



First  
Unitarian Universalist  
Church of San Diego

# FirstWords

Our Monthly Magazine

May 2022; Vol 16 No. 5

## Our New Lead Minister Is . . .

With great pleasure and gratitude, the Board of Trustees and the Developmental Minister Search Team announce the Rev. Justine Sullivan (she / her / hers) will be our new Lead Minister, effective August 1, 2022.



Ordained in 2017 by her home congregation of Northborough, MA, Rev. Justine served our UU faith for several years as a leader in her congregation and a congregational consultant and facilitator across New England and beyond. Prior to ministry, Rev. Justine worked for 20 years as a social worker and psychotherapist and as a technical writer and manager in high technology.

Her ministerial record speaks to her passion for transitional ministry: mentoring, leadership development, preaching, pastoral care, and leading congregations through major transitions of growth and service. She served as president of the Clara Barton district board in New England from 2012 to 2015 and president of the District Presidents' Association from 2014 to 2015. She was recently nominated to run for the UUA Board of Trustees and, if elected, will begin her 3-year term in July of 2022.

Rev. Justine believes strongly that times of major transition in the life of a congregation are not just something to get through but offer great possibility for healing, discernment, and transformation. She has served congregations in Massachusetts, Maine, and Virginia as an interim minister. She looks forward to joining us for her 4-year commitment as our developmental minister. Her top goal for First UU is to help our members gain clarity and renewed enthusiasm

for our mission. She will also be helping to guide us through the board's developmental goals, including governance and staffing needs, rebuilding trust and engaging conflict in healthy ways, and deciding whether to stay in Hillcrest or find a new location.

Rev. Justine will be moving to San Diego with her wife Dale and their dog Callie over the summer. She is looking forward to joining Rev. Dr. Omega Burckhardt and our amazing team of staff and volunteer leaders. Welcome, Rev. Justine, Dale, and Callie!



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# Will You Come Out and Play?

by Rev. Suzelle Lynch, *Minister in Residence*



I wonder how many of us remember knocking on a friend's door in childhood and asking, "Will you come out and play with me?" When I was a kid it often involved going down the block with my two sisters, starting at one house and then moving on to the next, gathering a group to play softball or tag, Spud or Kick the Can, or some other game we made up.

A great many of us adults spend most of our time working. Even those of us who are retired or don't work for wages usually have chores or volunteer work that we do! Some of us at First UU are students who do the work of studying. Many of us are parents who do the work of parenting.

Most of us grownups still like to play, though. And this month's First UU worship theme invites us to do just that: PLAY!

Why play? Because it's super good for us. After interviewing thousands of people about the history of play in their lives, Dr. Stuart Brown, the world's leading researcher on the science of play, tells us that play is the key to happiness, health, and better relationships, too. Without play, our imagination and the ability to solve problems suffers. With play, we become more optimistic, creative, and joyful.

My partner Tom and I like to go for walks, and one warm day last fall we wandered onto the playground at a park near our home in Janesville, Wisconsin. I headed for the swing set—yay! Let's play! But my sweetie was a bit reluctant. Should adults be playing on kids' equipment? Hmm.

One of the features of play is that it asks us to stay open to the unexpected. That could mean the exciting discoveries, but also the prospect of awkwardness and discomfort. As children, we don't worry about this very much, but as we get older, we become self-conscious. Our inner critic gets in the way. We don't want to look foolish! Play seems silly and unproductive.

There are a couple of things that can help us get beyond this. First, we have to remember that our inner critic thinks it's protecting us. Failing feels bad, so the critic discourages us from doing things that feel silly, uncomfortable, or risky. One playful idea is to talk back to our inner critic—tell it to get lost! You can also draw an unflattering picture of your critic to intimidate it into leaving you alone. (I love doing this!)

I'm glad to say that Tom and I didn't let our inner critics scare us off the playground that day last fall. And he's usually game if I invite him to dance in the kitchen with me when we're cooking dinner.

How do you like to play? Will you come over to the Hillcrest campus and play with me this month? The World Labyrinth Day gathering from 10 am –12 pm on May 7 will be an opportunity for a kind of sacred play open to adults and kids. Watch The Window for other opportunities, too.

