



First  
Unitarian Universalist  
Church of San Diego

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2021 to 2022**

**This document captures the activities of this  
UU Congregation between July 2021 and June 2022.**

**Our Mission is to create community, to nurture spiritual  
growth, and to act on our values to help heal the world.**



[firstuusandiego.org](http://firstuusandiego.org)

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*The Mission of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego is to create community, nurture spiritual growth and to act on our values to help heal the world.*

## **COVENANT OF GOOD RELATIONS**

### **Preamble:**

We members, friends, staff, and ministers of First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego covenant to treat ourselves and one another with respect. We vow to live our values, to learn, and to serve in ways that are fulfilling and responsible.

### **We respect and honor ourselves and others when we:**

- listen, speak, and act with integrity and compassion;
- communicate openly without anonymous criticism; and express gratitude and appreciation.

### **We value ourselves and others when we:**

- invite and welcome into our church the diverse populations and cultures of the wider community;
- enjoy each other with playfulness and good humor; act with awareness of ecological issues.

### **We learn when we:**

- educate ourselves about church structure and governance, and the responsibilities of ministers, staff, and volunteers;
- appreciate our own limitations as well as those of others; and
- practice the established process of resolving differences.

### **We serve when we:**

- contribute our financial resources, time, and skills according to our ability, whenever possible;
- model Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values; and strive to reflect more accurately
- the demographics of the wider community in our Church.



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Approved by the Congregation on June 8, 2008

## Journey Toward Wholeness

### *Purpose of the group:*

As an arm of the Board of Trustees, working under a mutually-agreed directive of the Board, Journey Toward Wholeness (JTW) helps the Board direct, monitor, and assess the work of the Church of dismantling systems of oppression and becoming a genuinely anti-racist, anti-oppression, multicultural institution. See more at: [firstuusandiego.org/governance/journeytowardwholeness](http://firstuusandiego.org/governance/journeytowardwholeness)



### *Major Accomplishments / Activities (July 2021 through June 2022):*

- Together with the newly established cluster-wide 8th Principle Collaboration Group of SD County, made up of representatives from five congregations, JTW launched the reading and discussion of the Widening the Circle of Concern Report, open to all congregants and friends of FUUSD.
- **JTW organized the reading and discussion of the article “Characteristics of White Supremacy Organizations”** by Tema Okun for the 5th Tuesday Board meetings in March and May 2022.
- Together with SOLACE, JTW participated in a worship service by discussing the work of individual transformation in anti-racism work.
- Together with SJET, JTW is raising awareness of anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander hate groups by putting notices in the Window and SJET news.

### *How JTW's activities happened for the Past Year:*

- Although the Church has been physically closed during the pandemic, we have been working through zoom meetings and individual discussion with congregants, to apply and help clarify the meaning and impact of the Eighth Principle which this Church adopted by a vote of 87% of the congregation in June 2021.
- Our activities have been consistent with our mission and covenant: **we have met regularly once every month or more; we have deeply listened to and supported each other's ideas and perspectives; and we have actively pursued accredited training to advance our mission** (see below).
- We have all participated in the 5th Social Justice Sunday in October 2021.
- Two team members attended a film night organized by SURJ-SD (Showing UP for Racial Justice- San Diego).
- **Two team members attended the “Jubilee 3 Anti-Racist Training”** offered by Paula Cole Jones through the UUA.
- **Two team members attended the workshop “Creating a Listening Community: Restoratives Circles Practice and Facilitation”** by Sarah-Elizabeth Anderson.

### *Anticipated projects for next year :*

- Completing the cluster-wide reading and discussion of the Widening the Circle of Concern Report, and sharing the results with our congregation.
- **Completing the reading and discussion of the article “Characteristics of White Supremacy Organizations”** with the Board, and discussing any impact on how we work at First UU.
- Bring the SURJ-SD offered “Anti-Racism Training 101: how to show up for Racial Justice” to FUUSD in the Fall.
- Participation in 5th Sunday Social Justice worship services.
- Collaboration with worship planning team to plan for specific monthly themes (in addition to celebrating specific days like Indigenous People day on October 8, Martin Luther King Day on January 16; Indigenous Heritage month in November; Black History Month in February; AAPI Heritage month in May).
- Work closely with newly established Interim Good Relations Study Team to address any potential race-based conflicts.
- Collaborate with and support the incoming Developmental Minister in anti-racism work.

*Lay leadership:* Valerie Jacques, Christina Imhoof, Rosalba Ciampi

## Rev. Julie Forest, Board President



On July 1, 2021 my presidency began. Our two ministers had resigned and our search team effort had failed, leaving us with no ministers on staff August 20. In addition, for various reasons three board members resigned by the end of October 2021. The resulting Board of Trustee openings were filled by appointees selected by the Board of Trustees per our church constitution over the period of August through November.

We hired Rev. Dr. Omega Burckhardt during the summer to begin work in September. I coordinated with the UUA to find some additional ministerial coverage creating the Ministers in Residence program. With the help of Robie Evans, the Director of Operations, we coordinated the tenure of Revs. Michael Brown, Deanna Vandiver, Kathleen McTigue, and Suzelle Lynch.

In August / September we met with lawyers and our UCSD neighbors to work out an easement agreement with the Regents of the University of California. This took a lot of time and involved a lot of meetings. The easement agreement was approved by congregational vote in September.

The board set out its goals for the year:

- ◆ Educate and train the Board in Policy Governance
- ◆ **Educate and train the Board in Robert's Rules of Order or a similar system of assembly structure**
- ◆ Clarify and codify policy around Open Mic practices at Board Meetings
- ◆ **Create guidelines for the incoming ministers for Minister's Monthly Report to maintain a consistent exchange of information**
- ◆ Work with the Nominating Committee to make sure our elections are consistent with our democratic ideals
- ◆ Update the Governance section of the church Website
- ◆ Find ways to make policies, reports, minutes, and other documentation more accessible to the congregation
- ◆ Identify areas of the Constitution, Statement of Limitations, and Policy Documents that need updating to be more in-line with our values and congregational goals around who we want to be in the future.
- ◆ See the Good Relations Committee or a similar committee re-established
- ◆ Set up a Board Committee for work on the Board Designated portions of the Renewal and Growth Fund large gift.

September - Set up supervision for all Staff due to no Lead minister. I supervised Rev. Omega, Cora Pendergast as VP supervised Robie Evans, and Dave Hunt supervised Ray Evans. Robie Evans supervised rest of staff, new shade sails were purchased and installed so we could worship in person in October. Successful annual pledge drive was begun and finished spectacularly.

October - began with considering the type of transitional ministry that would best serve the congregation going forward. We met with UUA regional and national staff. We looked at interim and developmental ministries. We held forums for the congregation and offered chances for congregants to weigh in on which kind of ministry was best for us at this time.

In November the Board voted to pursue a developmental ministry model with the assistance of the UUA Office of Ministerial Transitions. Began to develop developmental goals with input from the congregation, including feedback from the Funding Our Future project. We also solicited congregational input on ministry search team members. Completed pledge drive. Listening Circles began. Our regional support Rev. Sarah Gibb-Millspaugh helped with the Listening Circles and suggested we take advantage of the fact that Rev. Deanna also had a

# Rev. Julie Forest, Board President

restoration process that might be helpful for us as we continue to process what happened to us as a congregation over the last four years.

December – we developed an Attitude of Gratitude as a part of our monthly board meetings. We are trying as a board to lift up and thank folks that are contributing to the health and forward movement of our church. The Developmental Minister Search team was created. Because the food pantry requests to the Director of Operations were taking up too much of her time, we began to seriously encourage the food pantry folks to become an affiliate organization, so that they can make their own decisions and handle their own money. This should be completed by June 2022.

January - Good Relations Study Team was created to take advantage of a training that was being offered. Finalized developmental goals via a survey asking the congregation to rank them. These are goals for the congregation to work on with our new lead developmental minister. Continued worked with reopening team. Realizing that the food pantry volunteers did not have adequate fans and filters, we had all the rooms that we lease filtered for the health and well-being of pantry volunteers. Worked with the Nominating Committee who lost a member due to personal reasons to help clarify role of nominating committee and suggest members.

February - began working with Rev. McTigue. Continued to clarify what a developmental minister does with the congregation. Continued work on the Outreach and Growth fund. This group meets at least once every month with staff and volunteers.

The congregation was surveyed about what development our congregation will engage in with our new board hired Lead Minister. These goals and their importance are as follows:

Rebuild trust and community through a re-covenanting process that defines how we want to be together as a congregation
Develop a plan for ensuring the financial sustainability of the church
Develop infrastructure (such as a revitalized Good Relations Committee) for people with conflicting ideas and needs to safely engage in conversation and resolution
Live into the 8th principle by becoming a fully welcoming and inclusive community
Evaluate our governance structure and revise as needed to support our <b>congregation’s diverse needs and goals</b>
Right-size our programs and staffing
Decide whether to remain in our Hillcrest campus or sell the property and relocate
Explore how to build deeper connections between our two campuses

March - was able to successfully engage in the Developmental Search process and the board hired the Rev. Justine Sullivan to be our Lead Minister for four years.

April - work began on creating a budget for FY22/23. Work began on Dining 4 Dollar\$. Welcomed final Minister in Residence. Worked on finding South Bay congregants for the Nominating Committee. Discussed **congregants’ responses to Listening Circles** and that report was posted. Reviewed annual internal review report.

May - prepare for annual meeting. Review budget and approve for presentation to congregation. Continued wrestling with Unfolding Peace and how this restorative process will or will not help heal us.

In June we will conduct our annual meeting and then turn things over to the incoming board.

In addition to this report, the board hosted a board chat every month, posted agenda and past board packets on web, had board summaries in the window, our treasurer Sue Marberry created a financial handbook, which is posted in the members section of our website.

## 2021—2022 Ministers in Residence

### *Minister in Residence Report for September-December 2021 – Rev. Michael Brown*



When I arrived at the church at the end of August 2021 Diane and I were warmly received by everyone we met. The excellent staff was very helpful in getting me acclimated to the church and especially the complex routine for Sunday services. Board President Rev. Julie Forest helped me understand the structure of the church and how things worked. I made it a priority to visit all the various groups in the church and make as many connections as I could. I also officiated for three Celebration of Life services in my early weeks of service.

The arrival of Rev. Omega Burckhardt about three weeks after I arrived was most welcome and we worked very well together as a ministerial team. I felt that we had to initiate some action to begin to address the obvious wounds that many members were feeling from recent events. After consulting with the Board, staff, Ministerial Support Team, and Rev. Sarah Gibb-Millspaugh of regional staff, we decided to initiate the Listening Circles Program. Rev. Gibb-Millspaugh provided us with training and a dynamite group of lay organizers and facilitators stepped forward to run the program with inspiring competence. By the time I left the Listening Circles were up and running independently and were having some healthy effects.

