



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sunnyvale

April 2024

Fellowship News & Events



Join us on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in person or on Zoom at <https://bit.ly/uufs-sunday-service>. All our children join us in the sanctuary on the last Sunday of each month and then go from there with their teachers to their classrooms.

Sunday Services

Mother May I? A sermon on the Divine Feminine

March 31 @ 9:30 –10:30 a.m.

By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

Looking at the Easter Story through the lens of the "divine feminine," finding connections with the female archetypes of the Maiden, Mother, and Crone - and how in resurrection there is transformation.

Children's Sunday Morning Program

Children will arrive with their families at the 9:30 am sanctuary service. As is our tradition on the last Sunday of the month, the entire congregation will worship there together before participants in our Sunday morning program go back to the Community First School grounds. There, supervised by staff, they will paint Easter eggs and use them to decorate a tree before attending the congregational brunch with their families.

How I Met My Mother

April 7 @ 9:30 –10:30 a.m.

By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

No seriously... come and find out how I met my "mother" - in a spiritual/deific sense! A sermon on the joy of sacred epiphanies, involving REALLY big trees and a whole lot of stars!

Flower Ceremony (Intergenerational)

April 28 @ 9:30 –10:30 a.m.

By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

The Unitarian Flower Service was created by Rev. Norbert Fabian Chapek to celebrate the spirit of community. Our multi-generational service will include all ages! Don't forget your flower...

(Sunday Services on April 14 and 21 will be announced in the Weekly Updates.)

Ministers Musings

Spring is in the air! The temperature is rising, we've seen the sun a lot more than the dreary wintertime, and when we have rain, it is warmer than it was (I was able to wear shorts on purpose outside). The animals are flourishing – just outside my office window I hear the trill and song of some bird of indeterminable species (honestly, I never grew up around wild birdsong, so I thought my phone alarm changed itself again). As I walked out to my car this afternoon to take Geordyn to work, I was greeted with my car being covered in yellow pollen (if there is one thing that I miss about living in the desert, it is the lack of pollen). The time of renewal is upon us!

In this time of renewal and rebirth, I like to reflect on what I'd like to accomplish in the coming year. For me, it was registering for my very first doctoral level

course today. For you, it might be time to think about planting a new garden, visiting family for the upcoming spring holidays, or some much needed house cleaning or decluttering. While you're thinking about all the things that this season brings us, think also about what your community brings you. What does the Fellowship offer you? How does it feed your soul? How does it nurture your spirit? Thinking of those who came before you, how their spirit lives on in the work of the Fellowship: how can we till our own garden, or connect with our community further, or what can we do to bring some fresh air into the Fellowship, and into our time together?

Yes, the time of renewal is upon us (as well as the aforementioned pollen, so excuse me while I take an allergy pill and grab a tissue). Seriously though: what do you want to see for our future, and what can you offer to it?

Children's Religious Education: Update from Colleen Hamilton, Director of RE

Dear Families and Congregants,

Children in the Sunday Morning Program will continue learning about our faith tradition's values in April. Next up: interdependence, which Unitarian Universalists embrace as a source of strength. The draft of the UUA's new statement of purpose puts it this way: "With reverence for the great web of life and with humility, we acknowledge our place in it." Appreciating the power of communities and ecosystems will guide our activities this Earth Month and culminate in an intergenerational flower ceremony service in the tradition of Czech Unitarian founder Rev. Norbert Čapek and led by Rev Johnnie on the last Sunday of the month.

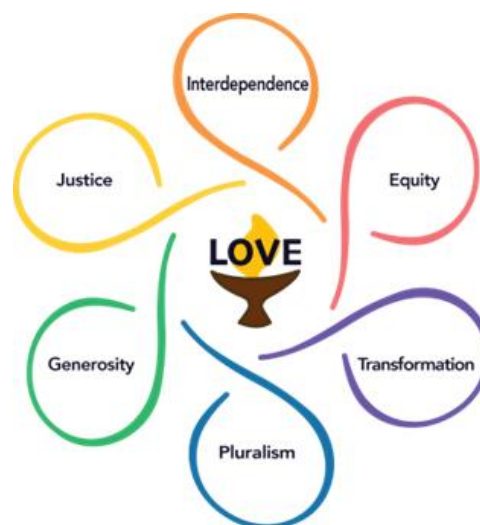
Religious Education puts young people in touch with the larger community, too. Last month, UUFS youth finished up a second session of Crossing Paths, a visit-based course in Unitarian Universalist practices in the context of religious pluralism. They chose to learn about Buddhism and visited the