Blessings to you all,

*Rev. Suzelle Lynch, Minister in Residence*

## May Sermon Messages

**May's Transformational Theme is:**  
"Play"

**Hillcrest Worship Time:**

Hillcrest Patio & Livestream Worship:  
Sunday, 9:30 am - (ASL Interpretation)

RSVP to Attend In-Person Worship

Watch Worship Online

**May 1, 2022**

**"Beltane's Blossoming:**

**An Earth-Centered Service"**

Rev. Suzelle Lynch, *Minister in Residence*

**May 8, 2022**

**"Playing in the Neutral Zone"**

Rev. Suzelle Lynch, *Minister in Residence*

**May 15, 2022**

**"Ten Bad Reasons to Join This Church"**

Rev. Suzelle Lynch, *Minister in Residence*

**May 22, 2022**

**"Play Ball!"**

Rev. Dr. Omega Burckhardt, *Assistant Minister*

**May 29, 2022**

**"Social Justice Sunday"**

**South Bay Worship Time:**

South Bay Campus Parking Lot  
Some Saturdays, 4:00 pm

**May 7 & May 21, 2022**

**"South Bay Summer Worship Series"**

# Justice and Joy

by Tony Bianca, *Program Director*



As I reflect on May's theme, "Play," I'm reminded of a song we sang frequently during my college days at Loyola, "A Place at the Table" by Shirley Erena Murray. Specifically, it's the refrain that came to mind: "And God will delight when we are creators of justice and joy!"

There's something about that line that I've always found charming. Religion, social justice work, and all things divine/spiritual are often couched in terms that are serious, deep, pensive, meditative, or even stoic. So, I think there's something refreshing about a higher power that "delights" in us.

And I also love that the song lyrics gives equal weight to justice and joy. When you read through our eight UU Principles, the justice of it all jumps off the page: inherent worth and dignity, democratic process, actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions—not to mention, literally, "peace, liberty and justice for all." If I were similarly scanning the Principles for "joy," I'd have to work a little harder. And that's true for the other religious traditions I've had experience with. We do depth and inspiration well, but we have to work harder at joy.

And I think that's a shame because it's also been my experience that the most spiritual people I've ever met have been the most joyful. I volunteered on weekends for a few years during my time in seminary at an AIDS hospice run by the Missionaries of Charity (Mother Theresa's order).

Those sisters take the standard vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, but they also take a 4th vow of joy.

In the midst of constant suffering and death (the men who lived with them typically had less than a month to live), the sisters created an atmosphere of loving kindness where the tears and inevitable sorrow was seamlessly woven with laughter, smiles, singing, dancing, and even the occasional running water gun battle. (You haven't lived until you've seen two women in those white & blue, sari-style habits and sandals hiding behind a sofa, giggling and aiming for the face!) For them, joy was not a happy byproduct of social justice work but, rather, was the very foundation upon which

that work was built. And play, as the outward expression of joy, was a spiritual practice. To laugh was to share in the inner life of the divine.

I try, when I'm being my best self, to imitate those masters of joy in the work I do. I've said often about RE that if we manage to enjoy the time we spend together, we've had a successful day. And that doesn't mean we don't talk about deep, serious, or sad things. But I think doing those things is both easier and more

effective when we find joy in each other's presence.

So, this month, come play and be joyful with us! Sing those hymns a little louder. Come to RE with the kiddos to make some art. Come dance and shake the parachute with us on the Upper Patio after service. Come hang out with friends at camp this June or just on the patio or online during Social Hour. Join in the delight of being a creator of justice and joy!





# Grand Opening for the New South Bay Food Pantry!

by Maureen McNair and Nancy Fisk

On March 19, 2022, the South Bay Food Pantry operated for the first time from Suite 105 at 970 Broadway in Chula Vista, next door to the South Bay Congregation meeting space. The food pantry previously operated out of the worship space and social hall for South Bay during the pandemic.

In order for the congregation to move back into the South Bay worship space and social hall, the pantry needed to rent dedicated space for themselves. Luckily, a suite opened up in the same strip mall where the congregation meets. After the pantry signed a lease for two years, Valerie Jaques devoted many hours to addressing requirements for opening such as installation of a hot water heater and organizing volunteers to perform other upgrades to Suite 105.



*The New Space*

Then the new space had to be inspected by Feeding San Diego and the San Diego Food Bank and the flow of distribution to our new footprint had to be adapted before the Food Pantry could open its new space. The work of our dedicated mid-week food rescuers, food bank truck runners, dry goods baggers, and bread donation retriever / baggers was also complicated by the move.



*Deirdre Lonergan*



*Sara Ferguson*

The food pantry is still serving 250+ families, every Saturday, from 11 am-12:30 pm. Crews bag shelf stable goods during the week. An early morning shift on Saturday handles any fresh food

deliveries for that morning and sets everything out on tables, to be distributed to each family. Then a later shift helps with intake, the processing of each household and the food distribution. On a recent Saturday, clients were given bags of shelf stable goods, frozen meat, bread, fresh fruit, and Starbucks items. The pantry also does a diaper distribution.