I enjoyed celebrating the holidays with this wonderful, historic congregation and was pleased to hand the ministerial baton over to Rev. Deanna Vandiver.

Submitted with gratitude, appreciation and ongoing confidence - Rev. Michael W. Brown

### *Minister in Residence Report for January to mid-February, 2022 – Rev. Deanna Vandiver*



Dear Ones, it was an honor and a joy to join you as Minister In Residence for the first six weeks of 2022. Your congregational hospitality upon my arrival was kind and faithful, even in the midst of the highest COVID-19 spike San Diego had experienced since the pandemic began. We made the holy pivot to online worship the weekend I arrived and continued to do so during my tenure with you. I offer particular gratitude to FUUSD staff, including Rev. Omega, Robie, Tony, Rose, Jenner, & Ray, for their proactive onboarding skills and generous spirits, as well as celebrating the connection and collaboration made possible by FUUSD's faithful congregational leaders.

FUUSD is a complex system, truly “a community of communities” as UU leader Paula Cole Jones names so clearly. I celebrate the wonder, struggle, and beauty of this congregation's commitment to being a people of open minds, loving hearts, and welcoming hands and encourage y'all to bring holy curiosity to your journey.

I passed the phone, computer, and keys into the very capable hands of the Rev. Kathleen McTigue, who arrived in time to overlap at the February Board meeting and to serve as the next Minister-In-Residence. In partnership with the Rev. Dr. Denise Graves, I continue to serve as a facilitator for the ongoing Unfolding Peace healing process.

Warmly, Rev. Deanna Vandiver

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## 2021—2022 Ministers in Residence

### *Minister in Residence Report for February 15 through March 27, 2022 – Rev. Kathleen McTigue*



Greetings! It was good to share the period from February 15 through March 27, 2022 with you. Here are a few thoughts and observations from this brief time.

You've got a terrific staff team of highly talented folks who function well together. Some work is needed in clarifying job descriptions due to budget-driven staffing gaps and the pandemic adding multiple tasks to some staff portfolios.

The Food Pantry is a thriving ministry of the FUUSD South Bay campus, and I found it an honor and pleasure to join them on Saturdays. I believe the shift of the Pantry's status to Affiliated Organization will help clarify the work going forward.

When I was with you, I encouraged the Board to adopt a practice of ending each meeting with absolute clarity on "who is doing what, by when, and to what end." This practice can also be applied to all committees, groups and teams by their leaders as a way to assess the fit of their work with the church's mission and their own progress.

Sunday morning worship and children's programming form the spiritual heart and soul of UU congregations. As you reopen for more activities, it will be easy to get consumed into problem-solving, committee tasks, and dozens of other things. But I encourage you to do all that you can to support and prioritize dynamic worship and religious education.

I strongly recommend that FUUSD work with UUA consultants and/or resources to find ways in which past harm can be named, acknowledged, and learned from. I also hope you will stay focused on racial justice programming and practices, for this essential work is a core part of our collective mission and a pathway to the racial justice practices that are liberating for all of us.

You are aware that you need work on Good Relations policies and a Good Relations Team. The regional UUA staff should be able to assist you as you develop a clear charge for the Team.

May you be well, sustained and encouraged by one another and by our larger faith as you move forward together into the next chapter of your congregation's life.

Rev. Kathleen McTigue

### *Minister in Residence Report for April – June 2022 – Rev. Suzelle Lynch*



Dear FUUSD Members and Friends – as I write this report, we are at the midway point in my three-month ministry with you.

Let me say first of all that I am thoroughly enjoying being at First UU with you all. I love the spirit of your church, your talented and hardworking staff, your caring and committed Board and lay leaders, and the curiosity and warmth of the members I've met from both campuses. It's a special blessing to work with the Rev. Dr. Omega Burckhardt – I really appreciate her many gifts and skills and her strong ministerial presence.

This has been a tough and confusing year at FUUSD. It began last spring with the loss of both your previous ministers, the struggles that resulted in the

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## 2021—2022 Ministers in Residence

removal of a church member-leader and other harms done that have relational roots and racism-related signatures – and all of it taking place during a historic pandemic that created such separation for you at church and beyond... I wasn't here for all that, but in my conversations with individuals and committees, teams and groups, I feel and hear the pain of it. I also feel the complicated knots of pain and mistrust beginning to loosen.

I've been delighted by the creativity and persistence and caring with which you've responded to your challenges. The idea of having a year of Ministers-in-Residence is a shining example. You've had the opportunity to experience different ministerial styles and gifts, and you have been invited by all of the Ministers in Residence to lean towards one another and support each other as you move through this "gap year." I know that not every member of the church is feeling hopeful about your future – but I certainly am. I'm so glad that Rev. Omega will be with you for another year, and that your excellent new Lead Minister – the Rev. Justine Sullivan – has entered into a Developmental Ministry Contract with your Board of Trustees to begin in August. And I am also glad that your work with the Unfolding Peace healing process facilitated by Rev. Deanna Vandiver and Rev. Dr. Denise Graves is ongoing. I hope you will participate in this process as fully as possible throughout 2022; it will help you and your congregation heal.

A few other things I'm noticing... You are hungry for ways to gather in-person for meaningful sharing and learning. Yes, you have MANY wonderful small groups as well as committees and teams that coordinate or accomplish the important work of church life. But I'm seeing your desire to reach beyond "those you already know" as well as the usual awkwardness about how to do this. My suggestion? Come to worship services at both campuses and stick around for a while afterwards to talk with folks you don't know. Invite them into your UU social circle. Or try joining a group or committee that's new to you.

Your leaders and staff are tired. Like the leaders and staff at UU churches across the continent, they have been holding the church together throughout the pandemic with duct tape, baling wire, love and grit. It's easy to feel impatient for transparency, stability, and progress – but I invite you to be gentle, curious instead of critical, and generous with your time, energy and compliments. Before you act on what you think is a better way to do things than your leadership is demonstrating, ask them what they really need.

And finally, this. A longtime church member asked me recently if I thought FUUSD was healthy or unhealthy. I was glad to be able to say that though FUUSD is struggling, it has a solid core. Healing the hurts and harms will take time, and it will ask for humility from all of us. I invite you to keep your heart open to learning new ways of being and acting that will challenge your self-concept. I hope you'll find yourself willing to see your church community in new ways, too. Unitarian Universalism and its congregations are evolving to meet the challenges of a changing world – and our evolution is being accelerated by the physical, emotional and spiritual conditions the pandemic has imposed. But your heart, your hands, and your voice are needed at FUUSD now more than ever.



Blessings to you all – Rev. Suzelle Lynch

## Rev. Dr. Omega Burckhardt, Assistant Minister

In a year marked by transition, our congregation has held tightly to good communication and tender care of one another and the extended community of which we are a part. As I began my ministry in September, I witnessed how the congregation, lay leaders, and staff were all adjusting rapidly to complex events that had unfolded in the previous spring and summer. I became increasingly impressed by the intentionality and compassion that this congregation displayed, and how incredibly hard the lay leaders and staff were working to create spaces—physical, virtual, and metaphorical—for connection and spiritual growth. **The staff created a Valentine’s Day drive-thru**, for example, because we wanted to show our community our love for them, even though we **couldn’t be together physically**.

Our worship team pivoted repeatedly during the year, from pre-recording services, to live streaming, to live-streaming and in-person on the Hillcrest patio, back to live-streaming only, to outdoor, unmasked services at Hillcrest and parking lot services at the South Bay campus. The staff displayed amazing flexibility and learning during the year, and should be proud of creating truly top-tier worship experiences.

The lay pastoral care team, composed of lay ministers, practical care providers, and leaders of several different support groups, went above and beyond throughout the year to make sure our community was supported. Several of these groups saw an increase in participation and meeting times—quantifiable evidence of the need for connection despite changing pandemic protocols and separation.

The Wisdom Circles continued to meet, fostering an environment for spiritual discussion and community care. While the topics were known, we found that many people engaged with a new perspective having endured the health crisis and the changes in their beloved church community.

The Social Justice Executive Team (SJET) continued the legacy of action based on community need. They organized new relationships with community partners and generosity offering recipients while maintaining important long-standing relationships. In December, FUUSD was recognized at the Fannie Lou Hamer event for our work with Project New Village.

The South Bay Food pantry continued to meet the growing needs of families in the region amidst a transition to a new space in Chula Vista and a different leadership model as an Affiliated Organization of FUUSD. We are continually proud and humbled by the collaborative leadership the volunteers demonstrate, and the Food Pantry should be proud to be a model of community service.

The transitions of four Ministers-in-Residence was a complicated yet graceful dance that provided us all with tremendous learning opportunities and perspectives from talented UU ministers from a variety of backgrounds. The lay leadership of the church focused their work on the hiring of a Lead Minister for August 2022 who will serve in the capacity of developing the congregation for readiness to call a senior minister in four to seven years. Rev. Justine Sullivan will join us later this summer, and we look forward to her wisdom and leadership.

Early preparations began for a celebratory year in 2023 to mark the 150th anniversary of FUUSD. We look forward to a year of renewal and festivities, both within our congregation and with our community partnerships.

We joyously anticipate what next year brings; new opportunities for spiritual growth in small group ministry, deepened relationships of accountability with community organizations, a strengthened relationship with the Food Pantry volunteers and our guests, and solidified worship plans for both South Bay and Hillcrest are all on the horizon.



## Robie Evans, Director of Operations



What a year! In my wildest dreams, I did not even begin to imagine myself going through a year like this one. Losing two ministers and facilitating fond farewells for both; negotiating a major easement issue last summer with the largest employer in the state of California (with legal counsel) – our neighbor UCSD; working with four different, unique and wonderful Ministers in Residence from September through June; working with the Interim Committee (Exec) as “Lead Minister;” navigating COVID-19 protocols as a member of our Reopening Team; Interim Head of Staff for September through mid-February; all while handling my usual responsibilities as your Director of Operations. On June 1, 2022 I celebrated 11 years here in this position!

Last year, my report was four pages; this year it would probably be **more, but I’m going to try a different format** – going to two columns per page with short descriptions and an invitation to email me if you have any questions or would like more details.

