



First
Unitarian Universalist
Church of San Diego

FirstWords

Our Monthly Magazine

May 2023; Vol 17 No. 5

Meet Zane Shrem-Besnoy, Sound Engineer

by Nancy Fisk, *First Words* Editor



Zane Shrem-Besnoy is our new Sound Engineer, the person you see setting up the microphones and other sound equipment for Sunday. He's worked with us since August 2022. Before he came to work at First UU, he had several connections to other members of our staff. He knows

Marshall Voit, our Music Director, from working with him at the Temple Emmanuel. Joe Cantrell, who worked with our audio for a long time, was his professor at USD. Finally, he worked with Jeff Pekarek, who was our previous Sound Engineer.

Zane coordinates the audio for both our worship services and concerts. This includes the streaming audio for our online services. He mixes the sound for the Meeting House and also online to make sure the recording is done cleanly.

Zane has been working with audio production since he was in high school, at the San Diego Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical High School, a charter school on the Mesa College campus. It was there Zane first interned in event planning and audio production. One internship was booking concerts and events at the House of Blues downtown. His senior project was booking a concert at Queen Bee's, a venue in North Park. He was responsible for selling tickets and managing marketing materials.

Having completed a certificate of Music Theory at Mesa College while still in high school, Zane also has a degree in Music Composition from USD with a minor in English and poetry. His ability as a composer has led to his music being featured in a ballet, two award winning musicals, and experimental music happenings all around San Diego.

Currently, Zane is a theater manager with San Diego Dance Theater at Liberty Station, where he's responsible for lighting design and theater maintenance. He also hosts an open mic at Public Square, a coffee shop in La Mesa, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays.

He takes voice lessons, trying experimental techniques such as overtone and throat singing. He also writes music, and has recordings at AlexanderShrem-Besnoy.com

Zane believes music can build community. He'd like to create platforms that highlight new forms of music expression. While he enjoys electronic, punk, and rock music, he believes all these types of music intersect more now. He also wants to promote music literacy, emphasizing the need to listen critically to new sounds and new ideas.

Welcome to First UU, Zane!



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Widening the Circle

by Rev. Justine Sullivan, *Lead Minister*



*Don't worry about a thing
'Cause every little thing is gonna be alright!*
~ Bob Marley

I do love that song by Bob Marley. It has a catchy tune and a cheerful rhythm, but it's the simplicity of the message, the confident reassurance that always gets me. I've been known to sing it to myself from time to time, and it reminds me to pause and breathe.

Covid didn't invent anxiety, but it sure did dump extra anxiety into every system: families, schools, congregations, workplaces. Sometimes, a shared

challenge creates camaraderie as we battle a common problem. But anxiety can also cause mistrust and greater separateness.

We've seen increased hate crimes against people of Asian descent since the arrival of Covid, and an increase in gun violence. Lately, we've seen people being shot for knocking on the wrong door or mistakenly getting into the wrong car—innocent mistakes that should've been instantly recognized, forgiven, and resolved but were not.

The culprit, I believe is twofold—first, there are too many guns. Second, we're afraid of one another. People in power are stoking that fear, suggesting there are “bad guys” out there who want to harm *us*. Making someone afraid and then giving them access to lethal weapons is a recipe for tragedy.

We can work for commonsense gun reform, and work to reduce the fear of one another by widening the circle, by increasing every day who we mean by “us.”

As Marge Piercy writes:

It goes one at a time.
It starts when you care to act.
It starts when you do it again
after they say no.
It starts when you say we
and know who you mean;
and each day you mean
one more.

I've been blessed to get to know you over this first year as your developmental minister. Next year, I'm pleased to say we'll have a ministerial intern, who'll be with us part time for two years. I'll announce her name very soon.

We've begun interviewing for a new Assistant Minister to replace Rev. Omega, who's moving on to be a lead minister in another congregation. First UU was so lucky to have Rev. Omega with us over these past two years, and we wish her every success and happiness in her new ministry. Saying hello and goodbye well is an essential part of creating and sustaining community in this time of high mobility.

Let us continue to learn and grow together in offering a warm welcome to all who find their way to us. We need those new voices, and the world needs all of us.

Peace and Love to you, *Justine*

May Sermon Schedule

May's Transformational Theme: "Creativity"

Hillcrest Worship Time:

Sundays, 10 am, Meeting House, Hillcrest Patio & Livestream Worship

May 7, 2023

“Journeying Toward Wholeness: Why is it So Hard?”