Chung Tai Zen Center of Sunnyvale. Participant Joseph Healy appreciated the inward focus of the "traditional meditation" and Xander Menter marveled that the 20-minute sit seemed to alter his sense of time as it went by surprisingly fast. Both were charmed by lessons teaching compassion and collaboration to the gathering of children and youth they attended, especially co-creating a pizza and a garden out of paper!

May we stay connected with each other and with the community in the months ahead.

Article II and You

At our May Business Meeting, we will vote on whether our congregation will support the proposed revision to Article II of the Bylaws of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Article II is our statement of shared values, principles, purposes, and sources of inspiration. The final draft of the proposal was approved at the UUA General Assembly last year, including the diagram of the Shared Values Flower with six petals and Love in the center. In June, our three delegates will represent UUFS at this year's GA to vote on the final approval of the Article II proposal. In the meantime, we have enjoyed talks highlighting the values in the Shared Values Flower: Interdependence, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Generosity, Justice, and Love.



Opportunity to Be a General Assembly Delegate

The UUA General Assembly June 20-23 is virtual this year, so you can participate from the comfort of home. We have two UUFS delegates attending, and we are looking for a third delegate who is a UUFS member. You can register just for the business agenda, donations suggested. You can also register for access to the entire four-day program to attend workshops and bring new ideas to our congregation. Reimbursement for registration fee is available upon request. More information available [here](#).

Pledge Drive

Now is our chance to continue to weave together the fabric of our fellowship and give back to the community that gives so much to us each week. UUFS is kicking off our 2024 Pledge Drive.



The fellowship is here for each other in times of need. Now is the time that the fellowship really needs you. You can pledge via this simple form, which only takes 5 minutes to complete:

[Online Pledge Form](#)

Please submit your pledge by Sunday, April 14.

When considering your pledge, think about the gift you are giving to help your fellowship - it really doesn't take much. The vision budget is \$237,084, so the fellowship really needs your help. What can you do to help our community?

A Match Opportunity! For every annual pledge of \$4200 or more, our anonymous donor will offer an additional \$420 per pledge, up to a total of 10 pledges of \$4200 or more.

Note that UUFS can also accept stocks, bonds and other asset types that might make more sense for

you. Donations from an inheritance can be structured to your benefit as well, while going a long way towards a thriving fellowship. Please email pledge@uufs.org for more information.

This year, we are looking for ways to make giving both easier and more meaningful for everyone.

Over the coming weeks, we will be hosting several gatherings both live and virtual, providing opportunities to imagine our future together, and also to help you make the most of your tax deductible donation, including ideas or pointers to info on estate and tax planning that benefits you while helping our community thrive. Details on this approach will be available in next week's mid-week update.

Channel the energy you get spending time with your friends in UUFS every week - the services, events, volunteering, etc. Pledge what the fellowship means to you. Every contribution is a brick in the path to a thriving community and a more just and compassionate world.

With gratitude (and maybe a sprinkle of fundraising enthusiasm!),

The UUFS Pledge Drive Team
pledge@uufs.org

2024 UUFS Marketplace

Your Donations = Our Success

Don't wait to make your donation to the Marketplace, an important fundraiser for UUFS. The focus of donations is earth-friendly goods and services such as baked goods, jams, preserves, art work, jewelry, cards, etc. as well as pet sitting, rides to the airport, brunches, lunches, dinners, teas, barbecues, picnics, whatever you please! Everyone's contribution counts, from the marvelous to the mundane, in helping make our story a success. Consider soliciting donations from your favorite retailer or restaurant; we have a letter signed by Rev. Johnnie, along with a form and

return envelope to assist. Or, feel free to solicit the donation with your own personal request and fill out the online form so we can enter the donation into the auction catalog. We'll send a letter of thanks and acknowledge the donor in the catalog.