I would like to give a huge thank you to our wonderful staff who are driven, dedicated and have worked extremely hard during these past two years through the pandemic to bring worship services to you at home and in person, as well as be there when you needed them and for going the extra miles above and beyond **anyone’s craziest expectations.**

### Hillcrest Facility

- Large Maintenance Projects:
  - ◊ Meeting House Ventilation and Circulation flow
  - ◊ Sewer Ejector Pumps
  - ◊ Plumbing: PVR upgrade and installation of shut-off valve for campus
  - ◊ Fence repair behind bus stop due to car **accident; paid by driver’s insurance**
  - ◊ Installed new sail shades over the Hillcrest Patio
  - ◊ Switched to Voice Over Internet Protocol phone system
  - ◊ Installed a new computer server
  - ◊ Facilitated cleaning of Welcome Center Kitchen with new Kitchen Manager in anticipation of Social Hours
  - ◊ Working to put together a deferred maintenance plan
  - ◊ Installed five new back doors to the RE/Preschool building
  - ◊ Front entry Chapel doors repaired
  - ◊ Installed MERV-13 filters in most HVAC units

### Worship/LiveStream/Other Technology

- Held two indoor worship services in August 2021 in the Meeting House
- Started live outdoor patio worship services in Hillcrest on Oct 3, 2021
- Held our first simultaneous livestream service on Nov 21, 2021
- Have held continuous recorded/livestream services since March 2020
- Using Rev.com for Spanish subtitles and English captions for livestream videos
- Used rsvp.church for pre-registration purposes for worship services
- **Installed “animated lower thirds” into our broadcasting software to show titles while speaking / performing**
- Purchased Owl meeting devices to facilitate **multi-platform meetings when we’re back indoors**
- Installed major electrical and internet outlet box under the Narthex to enhance and make more safe our outdoor worship experience
- Helping to facilitate move back to indoor worship in the Meeting House

## Robie Evans, Director of Operations

### South Bay Facility

- Negotiated three-year lease extension with no increases
- Signed two-year lease for Suite 105 for food pantry
- Assisted Assistant Minister with preparation in returning to in-person worship
- Carpet cleaned in all suites
- Installed MERV-13 filters in all HVAC units
- Hired outside custodial service in May

### Human Resources

- Interim Head of Staff from September through January
- Added a staff holiday for Juneteenth
- Exit Interview with Lead Minister
- Onboarded new Assistant Minister
- Onboarded Janitor (switched from outside custodial company)
- Onboarded Program Assistant
- Welcomed back Jenner Daelyn from pregnancy disability leave!
- Letters of Agreement for all Ministers in Residence as they came to us
- Hired new Kitchen Manager (not staff)
- Onboarded Music Director
- Formed the Minister in Residence Support Team (MIRST)
- Exit interview with Youth Program Coordinator
- Facilitated Staff Play Day at the San Diego Zoo in May
- Started hiring process for Scheduler
- Job postings for Youth / Young Adult Programs Coordinator
- Hired new Sound Engineer in May (not staff)

### Finances / Giving

- Hired contractor to investigate Employer Retention Credit
- Successfully Switched from Year Round Giving to Annual Giving with a new Pledge Drive Team
- Helping to administer Renewal & Growth Fund Gift
- Two-year Internal Review went well
- Part of the 2022 D4\$ Team which is going well
- Signed lease amendment with Ace Parking
- Opened a brokerage account and learned how to purchase treasury bonds with the help of Finance Committee member
- FY 22-23 Budget has been created, presented and accepted by the Board for approval at the Annual Meeting in June

### Administrative / Other

- Helped to administer Restorative Process work throughout the year
- Ongoing help for South Bay Food Pantry throughout the year
- Ongoing facilitation/maintenance issues with our tenant, SD Cooperative Preschool
- Part of the 150th Celebration Team for 2023
- Ongoing website updates
- Helped facilitate many surveys and many eblasts
- Met regularly with Interim Committee, Minister in Residence Support Team, Reopening Team, Staff, Board of Trustees, Finance Committee, Worship Team (part-time, as needed), Annual Pledge Drive team, Outreach and Growth Fund, MAG (Marketing Action Group), D4\$ Team



## Rose Riedel, Office Manager

Another year has come and gone, and I am still so grateful to be a part of this community, and to work with such a devoted staff team.

Here are some of my responsibilities here at First UU :

- ◆ **Compilation of the church's various publications**
  - The weekly Order of Service
  - The weekly newsletter, *The Window*
  - The monthly magazine, *First Words*
  - The quarterly Membership Directory
  - The Annual Report
- ◆ Administrative support to our ministry teams and lay leaders
- ◆ Administrative support to the Planned Giving Committee
- ◆ Managing supplies on our church campus
- ◆ Sorting and delivering phone bank messages
- ◆ Researching and utilizing publication software systems
- ◆ Assisting in facilities management where needed, and assisting in interacting with vendors
- ◆ Entering monetary donations and gifts into our database management system and balancing to our accounting software
- ◆ Creating Award letters and check requests for our Generosity Offering recipients
- ◆ Troubleshooting issues as they arise
- ◆ Interim Scheduling duties



This year has been a time of transition, for so many of us, and in so many ways. I now work in the **office two and a half days per week, and at home two and a half days per week. As I've been settling** into the rhythm of this new normal, I have been full of gratitude for the opportunities this schedule has afforded me.

**I'm still missing our front desk volunteers, and at least half of the time I'm in the office I'm the only** one here – but even with some occasional moments of loneliness, I am able to be very productive, and I feel deep joy whenever other staff or congregants are on campus. I am always filled with happiness just being in the environment of our beautiful church.

As of this writing I am wrapping up my first full year of seminary at Starr King School for the Ministry. Classes have been challenging and interesting, and I am thankful for the introspection that has been prompted by these courses. I thank all of you for your support as I work towards and discern my ministry.

## Connections Ministry Team

### Connections Committee

#### *Purpose of the group:*

The purpose of the Connections Committee is to grow the congregation by welcoming visitors, guiding prospective members along the path to formal membership, fostering opportunities for growth and involvement, and supporting newer members as they integrate into the wider church community. Additionally, the Connections Committee helps visitors, new members, and others to navigate the variety of activities, groups, and events on campus in order to find the right fit for each individual.

#### *Two Major activities or accomplishments (July 2021 through June 2022)*

- ◇ Continued to provide opportunities for congregants to connect to each other and to learn about membership amid a changing landscape of public health recommendations through virtual Social Hour, Becoming A Member orientations, and informational meetings for newcomers, as well as creating a proposal for Spirit Level funding to support some website accessibility edits and a volunteer coordinator position to revitalize volunteer programs at First UU.
- ◇ **A Welcome and Hospitality Training focusing on the concept of “radical welcome/radical hospitality” and re-starting welcoming programs at both campuses and online was held in May.** Attendees learned about volunteer roles such as Welcome Table, Ushering, Greeting, Virtual Social Hour, and South Bay welcome. Planned as the first of many ongoing learning opportunities, this training was attended by people who had volunteered in welcoming roles in the past as well as new volunteers who are eager to grow our community by practicing an affirming welcome to all.
- ◇ In the past year, seven people have become active, voting members of First UU, with two of them returning to membership after an absence. Most of the new members joined once in-person services resumed, as rates of new membership were slow when everything was virtual. It is hoped that new memberships will increase as the campuses open more fully in the near future.
- ◇ Currently, there are 496 active, voting members of First UU.



*Jenner Daelyn, Connections Coordinator*

#### *How our activities have happened for the past year*

- ◇ From July to October, all activities were online. Additionally, Jenner Daelyn, our Connections Coordinator was on parental leave until October, and the committee was not meeting during that time.
- ◇ Since October 2021, events have been a mix of in-person and virtual as health recommendations change. Committee meetings have all been virtual, but orientations and member-meetings have begun to happen in person.

#### *Anticipated projects for next year*

- ◇ Ongoing trainings for hospitality and welcoming volunteers, focusing on re-imagining the ways in which we are welcoming both on and off-campus, with an emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- ◇ Re-starting the Building Connections (formerly Building Sacred Ground) classes in-person so that new and prospective members can participate and interact with other folks who are new to our community.
- ◇ Hosting mixers and social events to help the community come together and connect after a long time apart.
- ◇ Working with Outreach and Growth Fund committee to plan/promote outreach events that can help to increase church membership.

*Staff:* Jenner Daelyn, Connections Coordinator

*Lay leadership:* Caroline Clark, Christina Imhoof, Jane Takahashi, Kathleen MacLeod, Rosalba Ciampi, Susan Reigel-Harding

## Caring Ministry Team

### *Purpose of the group:*

Provide opportunities to strengthen our church community via mutual care, support and service. Also, to provide practical care information and resources available from First Church and the county. In non-pandemic years, the group met quarterly. Since March of 2020, the team has been meeting every 1-2 months to identify and address additional pastoral care needs. Ministers and ministers-in-residence generally attend the meetings.

### *Activities this past year:*

We continue to provide loaner medical equipment to members and friends, and make sure equipment is available for visitors to campus.

Lay Ministers met monthly, virtually (led by Gay Hybertsen) for skill building & had their annual retreat in virtual format. Lay Ministers carried the pastoral care cell phone formerly carried by interns, and responded to all callers. Sunday listening presence **has been flexible** - in-person when services are in person, online when services online.

Support groups also continued online with Zoom and are well-attended.

- ⇒ *Coping with Chronic Conditions* support group meets twice monthly, and is facilitated by Chris Smith.
- ⇒ *Memory Matters*, a twice monthly meeting for folks with memory issues and their loved ones, continues to meet twice monthly, and is well attended. This group is led by Gay Hybertsen and Kathy Gilbert.
- ⇒ *Caregiver support group* meets twice monthly, and is facilitated by Les Vivian.
- ⇒ *Grief support education/support group* has not met during the church year.

### Practical Care Network (PCN)

There are approximately 70 church members who continue to be willing to provide rides, meals, errands, etc. for folks in need. PCN provides services about twice monthly.



(continued on next page)

## Caring Ministry Team

### Education and Resources

We continue to be available to assist church folks find resources for variety of needs. Sometimes we direct people to our Facebook Community Page. Other times we provide county resources of which we are aware of. We've helped with housing needs, caregiver needs, end-of-life resources. Due to the pandemic, we were unable offer our community resource table on the patio.

### Outreach

Every time a support group meets, a person provides a ride, a Lay Minister lends a compassionate ear, an outreach phone call is made, potential deep, meaningful connections can occur.

### *Anticipated goals/projects for next year:*

There are a few BIPOC lay ministers, we hope to recruit more. When campus reopens for Sunday services, we plan to resume a twice-monthly resource table set up for outreach. We'll be seeking one or two people for set-up and staffing.

*Lay Leaders:* John Holl, Peggy Holl, Gay Hybertsen, Chris Smith and Les Vivian are current lay leaders of Caring Ministry Team, and continue to meet quarterly.





## Larger UU Connections (LUUC) Ministry Team

*Purpose:* The purpose of the Larger UU Connections Ministry Team is to connect and coordinate First UU Church with the larger UU Community including:

- ◇ Camp de Benneville Pines
- ◇ Pacific Western Region (PWR)
- ◇ Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)
- ◇ UU United Nations Office (UU-UNO)
- ◇ UU Service Committee (UUSC)
- ◇ Partner Churches in Romania and the Philippines

*Noteworthy achievements in 2021-2022 (for more detail see individual reports which follow)*

- ◇ First Church donated \$5000 to Camp de Benneville Pines from 2021-2022 budget
- ◇ Encouraged and increased the number of Monthly Givers to Camp
- ◇ **Camp de Benneville Pines celebrated its 60th anniversary and Director's 27th year at the helm.**
- ◇ Raised money sending scholarships for 46 students as well as disaster relief funds for storm recovery for our Partner Church in the Philippines.
- ◇ Collected January Generosity Offerings for the following organizations:
 

* Camp de Benneville Pines	\$1,106
* Partner Church/Philippines	\$2,971
* Journey Toward Wholeness	\$338
* UU Service Committee	\$404
* Partner Church/Transylvania	\$290

*Future Plans:* LUUC will continue to strengthen connections with UUA and its suborganizations.