Rev. Justine Sullivan & JTW Team Members

May 14, 2023

Mother's Day

Rev. Justine Sullivan, *Lead Minister*

May 21, 2023

UU UN Envoys

Rev. Dr. Omega Burckhardt, *Assistant Minister*

May 28, 2023

Memorial Day

Rev. Justine Sullivan, *Lead Minister*

South Bay Worship Time:

1st & 3rd Sundays, 10 am, Suite 104

May 7, 2023

“Flores de campo: Flower Communion”

Rev. Dr. Omega Burckhardt, *Assistant Minister*

May 21, 2023

Rev. Justine Sullivan, *Lead Minister*

Why Come to Camp?

by Tony Bianca, *Director of Lifespan Faith Formation*



As you may or may not know, First UU partners with Chalice Congregation in Escondido each June to host an All Church Camp at Camp de Benneville Pines. This year, camp will take place from Friday, June 2nd to Sunday, June 4th, and I'd like to

encourage you to come.

Now, if I'm being honest, I'm not naturally a camping kind of guy. I like being out in nature all right, but I also like my own bed, my own shower, and strong wifi. To be clear, at Camp de Benneville, the beds & showers are just fine, and I've never had a problem getting a signal on my phone. But even if those things were horrible, I'd still encourage you to come to camp. Let me tell you why.

Camp is one of the few things we do in the church year where I experience "church" the way we talk about it when we're being our most idealistic. It's truly multigenerational. As I've mentioned before, our campers last year ranged in age from preschool to the 80s. That happens on Sundays, too, but on Sunday, we tend to be divided up into our own spaces. Even at social hour, most folks tend to chat with their usual friends, and that's completely normal. But at camp, the activities are structured to give you the opportunity to mix and mingle more than usual. We sing and eat, make art, hike, play games, worship, and just hang out together across generations. And as we do all these things, we build community and connections in ways that there aren't many other opportunities to do so.

Also, there's something magical that happens when we have the opportunity to live with each other in the "in between" moments. There's ample time and space at Camp to have much-needed alone time. But there are also moments when we get to see each other's splendidly mundane humanity. As much as the activities are fun, I also find morning chats over coffee and chance encounters during down time deeply meaningful. In my experience, the moments before the caffeine kicks in, or when we're up late under the stars too tired to be our fully-curated "church selves," are when I really get to know people as people.

So, whether you're a regular at Camp or a complete newbie, I hope to see you on the mountain this June. You can find out more and register at:

www.firstuusandiego.org/all-church-camp.html



Dining for Dollar\$ 2023 – Submit Your Event through May 15

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

Seventeen years ago, we started this amazing fundraising auction extravaganza at First UU. Over the past couple of years, we've raised as much as \$60,000 annually towards our church's general operating budget. Events are planned and hosted by First UU members and bid on by the congregation.

Here are just a sample of the Dining for Dollar\$ (D4\$) events hosted last year!

- Mexican Wine Tasting
- A Holiday Pizza/Violin/Piano Spectacular
- Small Group Karaoke Session
- Mingei Museum Lunch and Tour
- Four Day Stay in Love Shack: Island



D4\$ Champagne Tasting with Culinary Delights with Dave Hunt, Robie and Chef Ray in 2023.



Newt Ferris and Laurie Crehan hosting a Crab and Shrimp Boil

Cottage in British Columbia

- Vacations in Costa Rica! and in Playa del Carmen, Mexico
- Birding Photo Shoot
- Rancho Peñasquitos Adobe Tour, Hike, Picnic
- Kids Meet the Goats
- Quicken Instruction/Consulting
- Joy's Knitted Slippers – Adult and Children's Size

But, that's not the best part. The social and community-building aspects of the events hosted by First UU Members and Friends far outweigh the fact it's much more than a major fundraiser. It gives 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.

– Bidding Opens June 1st!

How to Host an Event: We're accepting events through May!! 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 participated last year, you're already registered in our online bidding system. You should receive an email invitation near the end of May to verify your registration.

New Bidders: If you're new to D4\$, you'll need to *register*.

Past & New Bidders: If you haven't received an email invitation by the end of May: Check your spam and junk email folders.

Call the office to make sure we have your correct email address or check with the D4\$ team member after a Sunday service.

If none of the above work, contact *Robie Evans*.

Our "How To Guide" is *here*.

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 4th.
- Bidding starts online on June 1st and run 24/7 through June. You'll be

notified via email, if you're outbid, or if you win one or more items. For best chances of winning your items, use the 'Buy It Now' feature.

