in the fun.

For more information contact Rhea Kuhlman at rheakuhlman2@gmail.com or 619-491-0664.
Taking the Next Step on YOUR Journey Toward Wholeness

By Jan Garbosky, for Journey Toward Wholeness (JTW)

The hard work of understanding institutional racism and how all of us—People of Color (POC) and non-POC alike—are affected by it is both individual and congregation-wide. First UU is a safe place to do that work—because of our covenant to affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

So, what is the next step in your learning about the white supremacy culture in which we live? Here are some opportunities for learning together, making mistakes together, and deepening relationships.

**Beloved Conversations: Meditations on Race & Ethnicity**

Thirty-one First UUers participated in the first round of this program in April and May. All reported ways in which their life has changed and encourage others to participate in upcoming sessions.

The second session begins October 4-5 with a required Weekend Retreat in Bard Hall followed by eight required weeks of 2-hour small group meetings facilitated by congregation members. A maximum of 40 can participate. A few spots remain if you’re interested and can commit to the Weekend Retreat and the eight 2-hour sessions for one of the days/times below.

**Weekend Retreat:** Friday, October 4, (4:30-9:15 pm) and Saturday, October 5 (8:30 am-5:00 pm)

**8 Weekly Seminar Sessions:**

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*Strikethrough* dates are during Thanksgiving week/weekend. NO MEETINGS have been scheduled for that week/weekend.

If you can’t commit to the above, we’ll be offering our 3rd session in early 2020. Dates will be announced soon. Let us know if you’re interested.

**FAMILY Beloved Conversations (PILOT)**

Our congregation has been approved to be part of testing a new Beloved Conversations version for families that are POC/IP (Indigenous People) or multi-racial. We’re in the beginning stages of organizing the pilot administration and are seeking families interested in participating. Families (adults, youth, and children) will participate in an afternoon retreat and five 90-minute sessions.

**Museum of Man “Race: Are We So Different?” Exhibit Tour & Microaggressions Workshop**

Between November 2018 and May 2019, more than 90 First UU lay leaders and staff participated in the 2-hour tour/workshop offered by Museum of Man staff. There’s no cost to individuals or to First UU. Additional tours/workshops will be scheduled this fall for those who are interested.

If you have questions or to sign up/get on the interest list for any of the above, contact Jan Garbosky ([jgarbosky@cox.net](mailto:jgarbosky@cox.net)) or Steve Howard ([steveh4544@icloud.com](mailto:steveh4544@icloud.com)).
Identity and Pronouns

By Käthe Larick, Youth Programs Coordinator

I’m Käthe Larick, your Youth Programs Coordinator, and my pronouns are they, their, and them. When I tell you my pronouns, there are a couple of things happening here:

1) I feel safe enough with you to let you know something very personal about myself, and
2) I’m asking you to see me, really see me, and respect my identity.

I feel that, other than your name, the pronouns you use in reference to yourself are one of the most obvious outward expressions of your personal identity. My personal identity is non-binary. You see, I’ve never fit very neatly into the gender binary categories of “man” or “woman,” or “male” or “female.” I’ve always felt like there was something else that described me; another category; ok, many other categories.

So, how do you know what my pronouns are? You can assume I work here because I wear a badge that has my name and job title on it, but that’s about all. And yet, we (all of us) make assumptions about people all the time based primarily on their outward appearance. And that can be really painful. So how can you know what my pronouns are? You can ask me. Yep, it’s that easy. And being the sort of extroverted, fabulous Aries person I am, I’ll tell you. But that’s just me … not everyone feels as comfortable here as I do … or has been here as long … or knows as many people … or really wants to share that personal part of themselves with you. And that’s OK, too. That should be respected, too.

So, what can you do? First, you can recognize that everyone has pronouns and that respectfully asking for their pronouns is very important so someone is not misgendered. You can ask people the pronouns they use for themselves whenever you ask people their name, such as when you meet someone for the first time or when you do check-ins at meetings. Keep in mind that people may change the pronouns with which they identify, so it’s necessary to ask pronouns at check-ins regularly.

Also, if someone doesn’t state their pronouns, PLEASE don’t interrupt with a repeated request. Simply allow them the space to determine their own comfort level with sharing this information. Maybe they don’t feel comfortable sharing in front of a group, but they may have shared their pronouns with a friend. (Hint: Try to pay attention to how that friend refers to them.) If you don’t know or haven’t asked someone’s pronouns, try to use either the person’s name or “they/Them” pronouns. It may feel awkward at first, but it’s one of the simplest and most important ways to show respect for someone’s identity.

Will we do this perfectly? No, because we’re human beings, we’ll make mistakes. If you were to direct someone to my office by saying “HER office is in the Admin Building,” don’t be surprised if one of our youth corrects you by saying something like, “Actually THEIR office is in the Admin Building, or I’ll show you where to find THEM.”

If you inadvertently misgender someone in person, just apologize (quickly and sincerely—every time), THEN MOVE ON. A three-minute apology or explanation isn’t going to help anyone, and it, actually, does more harm to the person you’ve just misgendered. But quickly apologizing and then correcting your mistake speaks volumes.

I promise that using the correct pronouns gets easier with practice. The truth is this really isn’t new. Non-binary, genderfluid, genderqueer, and agender folks aren’t following a new fad—non-binary identities have been recognized for millennia by cultures and societies around the world. And here at First UU? Well, it’s part of what being a truly compassionate, respectful, and welcoming congregation is all about.

I’m here … do you see me?