### Denominational Relations

The purpose of the Denominational Relations Team is to solicit, select and orient members to attend Annual UU General Assemblies (GA) and UU Regional Meetings (RM). Active members include John Schaibly and Jan Garbosky. This year there were two Pacific Southwest District meetings to dissolve the district and transfer assets. The new Pacific Western Region meeting was held in person and by ZOOM with 10 attendees and six delegates from our church attending. The Camp de Benneville Pines annual meeting was held in person at camp as part of the 60th Anniversary Celebration. It was presided over by First UU member, Pat Gordon.

*(continued on next page)*

## Larger UU Connections Ministry Team

### Friends of Camp de Benneville Pines (FdBP)

Purpose: To support de Benneville Pines (our UU Camp and Learning Center in the San Bernardino Mountains) through fund raising, publicity and hands-on work projects and to provide support for scholarships for All Church Camp and youth camps.

Major Accomplishments (July 2021 – June 2022):

**Friends of de Benneville Pines achieved our goal of raising \$50,000 toward the camp's goal of \$350,000 for the Share the Love campaign to sustain Camp while it was closed after fire and debris flow damage and COVID concerns. The Camp emerged carefully in soft reopening in Fall 2021, closed December through March, then opened April 1.**

**We celebrated the Camp's 60th anniversary onsite at the annual meeting on May 14, 2022. The festive event, which also gave tribute to Executive Director Janet James for 27 years of outstanding service, drew 200 Camp lovers from the Pacific Southwest service area. The Revs. Tom and Carolyn Owen-Towle were featured speakers and Church member Darlanne Hctor Mulmat headed the planning committee. At least 26 from First Church attended. A booklet, "Through the Years at Camp de Benneville Pines...Poetic Expressions" by Ardath Schaibly, was presented for sale with all proceeds to benefit Camp. That day \$300 was raised.**

Our First UU/Chalice All Church Camp was held June 3-5, resuming after two years of closure.

How Our Activities Have Happened:

The 60th Celebration was first planned to be held at our Hillcrest campus on December 4, 2021. Over COVID concerns, the planning pivoted to Spring 2022 at Camp.

Friends held group monthly meetings virtually by ZOOM August through May. We intend to resume in-person social potluck with hybrid meetings in June.

**We are grateful that the church's annual budget designated \$5,000 for Camp de Benneville Pines for the second year. The January 2022 generosity offering for Camp also raised \$1,106 for Camp. We especially appreciate all donors who are monthly givers to Camp de Benneville Pines. Substantial and reliable support is essential for the Camp to continue reopening.**

Anticipated Projects for next year:

- ◇ Hold in-person meetings, with ZOOM available for those at a distance
- ◇ Promote increased monthly giving to preserve the camp
- ◇ Resume fund-raising events for scholarships
- ◇ Promote Camp attendance

Lay Leadership: Ardath and John Schaibly led online monthly meetings.

Our group is particularly grateful for the help of Friends Pat Gordon, *Board President*, and Andy French, who has worked extensively onsite.



## Larger UU Connections Ministry Team

### Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)

#### Purpose:

The purpose of the UUSC Action Group is to bring awareness of the UUSC social justice programs of the UUA to First UU and encourage participation and financial support of the UUSC activities.

#### Activities:

In February, our Guest Minister was Rev. Kathleen McTigue, Past Director of the UU College of Social **Justice, one of UUSC's Programs. We also received a Generosity Offering for UUSC in January.**

In March First UU solicited funds for the Emergency Response Fund used to protect and advance human rights for Ukrainian refugees.

In recent months the President of UUSC, Reverend Mary Katherine Morn delivered a sermon message at the invitation of Reverend Rebecca Merton, Freedom for Immigrants staff person. She reminded us of the power of our flaming chalice symbol. It became a symbol during WW II, but it had long been a symbol of religious liberty and political resistance in the face of oppression throughout Europe. Rev. Morn also invited any who wanted to join her in a small circle to dialogue or ask questions about our SOLACE program.

#### SOLACE (Souls Offering Loving and Compassionate Ears)

Our SOLACE program is an example of befriending asylum seekers who have crossed our Otay Mesa border and who are presently detained in the Otay Mesa Detention Center. We currently have 22 Pen Pals, volunteers who have been given ideas and resources to carry on a conversation with individuals who wish to have a letter writing friend. Our former Social Justice Coordinator gave us a prototype letter of agreements and understandings about this friendship, responsibilities and confidentiality issues.

Our Pen Pal volunteer coordinator also provides us ideas and resources to encourage us in writing on various topics, or sending designs to color while in detention, etc. During the pandemic, it has been more difficult to meet as a group of volunteers, so we gather virtually on ZOOM. The leadership team include Soledad (Cholé) Diaz, Mayra Jones, Jane Uhle, Rodrigo Ibanez de Saudi, and Kathy Smith.

If you are not familiar with UUSC, here is a summary of their valuable work:

#### Who is the UUSC?

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is a nonprofit, nonsectarian organization advancing human rights together with an international community of grassroots partners and advocates.

#### Purpose, Mission:

UUSC advances human rights and social justice around the world, partnering with those who confront unjust power structures and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies. Their work is grounded in the belief that all people have inherent power and dignity.

For more information about the work of the UUSC and how you can take part, please visit their UUSC website [uusc.org](https://uusc.org).

## Larger UU Connections Ministry Team

### Partner Church, Romania

Purpose of group: To sustain and nurture the relationship between First UU and our Partner Church, the Unitarian Church in Brassó, Romania.

Two major activities or accomplishments (July 2021 through June 2022) and How Did They Happen: **The pandemic continued to severely restrict “Activities” in the normal sense for both Congregations. After a long time of meeting outside (only for the hardy during Winter!), the Brassó Church has again been able to hold in-person, indoor Services (masked and distanced), while the San Diego Church has only recently resumed in-person Services, still outside, and masked and distanced. Both Congregations have experienced disruptions of their “normal” routines, and both have put more focus on serving the needs of their communities, as so many have been affected by the illness or death of family and friends, the loss of jobs and/or housing, and food insecurity.**

Naturally, personal visits were not practical, but we have managed to stay in contact via email and Facebook postings. In addition to the normal greetings there have been two significant exchanges, the first when we learned about the striking parallels between the celebrations of Day(s) of the Dead in Mexico (as well as here) and those in much of Eastern Europe. This led to a Window article that included a poignant memory of Rev. Benedek, concerning a grave of unknown Soviet soldiers (see picture).

More recent and urgent contact has been around the situation in Ukraine. Romania borders both Ukraine and Moldova, and it has become a path for thousands of refugees. A number of people on our Partner e-list were wanting to know how this was affecting the Brassó Church, and if/how we might help. We were able to learn that most of those refugees are passing through Romania, with almost no direct effect on our Partner Congregation (save for individual members helping in the crisis). We were also given leads on several organizations that are effectively helping, and I was able to share that with our First UU Ministers, our Partner Church e-list, and the Social Justice Team. This has added to the connections already happening with Orange Coast UU and Jewish Family Services, in addressing our own crisis, the thousands of Ukrainian and other refugees at the US-Mexico border.



Anticipated Projects for next year:

It is a difficult time to anticipate what comes next, given the still present Covid, the Staff and modality changes at First UU, the War, the flow of refugees, etc. I hope we can expand our communication, perhaps with some opportunities for the Ministers of both Congregations to get to know each other.

*Lay leaders:*

Dan Ratelle, *Chair*

Resource People: Ken Herman, Liz Jones

# Larger UU Connections Ministry Team

## Partner Church, Philippines



*Student Studying by Candlelight*

Purpose – The Purpose of our Committee is to coordinate efforts to connect with and support the members of our Partner Church in Malingin on the island of Negros in the Philippines.

Activities or accomplishments:

Our two major accomplishments this year all under the heading of fundraising to support the members of the Congregation in Malingin. Thanks to the generosity of our members we were able to provide scholarship support for 42 students in elementary and high school this year. In

addition, following a Typhoon in December we held a generosity offering to help defray some of the costs of repair and financial support for the members of the Malingin congregation.



*Noe Castaneda's home after Typhoon*

We are also pleased to announce that the minister of our Malingin congregation, Noe Castaneda was ordained this Spring.



*Noe Castaneda's Ordination*

How our activities have happened for the past year:

We met as a steering committee primarily by Zoom, with occasional meetings following church services on the patio. Our fundraising was done through the **Church's regular publications (The Window and First Words) as well as during the service for the generosity offering in January.** Some email outreach was done to our regular supporters.

Anticipated projects for next year:

We anticipate continued work in raising funds for the scholarship program, and working to raise awareness within our congregation of our Partnership with this wonderful congregation in the Philippines.

Lay Leadership: Liz Jones, Rev. Carolyn Owen-Towle, John Schaibly, Rick Zemlin

## Family and Lifespan Ministry Team

The Family and Lifespan Ministry Team is responsible for all programming designed to engage people of all ages. While this Ministry Team is often most associated with programming aimed at children, youth and their families, it also includes Emerging **Adult Ministry (aka “Young Adult Group”) and Adult Religious Education.** The staff responsible for facilitating these ministries are Program Director, Tony Bianca, Program Assistant, Kate Collier, and, until March 2022, Youth Coordinator Käthe Larick.



### General Overview

The general trend for all of our Family and Lifespan Ministry Programs can be summed up as transitioning from 100% online offerings back to in-person offerings.

**While this is often described as “reopening”, it is, perhaps, better thought of as a process of “recreating.”** None of the staff are in the same positions as they were in June 2021. Tony Bianca has shifted from Program Coordinator to Program Director, Our Youth Coordinator, Käthe Larick, is no longer on staff, and we have hired a new Program Assistant, Kate Collier. As a result, even those programs that have been continuously offered throughout the pandemic are now being run differently as staff responsibilities shift.

Additionally, while we are now meeting in-person again, we are still meeting outdoors. For obvious reasons, the inability to meet indoors means that programs need to be adapted or changed completely to accommodate a different set of logistical realities. All of our programs will continue to shift and adapt as COVID restrictions change, lay volunteers return and new ones are recruited, and the number of individuals participating in these programs continues to grow as people return to church after two years of online-only participation.