- Trained volunteers will help you register and bid after services in June.
- 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, if you bid on Family Price events, please do not pay invoices online until you get an adjusted invoice.

You won't want to miss bidding on a fun time with the great people in our First UU community.



First UU's Membership Development and Communications Coordinator

by Rose Littler-Riedel, *Membership Development and Communications Coordinator*

If there's one thing I've learned while being on staff at First UU, it's that the only constant in this world is change. Now, I'm rolling into another one, as Membership Development and Communications Coordinator. That's a mouthful, and it's all mine. In my time on staff with First UU, I've transitioned through several positions, starting with childcare.

Within a few weeks of my joining First UU, our Director of Religious Education (DRE), Liz Jones, asked if I'd be interested in working in childcare on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. This was likely because I had small children of my own. It was a great way to find where I belonged in the First UU culture—and a little extra pocket money never hurt anyone, so I said yes.

I worked in childcare for about four years, when the next DRE, Dr. Melissa James, went on maternity leave and asked if I'd step in to cover some programming while she was out. That's how I became a temporary Program Assistant. During my time as Program Assistant, I was asked if I'd have any interest in being First UU's Scheduler. Since I knew the Program Assistant position was short term, and the Scheduler position was very part-time, I again said yes.

I was the Scheduler for a year (and have popped in and out of the role as needed several times over the past few years) when I got a call saying our beloved Administrative Assistant was leaving. I was again asked if I would have interest in that position. This was the first moment I paused. I was a bit afraid.

My children were getting older, I was a homeschool mom and I'd never spent too much time away from them. However, because I received the support I needed from this community and was allowed the flexibility to be with my children, I took the leap into this full-time position.

In the four and a half years I have been in this position, the title has changed from Administrative Assistant to Office Administrator to Office Manager. Now, my three children are adults (can you believe it?!) and my spouse is beginning to



imagine retirement. I am in seminary at Starr King, and looking towards what the future holds for me.

And it's time for my responsibilities here with you to change once more.

So here I am, your Membership Development and Communications Coordinator. So, what does that mean? It means my job here will be much more program centered rather than administratively centered than it has ever been. In Membership Development, I'll create ways to involve newcomers and help them transition from visitor to fully engaged community member.

In Communications, I'll work on our congregation's publications such as *The Window* and *First Words Magazine*, as well as our website and social media presence, and I'll engage with and investigate the ways we reach the wider community.

This new position is transitioning with me, as I move along the path from congregant to staff to ministry and will help me in a variety of ways as I continue through seminary. I consider this to be an amazing learning opportunity and my door is forever open to every one of you. I'll appreciatively hold any ideas and suggestions. As always, I am forever grateful for each and every one of you, my beloved community.

First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego introduces

Leigh Pettit, piano

performing the works of
Beethoven
Schumann
Liszt

First Unitarian Universalist Church
of San Diego

298 W Arbor Street
San Diego, CA 92103

7:30 pm
Friday,
May 12th

Free!
Registration
Required
Reserve your
seats at
Eventbrite



▶ Free parking in our lot

GROSSMONT COLLEGE MIDDLE EAST ENSEMBLE

7:30 pm
Saturday
May 20TH,
2023



7:30 PM
Saturday
May 20TH,
2023

A world of beautiful melodies & fascinating rhythms

Register for your free seats

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Rev. Dr. Omega Burckhardt, Assistant Minister
Rev. Jim Grant and Rev. Lône Broussard, Affiliate Ministers
Rev. Bonnie Tarwater, Rev. Frank Piccone-Willey, Rev. Julie Forest and Rev. Katy Swanson, Affiliate Community Ministers
Robie Evans, Director of Operations
Tony Bianca, Director of Lifespan Faith Formation
Rose Littler-Riedel, Membership Development and Communications
Chris Chambers, Social Justice Coordinator
Lara Anderson, Youth and Young Adult Coordinator
Kate Collier, Program Assistant
Jazmine Ramanathan, Administrative Assistant
Pam Bates, Scheduler
Marshall Voit, Music Director
Lorelei Isidro-Garner, Music Coordinator
Andrea Speiro, JUUL Tones Ensemble Director
Tomás Acosta, Collaborative Pianist
Connie Hayes, Controller / Bookkeeper
Ray Evans, Maintenance
Joshua Morrison, Janitor
Mark Epler, Event Coordinator
Revs. Dr. Carolyn and Dr. Tom Owen-Towle, Ministers Emeriti

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