The deadline for donations to be included in the auction catalog is April 28. Donations can be made after that date, but they will not be included in the catalog. Paper forms and retail/restaurant donation request packages are available at the welcome desk during Sunday services, but we encourage use of the online donation form available [here](#). For questions, please email community.marketplace@uufs.org

Here are a couple of donations you can bid for on **May 19** as you enjoy the potluck brunch:



Play Day in Santa Cruz



Wine Tasting in San Benito County

Supporting Our Community and Values

Volunteer to donate food items or help prepare a meal to the LGBTQ+ shelter on April 7th!

Social Justice at UUFS will again be coordinating volunteers to provide a meal to 20 clients at a LifeMoves shelter in San Jose. We *welcome donations of food items* such as fresh fruit, butter, and salad dressing (specifics to be arranged). We are looking for *one more volunteer to help purchase and prepare food*, either together with the other volunteers on April 6th at Laurel Beecher's home or in your own home. We also need a *volunteer to drive the meal to the shelter* after the Sunday service on April 7th. Contact Laurel Beecher at social.justice@uufs.org to donate, volunteer, or get more information.

Activities

Authentic Selves Photo Exhibit at UUCPA

The photo-and-text exhibit, *Authentic Selves: Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and Their Families* will be hosted at UUCPA (505 East Charleston Road in Palo Alto). The traveling exhibit, which was produced by a wonderful organization called [Family Diversity Projects](#), will be displayed on three Sundays: March 31, April 7, and April 14, 2024, from 11:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m. More information [here](#) and [here](#).

Intercongregational All-Ages Game Night

Saturday, April 6th @ 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

At UU Fellowship of Sunnyvale

There will be a variety of teen and adult table games on hand—or bring one of your own. There will also be a staff-supervised table featuring games for younger children. Parents play knowing that their kids are happily occupied too. Enjoy good company and potluck snacks while we play.

Multigenerational Climate Discussion Circle

Saturday, April 20th @ 11:30 - 12:30 p.m.
Online via Zoom

This winter we are reading [What Kind of Ancestor Do You Want to Be?](#) edited by John Hausdoerffer, et al (2021). Published in association with the Center for Humans and Nature, this collection of essays, interviews, and poetry brings together Indigenous and other voices to consider how those alive today can shape the lives of future generations for the better. Join us on Zoom. Email redirector@uufs.org for the link.

Social Justice & Climate Action Meeting

Thursday, April 25th @ 7:15 - 8:15 p.m.
Online via Zoom
Contact: social.justice@uufs.org

All are welcome at our monthly meeting where we discuss a variety of topics related to our Social Justice and Climate Action priorities. Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/96254752500>. Email social.justice@uufs.org if you would like to join our team's Google Group or have questions.

The Book Group

Thursday, April 18th @ 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
In person with a zoom option

Our April book is *The Lemon Tree: An Arab, a Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East* by Sandy Tolan (note: not the Young Adult version). Library availability for the "non-juvenile" version is limited. [Leigh's Favorite Books](#) gives 50% buyback. We meet in a member's home. Contact book.group@uufs.org to join us or to be added to our Google Group. Zoom option *by request*.

Men's Group

Meets weekly on Tuesday @ 7:15 - 8:15 p.m.
Online via Zoom - Contact: mens.group@uufs.org

Meditation Group

Meets weekly on Thursday @ 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.
Online via Zoom - Contact: meditation@uufs.org

Women's Group

Meets every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month @ 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Online via Zoom
Contact: womens.group@uufs.org

Contact Us

You can reach our office manager, Ellen Juco, at office@uufs.org or by calling our office at (408) 739-0549. Ellen is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30 - 7:00 p.m. and on Sunday mornings. (On site Tuesdays and Sundays, and from home on Thursdays.)

Reverend Johnnie's meeting hours are available [here](#). Please refer there for any pastoral care or operational needs. If the date does not have hours listed, please reach out at revjohnnie@uufs.org. He is, of course, always available for immediate spiritual emergencies via his cell phone.

Contact webmaster@uufs.org regarding updates to our website.

Please direct questions about this newsletter to: communications@uufs.org.

Note: See our [News](#) page for detailed information on our Covid-19 decision making and policies.

Monthly Calendar

uufs.org/calendar/