For these and other reasons, it has become clear that we are in a process of recreating and reimagining what Family and Lifespan Ministry Programs will be like at First UU. While this process has many challenges, it is also a time of creativity, innovation and growth. We have seen a recent increase in new families with young children, and new staff members are bringing fresh, new ideas. We also want to ensure that we create programs that fully embrace the reality that we are one congregation with two campuses. So we will be thinking deeply about what we can do as a Family and Lifespan Ministry Team to be less Hillcrest-centric and better integrate our South Bay Campus into the work of our ministry.

To help meet these challenges, Program Director, Tony Bianca, is pursuing additional professional **development and has been accepted into the UUA’s Maters Level Religious Educators Credentialing Program.** It is his hope that this time of re-creation will be the beginning of a journey toward building a more diverse, vibrant and engaging Family and Lifespan Ministry at First UU.

### **Children’s Religious Education (CRE)**

At the beginning of this year, all CRE was happening online. Program Director, Tony Bianca, was meeting with children from both our Hillcrest and South Bay Congregations twice weekly for stories, art, check-in time and to learn the ukulele.

CRE has now returned to happening in-person during the 9:30 Service at our Hillcrest Campus. Children are dismissed after the Time for All Ages and go together to the playground area behind room 105. After a time for check-ins and a brief story on the theme of the day, the children are given a variety of activities to choose from that support that theme. Some activities are open to all ages, others are limited to children in grades 3 and up. This model of CRE allows us to serve children of diverse ages with fewer adult staff/volunteers while also creating a stronger sense of community across age groups. Many of the older children enjoy working with the younger children but still have the option to engage in activities and conversations that are

## Family Ministry Team

more appropriate for their age. We plan to continue in this way throughout the summer and then reevaluate the model in September when the school year begins and, hopefully, COVID restrictions are eased.

We have also added some program options after the Service from 11:40 to Noon on the Upper Patio. In response to a request for more physical activity, Program Director, Tony Bianca, is offering a Music and Movement group for all ages with a special focus on children in grades Pre-K through 2nd Grade. We are also continuing to offer our Ukulele Program on Sunday when there are enough children attending who wish to participate. We will continue these programs for as long as there is interest/attendance, with the knowledge that we will need to adapt and change what we offer as the population of children returning to in-person programs changes.

At our South Bay Campus, Program Director, Tony Bianca, is working with Rev. Omega to prepare for **Children's RE. Now that the Food Pantry is in its new location next door, the RE Room has been set up for use** again. We are also reimagining the area in the rear of the Worship Space that had previously been designated for young children. Many of the toys and supplies there were well-worn or broken and, more generally, we're attempting to remove toys and supplies from all our spaces that may easily spread germs. Our hope is to create a space that is welcoming for families with young children, but to do so in a way that is safe, sanitary and inviting.

### Youth Group & Emerging Adults

After a time of successfully meeting on Zoom, our Youth Group experienced several conflicts and the individual members of the group expressed a desire to no longer affiliate with the church. Currently, we do not have a functioning youth group nor a Youth Coordinator on staff.

Our Emerging Adult Group has always been small in numbers in recent years and, during the pandemic, stopped meeting altogether. Traditionally, this group has been facilitated by the Intern Minister and/or Lead Minister. As we currently have neither of those, there has been no movement to restart the Emerging Adult Group at this time.

We have, however, begun the process of hiring a new, part time Youth and Emerging Adult Coordinator who will be responsible for both of these Program areas. It is our hope to have that position filled in the early months of the fall, at which time those programs will be recreated from the ground up.

### Parent Lounge

In the earlier part of this year, the Parent Lounge group was meeting weekly on Zoom each Sunday for conversation, community and support. Now that we are meeting in-person again, the group has returned to their traditional one meeting each month on the 1st Sunday. Amanda Birmingham and Abby Marcato have taken on the responsibility of co-facilitating the group and choosing the monthly topic for discussion.

**Additionally, Program Director, Tony Bianca, has begun a group text with parents using the What's App platform.** This allows parents to opt in to a group text conversation to communicate information more efficiently. While Tony is part of the conversation, Mindy Hochgesang initiated the idea and is the group **Admin. In the short time we've been using it, this has been a highly effective means of communicating and** has created a deeper sense of connection and community.

### Adult Religious Education

**For several years now, Adult Religious Education has been on what might best be described as "auto pilot."** First UU has several groups with strong lay leaders that have continued to meet online throughout the pandemic and which are now starting to gather in-person again. These groups, however, have been largely

## Family Ministry Team

self-sustaining as a result of their leaders' initiative and had only minor logistical support from staff.

Working with the Interim Committee (Exec), Program Director, Tony Bianca, has begun the work of slowly recreating our Adult RE Programs and has proposed a model of Adult RE that includes:

- ⇒ Formal classes and workshops offered by ministers, staff lay leaders and local professionals
- ⇒ Discussion and Affinity groups led by lay volunteers
- ⇒ One-time sessions focused on a specific topic of interest
- ⇒ Open attendance groups focused on meditation, mindfulness and other spiritual practices

Each program offering will be run by its individual leader(s) but will be coordinated and supported by Program Director, Tony Bianca. This model of Adult RE has worked extremely well at First UU in the past and it is our hope that it will do so again. In addition to programs that have continued to meet throughout the pandemic such as the Christian Study Group, Conscious Communication and our various mediation groups, Marge Wurgel and Keith Mesecher are offering the first new, post-COVID program, a course entitled **"Blossoming Through Mindfulness and Meditation."**

Our Whole Lives (OWL)

Because of the nature of the content and instruction, OWL is not offered in an online format. As a result, we have not offered OWL for a couple of years. Additionally, all of our OWL-trained staff are no longer with us. We do, however, have an OWL facilitator and trainer, Everardo Aguilar, as a member of our congregation. Program Director, Tony Bianca, has been in contact with Everardo to discuss the history of OWL at First UU and make preliminary plans for a path forward, including the possibility of holding an OWL Training here.

Whether at a training hosted by us or at one of the trainings offered by the UUA, our plan is to have Program Director, Tony Bianca, and Program Assistant, Kate Collier, trained by the fall so that we can begin to offer OWL again once we have the ability to meet indoors.

Worship

Program Director, Tony Bianca, attends weekly worship meetings and, in addition to other duties, is responsible for the weekly Time for All Ages that is part of our Sunday services. Families also overwhelmingly report loving outdoor worship. They feel that it is a more welcoming experience for families **with young children, and that the space allows them to feel less concerned about whether their children's behavior matches more traditional expectations about how children are "supposed to" behave.** The area near the memorial wall has very organically become the space where families with young children congregate and we have begun setting up three or four tables in that area each Sunday to facilitate children coloring, eating or engaging in other activities while their parents are engaged in worship. As we transition back inside for Sunday worship, parents have expressed a desire to think creatively about how we might continue providing this kind of space for families. This could mean reimagining how we use our indoor space and/or continuing to offer an outdoor area where families and individuals can watch the livestream together on Sunday mornings.

As we start gathering for in-person worship at our South Bay Campus, Program Director, Tony Bianca, will also be involved in helping to plan the parts of those services that are relevant to Families, Children and Youth. Additionally, we hope to have a Sunday RE program at South Bay similar to the programming we offer at Hillcrest. Our Family and Lifespan Ministry Team serves our entire congregation at both campuses, and we are committed to creating systems and structures that support our ability to do so moving forward.



## Social Justice Ministry Team

### Social Justice Ministry Team – Acting on Our Values to Help Heal the World

The Social Justice Ministry Team is led by the Social Justice Executive team (SJET). Current members of the team include, Steve Gelb, Laurie Gerber, James Long, Kathy Smith, and Rev. Omega. Kay Chandler also served for part of the year, and visiting ministers Michael Brown, Deanna Vandiver, Kathleen McTigue, and Suzelle Lynch also participated in meetings. Rev. Kathleen Owens participated with SJET until the end of August.

SJET meets twice a month (online) to facilitate and support Social Justice work in the congregation and in its Social Justice Action Groups. These teams include: Climate Justice, Organizing for Justice, Palestine/Israel Social Justice Team, Rainbow Action, Reproductive Justice, SOLACE (Souls Offering Loving and Compassionate Ears), and UPTOWN Community Service Center. (Individual Action Group reports follow in the next section of the annual report.)

In August SJET held a meeting with leaders of the action teams to discuss the three, fifth Sunday service opportunities during this fiscal year for teams to lead worship. Journey Toward Wholeness and SOLACE jointly led the October, fifth Sunday service, and the Palestine/Israel Social Justice team led the January fifth Sunday service. Organizing for Justice will lead the May fifth Sunday. In April the Climate Justice team led the service that coincided with Earth Day activities. SJET helped the Social Justice teams connect with the appropriate ministerial and worship team members to plan their services.

This year the members of SJET adapted to the loss of the Social Justice Coordinator staff position which previously led and oversaw its work. This required monitoring and dispensing funds in the SJET budget and preparing a budget request for the next year, as well as taking responsibility for getting out the weekly Social Justice! E-News newsletter. **Among other things, SJET dispensed funds to support Rainbow Justice's trolley in the upcoming annual Pride parade, to buy tickets for First UU members to attend Project New Village's Fannie Lou Hamer award celebration, and to back a SOLACE initiative to help immigrants held in the Otay Mesa Detention Center.**

SJET member Laurie Gerber creatively expanded the content and reach of the E-News to include, among other things, information about what SJET was working on and how to get in touch with SJET. The latter was made easier by the creation of the SJET@firstuusandiego.org email address that has been ably monitored by James Long.

**A great deal of SJET's work this year focused on implementing the revised Generosity Offering policy that had been put in place by last year's SJET team. The new model is based upon building accountable relationships with grassroots organizations that are led by and serve BIPOC citizens. Instead of maintaining a purely charitable relationship congregants are encouraged to volunteer, serve, and learn along with staff and volunteers of the organizations. SJET established promising, generative relationships with Project New Village, Sharia's Closet, and the Environmental Health Coalition. SJET invited congregants to nominate other potential organizations for partnerships using an online form. When a nomination is received SJET members research the organization and, if it appears to meet the criteria, schedule a field trip to speak with the organizations' leaders and observe it in action. In December Project New Village named First UU as a recipient of its Fannie Lou Hamer legacy award. SJET arranged to bring a sizable group of congregants to the downtown in-person celebration at which Board President Julie Forest accepted the award on behalf of the congregation.**

SJET has also served as a liaison between Generosity Offering recipient groups and the worship team to provide speakers, videos, and text to inform the congregation during the Generosity Offering portion of the worship services.

## Social Justice Ministry Team

### South Bay Food Pantry

Purpose: We aspire to let service be our prayer by addressing food insecurity and economic hardship among South Bay and First UU-affiliated individuals and families. Free food, diapers, feminine hygiene products and other necessary items are distributed weekly from the site of the First UU South Bay Campus. The pantry is sustained through partnerships with the **San Diego Food Bank and Feeding San Diego**, “food rescue” relationships with multiple area retail food establishments, and essential funding from FUUSD donations and pledges and grant-funding.



