

## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH CELEBRATES 150 YEARS

The Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego, the fifth oldest church in the city, will celebrate the 150th anniversary of its founding with a year long series of celebrations. An opening festival for all ages will take place at the Front Street campus on Saturday, January 28, featuring dignitaries, food, face painting, stilt walkers and music. Choral festivals, special worship services and a series of speakers on the cutting edge of religious thought are planned throughout the year.

In June of 1873, a group of Unitarians established a Sunday school, at the instigation of Lydia Knapp Horton, wife of downtown San Diego founder Alonzo Horton, at Horton Hall. The first public worship service was held on Easter Sunday the following year. The church built its first building, on land donated by Alonzo Horton, in 1883. The location was at the corner of 10th and F Streets.

The mission of the First Unitarian Church of San Diego is “To create community, nurture spiritual growth and to act on our values to help heal the world.” Unitarian Universalism is an evolving faith that has its beginnings in the early days of the Protestant Reformation. It has since evolved to include people of many different faith backgrounds. Unitarian Universalist spirituality is unbounded, drawing from scripture and science, nature and philosophy, personal experience and ancient tradition.

The First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego has been an important part of San Diego’s religious and civic life. It has stood for free speech, desegregation, gay and transgender rights and immigrant rights during its history. Rev. Howard Bard, who served as Senior Minister from 1913-1945 served for many years on the San Diego city council, and also served as mayor for a time.

The Hillcrest Campus is located across from UCSD medical center. An additional campus, which offer bi-lingual English/Spanish services, is in downtown Chula Vista. A food pantry operating from the Chula Vista campus serves up to 300 families weekly, offering food and diapers.

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