*Bella Furth*



*Laura Ball*

More work lies ahead, and new volunteers are always welcome to join us, on site or remote, Saturdays or weekdays, day or night. Please contact Deirdre for more information: [deirdre@deirdre.com](mailto:deirdre@deirdre.com)

or 619-261-8484 (phone calls may not be returned until evening!).

*This article contains excerpts from an article on the church blog at [firstusandiego.org](http://firstusandiego.org). For the rest of the account of the first day of the pantry, go to [Grand Opening for the New South Bay Food Pantry!](#)*

# Dining for Dollar\$ 2022—Submit Your Event through May 15 - Bidding Opens on June 1st!

by Robie Evans, Member, Dining for Dollar\$ Team



*D4\$ Champagne Tasting / Pairing Event at the home of Dave Hunt and Toni Turbyfill, co-hosted with Ray and Robie Evans in 2019.*

Sixteen years ago, we started this amazing fundraising extravaganza at First UU. Over the past couple of years, we've raised as much as \$55,000 annually towards our church's general operating budget. Events are planned and hosted by First UU members and bid on by the congregation.

Events submitted this year so far:

- Mexican Wine Tasting
- A Holiday PVP Spectacular - Pizza / Violin / Piano
- Small Group Karaoke Session
- Lunch and Tour at the Mingei International Museum
- Four Day Stay in Love Shack: Island Cottage in British Columbia
- Birding Photo Shoot
- Rancho Peñasquitos Adobe Tour, Hike, Picnic
- Kids Meet the Goats
- Quicken Instruction / Consulting
- Joy's Knitted Slippers - Adult Size / Children's Size
- Wisconsin Tailgate!

But, that's not the best part. The social and community - building aspects of the events hosted by First UU Members and Friends give us a chance to:

- work with others to dream up, organize, and co-host events;
- meet new people;
- deepen existing relationships while attending events with friends;
- do things we've never done before; and
- find ways to ensure everyone is able to participate on some level, regardless of family or financial issues.

**How to host an event:** We are still accepting events through May 15th! Here is the online [event hosting](#)

form. You can find more information and ideas for events on our [D4\\$ webpage](#).

## Registering for bidding:

**Past bidders:** If you are a past bidder, you are already registered in the new online bidding system. You should receive an email invitation near the end of May to verify your registration.

**New bidders:** If you are a new D4\$ bidder, you will need to [register](#).

**Past and new bidders:** If you don't receive an email invitation by the end of May, check with the D4\$ team member at First UU after Sunday service, or call the office to make sure we have the correct email address on your account.

If none of these options work, contact [Robie Evans](#).

**Bidding:** [Preview the Catalog](#) online to get ideas of what you want to bid on!

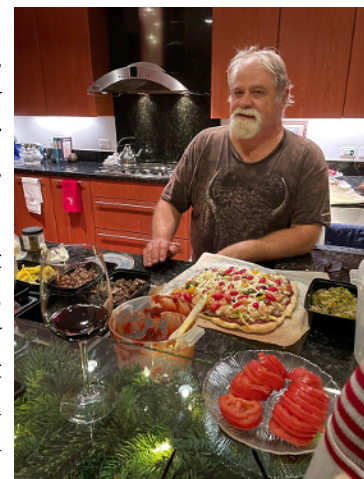
If you need assistance with your bidding, and can do it in person, complete proxy bidding sheets which will be available after each service starting Sunday, June 5th.

Bidding starts online on June 1st and runs until midnight, June 30th. You'll be notified via email, if you're outbid, or if you win one or more items. There's also a 'Buy It Now' feature.

Once bidding is completed, you can pay for your items online, or arrange manual payments with [Robie Evans](#).

Because the system doesn't allow multi-tiered pricing, those who bid on Family Price events, please do not pay invoices online until you get an adjusted invoice.

Bid early and bid often. Just be sure you and your family don't miss out on the fun!



*New for 2022! A Holiday PVP Spectacular - Pizza/Violin/Piano evening at the home of John and Craig Darling, co-hosted with Ray and Robie Evans.*



## First UU to Celebrate 150 years in San Diego!

by Rev. Dr. Omega Burckhardt, *Assistant Minister*

When an occasion like the present arises—a forward step—a casting off an old shell, we're prone to turn back and think of our original starting point.