Two major activities or accomplishments (July 2021 – June 2022)

- Met increased demand: Our weekly Saturday walk-through food distribution now serves an average of 235 households and over 1,000 individuals per week (up from approximately 120 households in 2020 and 150 in 2021). Food insecure clients from the South Bay (a region disproportionately impacted by Covid-19 and inflation), receive meat, poultry, artisanal bread, bakery products from Starbucks, shelf-stable groceries, sundry refrigerated foods, and a wide variety of fresh produce. Unhoused clients are provided food items which can be prepared and consumed without access to a cooking facility. **Volunteers also deliver meals to several FUUSD households which can't travel to obtain food at our Chula Vista location.** We distribute diapers for infants and toddlers each Sunday morning through our Infant Diaper and Period Products Distribution Program. The pantry won a merit-based competition through the Regional Diaper Bank to be one of five pilot period products distributors.
- Adapted to operational and management challenges: Until the spring of 2022, the South Bay Food Pantry utilized space in the three suites that comprise the First UU South Bay campus, closed to other uses during the Covid-19 pandemic. As the long-awaited reopening of the campus approached, an adjacent suite was rented for pantry use. Volunteers conducted a major, prolonged renovation of the new suite and, in March, moved into Suite 105. This spring, our operations were reorganized into a collective, team structure. In addition, we have opted to apply to become an Affiliate Organization (AO) under the Social Justice ministry.

Anticipated Projects for Next Year

- Continue food and diaper distribution programs, expanding them as needed to meet demand.
- Further involve community members in the decision-making and leadership of the pantry.
- Foster stronger ties between the South Bay congregation and our local community. Recently-arrived Assistant Minister Rev. Dr. Omega Burckhardt has joined the work of the pantry, including Saturday morning distributions. She brings welcome bilingual (Spanish-English) skills, multicultural sensitivity and helpful perspectives to our team and the clients we serve.
- Install double doors and purchase a pallet jack to more efficiently move cases of food into and out of the pantry suite.
- Consider applying for a grant to purchase energy-efficient freezers and refrigerators.

(continued on next page)

## Social Justice Ministry Team

### List of Lay Leadership

- \* Nina Douglass, *Communications Coordinator*
- \* Bella Furth, *Records Coordinator*
- \* Mindy Hochgesang, *Diaper & Period Products Distribution Program Coordinator*
- \* Valerie Jaques, *Facilities Coordinator*
- \* Armin Kuhlman, *Financial Coordinator*
- \* Deirdre Lonergan, *Saturday Distribution Coordinator*
- \* Sophia Lopez-Zimmer, *Food Acquisition Coordinator*
- \* Maureen McNair, *Founder and Food Coordinator Emeritus*
- \* Dan Ratelle, *Midweek Coordinator*

### Food Program Volunteers

Adrienne Kaplan	Antonio R.	Käthe Larick
Alice & Doug Diamond	Carlos P.	Katrina Peterson
Andrea Spiero	Ester M.	Kay Chandler
Andres & Santiago Lopez-Zimmer	Hector A.	Kay Phillips
Andrew Fox & Family	Helen S.	Kiah Crowley
Anna & Mark Kelley	Irma P.	Laura Ball
Armin & Rhea Kuhlman	Jesus A.	Leo Casas
Barbara Davenport	Jorge D.	Lety & Manny Reyes
Brian Koughl	Jose D.	Liz & Scott Jones
Christina Willis	Karina J.	Louise Titlow
Dan Heiserman	Lupita G.	Marc Narkus-Kramer
Dave & Jackie Spierman	Marcia B.	Maria Piña
Dave Phillips	Margarita V.	Nan & Bob Hazelton
Elaine Rodriguez	Maria C.	Nancy Fisk
Eric & Gay Hybersten	Ramon R.	Nancy Toba-Laba
Fiamma Straneo	Rico S.	Newt Ferris
Gina Woodard	Rosa R.	Nicole Woodman
Helen Ojha	Terry R.	Olivia Martinez
Jack Soule		Robin Church
Jeff Kline		Rosalba Ciampi
Jim Ferguson		Sara Ferguson
Jinny Batterson		Sebastian Hochgesang
John & Peggy Holl		Steve Howard
Juliana Humphrey		Steven Gelb
Karen Kircher		Sue Marberry
Kate Collier		Vanessa Pool

## Social Justice Ministry Team

### Rainbow Action Group

Accomplishments July 2021 – June 2022:

- ◇ Continued monthly Coffee Klatch socials, online and in person
- ◇ Celebrated Welcoming Days of Observance in Sunday Services
- ◇ July 2021 – Helped produce 2021 Pride Service
- ◇ July 2021 – Pride Picnic at a private home
- ◇ September – October 2021 – Hosted 5th Transgender Inclusion Workshop
- ◇ September 2021 - participated in AIDS Walk
- ◇ October 2021 – Began Twilight Walks in Balboa Park
- ◇ November 2021 --- **Participated in Mama's Kitchen** Annual Pie Sale Fundraiser by selling Thanksgiving pies and hosting the only Hillcrest Pie drive-through distribution site at the Hillcrest First UU campus.
- ◇ November 2021 --- Helped produce and present Transgender Day of Remembrance Service at First UU
- ◇ December 2021 – Participated in Light Up the Cathedral
- ◇ March 2022 --- Successfully completed Welcoming Congregation Recertification
- ◇ May 2022 Began hybrid Coffee Klatch
- ◇ May 2022 - **Joined San Diego Pride's DevOut, a faith community comprised of other LGBTQ affirming congregations in San Diego**



Anticipated projects for 2022 and 2023:

- ◇ Promote Diversity and Inclusion in Rainbow Action events and membership
- ◇ Participate in Pride Rally, Service and Parade
- ◇ **Continue support of Mama's Kitchen through pie distribution**
- ◇ Continue support of AIDS Walk
- ◇ Participate in Light up the Cathedral
- ◇ **Continue participation in San Diego Prides' DevOut**
- ◇ Highlight Transgender Day of Remembrance Service
- ◇ Highlight Welcoming Days of Remembrance in Sunday Services
- ◇ Host educational Movie/Webinar in Fall
- ◇ Host educational Book Reading in Winter
- ◇ Contribute to Our Whole Lives trainings
- ◇ Staff a patio table when possible
- ◇ Continue monthly Coffee Klatch socials in person and online
- ◇ Continue Twilight Walks in the Park

Lay Leaders: John Keasler, *Co-Chair*; Louise Titlow, *Co-Chair*

## Social Justice Ministry Team

### Palestine-Israel Justice

The Palestine-Israel Justice Team strives to inform and mobilize members of First UU to recognize and counter inequality and injustice in Palestine-Israel, to work for the human rights of both Palestinians and Israelis, and to understand the role the US government plays in the conflict so that we as UUs may help to constructively shape it. We seek to promote a just peace in Palestine-Israel that reflects our UU values of respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every human being and justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.

We provide programs that call attention to and center the voices of marginalized groups within the UU, local, and global communities, often partnering with allies in the racial justice, anti-oppression, and human rights movements. We endeavor to raise awareness among UUs of biases against Muslims and Arabs, which can make the UU community feel uncomfortable and unwelcoming to them as well as less likely to engage on Palestine-Israel. We further seek to address injustice by highlighting similarities between the treatment of Palestinians in Israel-Palestine and that of people of color and other marginalized groups here in the US.

#### *Two Major activities or accomplishments (July 2021 through June 2022)*

- ◇ With the goal of centering the voices of Muslim- and Arab-Americans, two much maligned and misunderstood groups in the US, we hosted a presentation in September by members of the San Diego chapter of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee titled **“Who Are Arab Americans?”** and in January we organized a church service at First UU on the theme of **“The Interfaith Heritage of Islam and Its Influence on Unitarianism.”** Local activist and Muslim-American, Yusef Miller, presented the sermon titled, **“The Interfaith Heritage of Islam.”** During the service we introduced the book *Children of the Same God: The Historical Relationship Between Unitarianism, Judaism, and Islam*, which discusses the influence of Islam on Unitarianism and which was the topic of a February book discussion organized by our team and facilitated by Rev. Omega.
- ◇ In November, we hosted a virtual screening and discussion of the Academy Award-Nominated short film, *The Present*, by Palestinian-British filmmaker Farah Nabulsi, which dramatizes the dehumanizing treatment often faced by ordinary Palestinians going about their daily lives under the Israeli military occupation in the West Bank.

#### *Anticipated Projects for Next Year*

We plan to host a screening and discussion of an episode of the civil rights documentary, *Eyes on the Prize*, in partnership with Continuing the Conversation, a local anti-racist activist coalition. We also anticipate hosting additional film screenings, lectures, and book discussions, in addition to re-starting our olive oil sales once tabling is allowed again on Sunday mornings.

*Lay leaders:* Cathy Pfister and Steve Gelb (*co-chairs*), Beth Chopp, Kathleen MacLeod, Kathy Radinovsky

## Social Justice Ministry Team

### Climate Justice

*Purpose:* **The Climate Justice Team's purpose is to create a spiritually grounded, informed and action-oriented community that provides hope for all beings through systemic action that stops climate change and heals our planet.**

*Two major activities or accomplishments (July 2021 through June 2022)*

1. Held monthly meetings through Zoom to grow our membership and increase our visibility in the church and the wider community. Discussions included impact of agriculture and our food choices on the planet; weather and the changing climate of southern California; the City of San Diego Climate Resiliency Plan; the military and toxic PFAS in the environment; transit actions for the climate; the potential impact of carbon pricing on the environment; and ways to help elect candidates who would take action to reduce climate change. We included weekly environmental actions in the Window and Social Justice News.
2. Sponsored Earth Day service with the Environmental Health Coalition; Presented webinar to UU Seniors on Seniors and Climate Change; Collected signatures on petitions to put public transit on the ballot. Collaborated with other climate and environmental groups on various actions.

*Anticipated projects for next year:*

Present programs on:

1. Should nature have legal rights?
2. Fast Fashion and Its Impact on the Planet
3. Are plastics really recyclable?
4. Green or sustainable investing
5. Food and Water Watch, Food Equity
6. Water quality & clean water program
7. Electrify Your Home
8. Plastics Pollution Impact on Oceans, Health
9. Carbon removal and blue carbon
10. Indigenous techniques for stewardship of the earth

We plan to continue to work with other organizations on climate change, support the work of UU the Vote and support candidates for office who believe that the climate emergency is real and who will take leadership on this issue. We will continue to be both educational and action oriented.

*Lay Leaders:* Rhea Kuhlman and Armin Kuhlman, *Co-Leaders*

## Social Justice Ministry Team

### SOLACE Immigration Detention Visitation Action Group

During the pandemic of the last two years, SOLACE regrouped into a Pen Pal writing program which serves those in immigration detention at the Core Civic managed, Otay Mesa Detention Center on the border.

We currently have 22 Pen Pals matched with 22 immigration volunteers from the greater San Diego County Community. Our Pen Pal Manager remains Mayra Jones. She created a large trove of resources online to support our volunteers with topics, ideas, resources within the community. The majority of our volunteers are non church members who have been active in the past when we had physical visitation visits.

Over the last year we have been able to have Speaker Meetings, second Tuesday of the month which serve as a forum for information-sharing. We have had former detainees who returned to their families/sponsors as speakers as well as speakers from the community at large. Our community leadership team meets first Monday of the month for virtual zoom meetings to discuss any business at hand and to decide on topics for monthly meetings.

Our leadership team is comprised of Soledad (Chole) Diaz, Jane Uhle, Mayra Jones, Rodrigo Ibanez de Sandi, and Kathy Smith.

### Reproductive Justice

Reproductive justice focuses not only on access to safe and legal reproductive health care, but also the social, political, and economic inequalities across communities that historically have limited access. As a voting member of the San Diego Coalition for Reproductive Justice (CRJ), our Reproductive Justice Group is an active partner with other community organizations working to **protect everyone's right to make informed decisions**—free from government interference—about reproductive health. We also provide the church community with current and accurate information about the many issues related to this topic.

*Major activities with the Coalition for Reproductive Justice (July 2021 through June 2022)*

- ◆ Hosted the 49th Roe v. Wade Anniversary Celebration. The proceeds from this event allowed the CRJ to donate \$10,000 to Access Reproductive Care Southeast. ARC-Southeast provides funding and logistical support to ensure those in the south receive safe and compassionate reproductive care including abortion services. Through education and leadership development, ARC-Southeast builds power in communities of color to abolish stigma and restore dignity and justice
- ◆ Held a membership event with 100% of the proceeds (\$3,500) going to the Texas Abortion Fund

*Anticipated projects for next year:*

The Reproductive Justice Group will continue to represent the church on the Coalition for Reproductive Justice; engage the church community and others in activities that broaden awareness about the many facets of the reproductive justice movement, and encourage action to create change.

*Lay Leader:* Karen Lamphere

## Social Justice Ministry Team

### Organizing 4 Justice (O4J)

Organizing 4 Justice (O4J) works with the San Diego Organizing Project (SDOP) on a number of initiatives. In 2021–2022, these included housing, homelessness, police reform, and Covid relief. Some **of this year's activities:**

- ⇒ Convened a zoom meeting with San Diego District 3 City Councilmember Steven Whitburn to discuss issues related to housing, homelessness, and police reform in our communities – about 50 members of the community attended.
  - \* In planning and carrying out this action, collaborated and built relationships with members **and clergy at St. Luke's Episcopal church in North Park (a congregation that includes a large number of African immigrants)**
- ⇒ Participated in multiple townhalls and research actions in support of PrOTECT, a police reform measure coming before the City Council.
  - \* Sent an open letter to Councilmember Whitburn urging him to support the measure, signed by 50 church members, friends, and action teams.
  - \* Participated in a zoom face-to-face with Councilmember Whitburn, San Diego District Attorney Summer Stephan, and SDPD officials.
- ⇒ Participated with multiple SDOP congregations to advance countywide action and organizing around affordable housing, which has so far resulted in the SD Board of Supervisors dedicating five parcels of county land for affordable housing projects.
- ⇒ Nominated community members to receive SDOP Covid-19 Emergency Financial Assistance grants, aimed at supporting people not eligible for state and federal Covid relief.
- ⇒ Isabella Furth became an SDOP board member in January 2021, and is now serving as secretary of **SDOP's Executive Board and taking part in SDOP's Strategic Planning process.**

Lay leaders: Isabella Furth, Erik Kaestner, Newt Ferris.



## Worship and Program Ministry Team

### Music Ministry

Marshall Voit, *Music Director*

Tony Bianca, *Handbell Programs Director, Chalice Choir Director, Children's Choir Director*

Lorelei Garner, *South Bay Music Coordinator*

Andrea Speiro, *JUUL Tones Director*

#### Music Ministry

The 2021 - 2022 fiscal year, like the one before, was defined in large part by our community's response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic; our music ministry offered no exception to that. During the latter half of 2021, First UU staff musicians worked diligently to ensure meaningful musical contributions to online worship, including recording music both individually and as a team, and managing the production of music recordings that featured our various ensembles.

Music Director Marshall Voit joined our congregation in January, 2022, and helped us transition back into live musical performance for Sunday services, whether streamed from Bard Hall, or in person and streamed from **the Hillcrest patio. Marshall's contributions were immediately felt in our worship design process and delivery,** and he is thrilled to have joined a team of capable, sensitive musicians and humans.

In April, 2022, staff Pianist Chase Pado resigned from his position, creating an opportunity to reimagine staff roles and music program goals. In the coming year, Lorelei Isidro-Garner will assume direction of the **Treble Choir (formerly the Women's Choir; see below), and an official position as congregational organist. Marshall's** role will be adapted to emphasize broader community involvement and non-worship musical programming (concerts, sing-alongs, etc.). We hope to round out our team by hiring a Collaborative Pianist in the early weeks of the new fiscal year.

#### **Chalice Choir and Women's Chorus**

After a few months' hiatus from online meetings, which had been capably led by Program Director Tony Bianca, **our Chalice Choir and Women's Choir began meeting with Marshall in person in March, 2022. They** sang beautifully as a combined ensemble for our Easter service, and are preparing to sing both together and as distinct ensembles for our Music Sunday service on June 19, 2022.

**Based on discussions amongst the staff team and choir members, the Women's Choir will be renamed the Treble Choir in the 2022 - 2023 fiscal year on the basis of welcoming all sopranos and altos (i.e., treble singers) regardless of gender identity. Treble Choir rehearsals will move to Mondays from 7:15-8:30pm, under Lorelei's direction. The Chalice Choir will continue to meet on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:30pm, under Marshall's direction.**

*Yours in harmony,  
Marshall Voit*

#### Handbells Program

The Handbell ensemble has continued to meet and rehearse throughout the pandemic. We moved to outdoor **rehearsals to comply with our church's Covid policy. During the time when we were having online only** services, the Handbell ensemble created videos for services, and have now returned to playing live at outdoor services. Because this summer feels different to us than previous summers, we will not take our usual break for the summer months and will continue to rehearse throughout July and August.

## Worship and Program Ministry Team

### Children's Choir

Due to the logistical complications of singing outdoors with keyboards and children, The children's choir will continue to remain on hiatus until we can sing indoors. To continue providing a musical experience opportunity for our youngest children, Children's Choir Director Tony Bianca offers a weekly music-and-movement program on the upper patio after Sunday services.

*Respectfully Submitted by Tony Bianca*

### South Bay Music

Pandemic restrictions put much of our South Bay programming "on hold" this year, which left little in the way of music coordinating. Still, the South Bay Singers sing on, sing on, sing on. During the earlier part of the fiscal year, the Singers rehearsed online via zoom. We transitioned in early 2022 to in-person meetings, singing outside with masks on in one member's spacious backyard. We had been looking forward to performing for worship and had the opportunity to sing live in Hillcrest at our Easter service. It was a blessed experience singing and being amongst the other choirs and congregants. We are looking forward to singing for Sunday worship whenever we are called and able.

In the absence of programming at South Bay, I was able to make use of my skills at church by continuing to create music videos and recordings for worship, as well as songleading and playing various instruments during our live Sunday worship services. I feel fortunate to work alongside such a great worship team that inspires me often and supports me when I need it.

Two pieces of good news from South Bay UU: First, we had a really nice get-together at the South Bay Marina, where we engaged in conversation about the past year, and shared our feelings about South Bay's present status and our hopes and expectations for the future. Second, in May, South Bay UU hosted its first Saturday afternoon worship services led by Rev. Omega and Music Director, Marshall Voit. These Saturday afternoon services will occur twice monthly through the summer months, so keep your eye on the Window, and I hope to see you there.

*Cheers and blessings,  
Lorelei Isidro-Garner*

### JUUL Tones

The JUUL Tones continued to meet for fellowship and to maintain connections during the fall and winter of this fiscal year. Volunteer members expressed fatigue with singing individually in a recording format, so this was discontinued for several months. Ensemble director Andrea N-L continued to provide live music and audio/video contributions for Sunday services. As pandemic protocols permitted, rehearsals resumed outdoors and are now occurring on a weekly basis, with modifications such as mask-wearing and frequent breaks. Members are currently preparing for Music Sunday (June 19, 2022) as well as considering how to resume social justice and community support work in the future.

*Respectfully submitted by Andrea Speiro*

## Worship and Program Ministry Team

### UU Men's Fellowship (UUMF)

#### *Purpose of the Group*

Our mission is to support men in the quest for lives of compassion, integrity, responsibility, and balance. We are a caring, intentionally diverse brotherhood, committed to social justice, and offering opportunities for intimate sharing, personal growth, and spiritual deepening. The fellowship encourages men in their development as sons, fathers, and brothers.

UUMF is an active and vital organization of men in our church, both members and friends, who participate in our many activities **and who are committed and aspire to do men's work.** New men and all men friends and members of the church are always welcome. A Steering Committee is the organizing body of the group.

#### *Activities:*

To a large extent the number and type of activities the group could hold was severely limited by the restriction imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite these restrictions the group still met in-person on Zoom.



2021 Fall Renewal Weekend

- Fourth Monday Potluck and Discussions: A topic pertinent to men was discussed each month with about 15 men attending on Zoom. Virtual Fourth Mondays are planned through May 2022. Weather permitting we plan picnics on the Fourth Mondays of June, July and August in Morley Field, Balboa Park. In September 2022 we plan hybrid meetings (virtual and in person) beginning with a program by UUMF founder, the Rev. Tom Owen-Towle.
- UUMF currently sponsors thirteen Support Groups of five to eight men each. Most meet twice a month on Zoom.
- Several Meetings were held both in person and on Zoom to organize two Renewal Weekends: one in the fall and one in the spring.
- Bi-Monthly Steering Committee Meetings were instituted in 2022. These meetings are open to and welcome the participation of any member of the UUMF.
- The Fall 2021 Renewal Weekend was held at DeBenville Pines, October 29-31 **with the topic of "The Masks We Wear: How They Help Us, How They Limit Us."**
- The UUMF was able due to easing COVID restrictions to hold an in-person Annual Brotherhood Banquet at Marie Calendar's near San Diego State in February 2022. **20 men attended.**
- The Spring 2022 Renewal Weekend was held at DeBenville Pines, April 22-24 **with the topic of "Friends and Brothers: Nurturing the Connections in Our Lives."** **More than 40 men participated, many from other congregations around Southern California.**
- The UUMF will work with the Worship Committee to produce this year's Fathers Day Service in June 2022.
- Working with the Outreach and Growth Committee the UUMF will help produce the All Church Hootenanny on Saturday, July 30, 2022.
- Our mailing list of approximately 500 men and UU Churches within the Cluster and the old PSWD serves as the primary communication link to the fellowship.