As Lydia Knapp Horton who, in 1873, brought the Unitarian Sunday School and The Unitarian Society into being said in *Living Liberal Religion* (pp. 15-16):

*“While an enterprise is taking shape our thoughts and energies are directed to the present moment. We do our work with no thought of the fact that we are making history. After a few years have passed and a new generation comes on the stage, we find we have almost lost sight of that small first beginning—and, in trying to recall it, we sometimes find the key in memory’s wards has grown rusty and we need a little help in turning it. That help has been kindly given me by some of the earlier members of our society to whom my thanks are due.”*

In 2023, First UU will celebrate its 150th birthday. What would Lydia Knapp Horton, one of the original Unitarian teachers and founders of this congregation, think of this auspicious celebration? It's right to thank those who have come before us, those who've lived into Unitarian Universalism's belief that all humans deserve dignity, are inherently worthy of love, and that, only through a covenantal journey, can we move towards a Beloved Community where accountability and mutual support create spaces and opportunities to affirm and promote spiritual growth. Perhaps Lydia Knapp Horton wouldn't have phrased it this way, but her love of liberal, progressive religion suggests to me that she might approve, over a century later, of our shared principles.

A committee has formed to celebrate the 150th anniversary of First UU's founding in 1873, and has convened twice to get to know each other a bit more (perhaps more for me as a newcomer),

as well as brainstorm for the upcoming year's celebrations. I have the honor of serving as the group's convenor, and I'm thrilled and humbled to be taking the lead from experienced and beloved lay leaders, current staff members, and ministerial colleagues who form the committee. We look forward to working with and celebrating alongside our whole community in bringing about a year of reflection, renewal, and forward momentum.

We are at a pivotal point in this community's history. Unlike the words of Lydia Knapp Horton that suggest that she and others “do [their] work with no thought of the fact [they] are making history,” we—all of us who form this congregational community—know that the coming years will likely define the next phase of First UU's continued legacy. Implicit in the next year of celebration must be reconciliation of the past, a re-alignment of our covenant and mission, as well as a bold and creative vision for the future.

What shape will this year of exploration take? Already we have plans to celebrate our congregation's past, as well as re-examine our history through lenses that will undoubtedly bring into focus both the beautiful and the challenging. We also know the coming year will tell us a lot about who we are as a community—not who we think we are or who we aspire to be, but who is here now and what we hold dear. Then, we can turn ourselves to an aspirational future, a celebration of a new era of Unitarian Universalism in this region.

We know Unitarian Universalism saves lives because to be UU means to affirm Love—for everyone, for our community far and wide, and for our planet. Let us use this 150th anniversary to celebrate this Love. May it be so. Que así sea.



**UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
MULTIPLATFORM / PORTLAND • 2022

Ready to start traveling again? How about to the Northwest including GA in Portland, OR June 22 through June 26? General Assembly is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists, where delegates from all UU congregations conduct business of the Association, explore the theological underpinnings of our faith, and lean fully into our mission and principles. In 2021, GA had more than 4,000 registered attendees participate from remote locations around the world at the second virtual GA. There's a real thrill in meeting with a multitude of UUs in person, however, and making friends from around the country. For this year's hybrid 2022 GA you can either attend in person or, if traveling or the cost of

## It's Time for GA! In-Person or Virtual!

traveling is not for you, you can attend GA online.

No matter how you attend, you can participate in 80+ workshops and events including the Service of the Living Tradition and the Ware Lecture. This year's Ware Lecturer is Ibram X. Kendi, author of *How to be an Antiracist* and *Stamped From the Beginning: A Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*.

Registration and more information are available at [uua.org/GA](http://uua.org/GA). View the GA [schedule](#). Everyone is welcome to register to attend on-site or online. Also, ten on-site or online delegates (we need six more) from First UU are needed to help vote on business items. On-site delegates can receive partial reimbursement of their expenses. Contact [John Schaibly](#) if you would like to be certified to attend as a delegate. Please notify [Jan Garbosky](#) if have questions or you'd like to attend as a non-delegate.

## Camp de Benneville Pines is Re-opening!

by John and Ardath Schaibly

Hurray! After a two-year hiatus, All Church Camp will be back at de Benneville Pines June 3-5. We're ready to resume and renew intergenerational fun. Let's relax, talk, play, sing, hike, and worship in the wonder of nature together.

Find the brochure and registration form on First UU's [website](#).

Now is also the time to register for July Summer Youth Camps, Counselor in Training program in July, and Summer Break for Adults in August. See the Camp's [website](#) for more information and early bird discounts.

Expect that masks and proof of COVID-19 vaccination will be required for safety reasons.

We all need to get back to nature and community. Attendance caps are lower this year, so don't delay.

Come to enjoy the mountain air and convivial company! Even if you can't come up the hill, consider a donation for scholarships to enable others to attend.

Ardath Schaibly [ardathschaibly@gmail.com](mailto:ardathschaibly@gmail.com)

Friends of de Benneville Pines



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