#### *Goals for the next 1 to 3 years*

Encourage younger men, 21-40, to join and participate in the UUMF. Outreach to other UU men in the San Diego cluster and encourage them to participate in UUMF activities. To continue development of **an annual men's issues forum funded by bequests from former UUMF members.** As part of our outreach program and to attract younger members Les Vivian and John Keasler have worked with the young adult group at church and increased our exposure on Facebook.

*Lay leadership:* Co-conveners for the Fellowship are Andy French and John Keasler. The steering committee includes Denny Braun, Kim Cohn, Mike Dorfi, Ron Evans, Andy French, John Holl, John Keasler, Armin Kuhlman, Jason Leichter, **Derek Staats, Jerry Olinger, Les Vivian, and Peter Woodbury.** The Mens' Support Groups are organized by Armin Kuhlman. The 4th Monday meetings are organized by John Keasler. Andy French, Michael Dorfi and John Holl among several put substantial effort in producing the two annual renewals.

# Worship and Program Ministry Team

## Archives Committee

The Purpose of the Church Archives is to preserve the history of our church community here in San Diego, and make the material available for members and researchers now and in the future.

### *Activities or accomplishments (July 2021 through June 2022):*

The major accomplishment of this year has been the continued transition of our Archival materials from binders into acid free storage boxes.

The second accomplishment has been the entry of items into a database so that items can be found more efficiently.

Box	Folder	Name	DENR#	DATE	Comments
1	1	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	May 1961	
1	2	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	July-December 1966	File begins with 6 pages in order from 1966 that continues with July Board Meeting. No August meeting.
1	3	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - June 1967	
1	4	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	July - December 1968	No August meeting.
1	5	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - May 1969	
1	6	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	June - December 1969	No June, July, August or September meetings.
1	7	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - May 1972	
1	8	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	June - December 1972	No August meeting.
1	9	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - May 1973	
1	10	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	June - December 1973	No August meeting.
1	11	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - May 1974	
1	12	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	June - December 1974	No August meeting.
1	13	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - May 1975	
1	14	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	June - December 1975	No July or August meetings.
1	15	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - May 1976	
1	16	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	June - December 1976	
1	17	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - May 1977	
1	18	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	June - December 1977	
1	19	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - May 1978	
Box	Folder	Name	DENR#	DATE	Comments
2	1	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	June - December 1978	
2	2	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - May 1979	
2	3	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	June - December 1979	
2	4	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - May 1980	
2	5	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	June - December 1980	
2	6	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - May 1981	
2	7	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	June - December 1981	No October meeting missing.
2	8	Board Minutes and Packet	Church Board	January - May 1982	

### *How our activities have happened for the past year:*

We were permitted limited access to the archives room so that we could continue with our work. In most instances one person worked alone in the room, and occasionally two were able to work at the same time.

### *Anticipated projects for next year:*

We will continue our work of transferring materials and cataloging them. Recruitment of new members will be part of our work as they are able to open up more.

### *Committee Membership*

Liz Jones, *Chair*; Betty Boone, Rev. Tom Owen-Towle



## Worship and Program Ministry Team

### UU Seniors

UU Seniors is a program designed by older adults to encourage living the senior years of our lives to the fullest. Each third Saturday of the month we gathered at 10:00 am on Zoom to learn about a topic of interest and to share experiences. Lively discussions in Breakout Groups contributed to a sense of community among attendees.

From practical everyday needs to spiritual and emotional support, we covered a range of topics for living our lives to the fullest. Topics from July 2021 through June 2022 included Climate Change Impact on Seniors; Riding the Covid Roller Coaster; Riding the MTS Trolley to La Jolla; and an Art Conversation with John Keasler. Other programs were conversations with church ministers and **leaders on current church issues.** **Our page on the Church's website archived the video of each program.** Folks who missed a live Zoom program were able to view it online.

Throughout the past year, UU Seniors programs were planned by Marv Pulliam, Caroline Clark, Eli Shefter, Ann Mc Donald, Denny Braun, and Joan Helland who served as chairperson. **During the year we decided to change our name from "Living the Homestretch" to "UU Seniors."** **Reference to the "homestretch" put the focus on the end-of-life issues which was too limiting.** Our programs focus on the range of issues that affect seniors. With this change, we hope to attract more seniors to our programs. In the coming year we will continue to cover topics that promote living life to the fullest. Program topic suggestions are welcome.



## Worship and Program Ministry Team

### Earth Centered Spirituality Circle

The purpose of the Earth Centered Spirituality Circle (ECSC) is to create Pagan community, nurture Pagan spiritual growth, and act on our Pagan values to help heal the world. In doing this we provide a safe space in which individuals, families, and groups can explore and deepen their spiritual growth within Pagan and Earth-Centered traditions.

Two Major activities or accomplishments (July 2021 through June 2022)

- Our Yule Ritual was held in-person outdoors and was attended by around 50 participants. The pared-down ritual included some elements from years past, as well as new performances and participatory ritual elements. Feedback about Yule from attendees was overall positive. All of the proceeds from Yule ticket sales were donated to the Kumeyaay Diegueño Land Conservancy.
- This past year, we continued to offer all Sabbats (holy days) of the Pagan Year: Litha (summer solstice), Lammas (first harvest), Mabon (autumn equinox), Samhain (final harvest), Yule (winter solstice), Imbolc (first planting), Ostara (spring equinox), and Beltane (May day). We also **continued to host Pagan Conversations, as well as a new Q&A session “Drop In With A Witch.”** ECSC leadership was also invited to participate in Sunday worship services by calling the directions and setting sacred space.

For the past year, the majority of our programming has been online via Zoom. We have held in-person meetings and rituals as reopening rules have allowed, with Yule 2021 and Beltane 2022 both happening in-person on the Hillcrest Campus.

In the next year, we hope to continue to host more in-person rituals and welcome back members of our ECSC community who have been eager to make magic face-to-face. Additionally, we hope to utilize First UU's resources for hybrid online/in-person meetings to allow people to connect across distance for Pagan Conversations, classes, and potentially rituals. This next year is anticipated to be a year of re-grouping after a period of isolation, and the focus of leadership is on spiritual nourishment for our community.

#### *Lay leadership:*

Fernando Martinez  
Issel Martinez  
Jenner Daelyn  
Kiona Daelyn  
Rhiannon Rudisill Roselle



# Worship and Program Ministry Team

## Looking Glass Theatre

### *Purpose of Group:*

Looking Glass Theatre (LGT) builds community, fosters spiritual growth, and promotes UU values by producing and performing plays and musicals. It is intergenerational in nature and invites the community to both be involved in our productions as participants as well as audience.



### *Major Activities:*

The Edge of Noir

This 20-minute short play follows night-desk journalist Rocky Rockford and his PI contact as they try to solve a gem heist, because breaking the story could launch Rocky's career to the next level.

**This was Looking Glass Theatre’s second all virtual performance, directed by Kimberly Price. We are grateful to the wonderful performers and crew whose dedication is keeping Looking Glass Theatre performing through this strange time.**

### *Anticipated Projects for Next Year:*

As church guidelines ease and in-person activities are beginning to resume, we hope to provide live theatre productions to our community.

### *Lay Leaders:*

*Chair* – Elsie Sleeter

*Past Chair* – Gay Hybertsen

*Treasurer*: Rose Riedel

*Publicity*: Jordan Fraser



## Worship and Program Ministry Team

### Memorial Wall/Memorial Garden

The purpose of this committee is to act as a liaison between the artist, Jerry Thiebolt, and the church member who purchases a brick for the Memorial Garden Wall. The committee, in concert with a staff member, oversees this process and is responsible for keeping accurate and current records.

Bricks may be purchased by current church members, for future use by themselves, or for members of their immediate families. Jerry installs bricks once a year shortly before Easter. This year two bricks were added.



*The projects and goals for the foreseeable future are:*

1. Continued placing of bricks for members, who have previously purchased them, on the Memorial Wall.
2. Make available and sell bricks for the six Memorial Garden Walls.
3. Maintain spreadsheet for the Memorial Garden Walls.
4. Obtain executors names and contact information for members who have purchased bricks but have not yet died.
5. Install bricks for members long passed. For the past many years Betty Boone has provided invaluable assistance in procuring information in accomplishing this goal. Her time and effort is greatly appreciated.

Contact: Elaine Durson  
619-518-4383  
[eballerinad@gmail.com](mailto:eballerinad@gmail.com)



## Worship and Program Ministry Team

### UU Christian Study Group

#### *Purpose of Group:*

Welcome to the Unitarian Universalist Christian Study Group. We are a community of non-creedal Jesus followers and the Jesus curious in the history and tradition of Unitarian Universalism. We are members and friends of this congregation who share a common respect for the message of unconditional love taught by Jesus in the Gospels and in the Christian tradition from which Unitarians and Universalists emerged. We study all aspects of the world's religious and spiritual traditions so that this light may better shine in our own lives and in the world.

#### *Reflection on the Past Year:*

We called the Covid shutdown the Long Lent of 2020/21, a time of introspection, discipline, and reflection when we were cut off from each other and the world and focused on our inner journey. Last fall we started to meet again in person on our lower patio with masks and distancing. What a joy. We developed a workshop called **"What's In Your Spiritual toolbox."** We examined and worked with **traditional prayer, meditation and chanting**, both Western and Asian, and the deep work of contemplation. We also explored the lives of the Desert Fathers and the Desert Mothers who so embodied the tradition of contemplative prayer and what it might have to say to us today.

#### *Looking Ahead:*

A just and compassionate life and world is the very core of a Unitarian Universalist spirituality. The UUCSG provides thoughtful and challenging workshops and discussions to support individuals and the whole community in traveling this path with Jesus, Buddha, Moses, Jung and/or the Goddess. For the near future, we are planning on meeting just once a month. Our next topic will be to take up where we left off when the shutdown started in March of 2020. We were just completing a very thorough look at the work of Nicholas **Wade in the "Faith Instinct" which examines the very controversial idea that religion is product of human evolution and how it is playing out in the conflict between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.**

#### *Lay Leadership*

Curran Jeffery



## Worship and Program Ministry Team

### Cosmos

#### *Purpose of Group:*

Cosmos explores the intersection of Science, Cosmology and Spirituality. We look to learn from the story of the birth and evolution of our universe, coming from our best science, how we might live in a mutually enhancing, harmonious relationship with the whole earth community, and thereby contribute to the evolution of the universe. We have been watching, contemplating and discussing **Brian Swimme's series, HUMAN ENERGY PROJECT**, available on YouTube, to deepen our appreciation of this astounding universe we are part of. The thesis of this series is that humanity is evolving into a global mind, called by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, the Noosphere. We meet on Zoom from 1:00-3:00 pm on the first Sunday of every month.

#### *Lay Leadership*

Keith Mesecher, James Long and Bruce McGraw



