



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sunnyvale

September 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.

Unitarian Universalists, Cats and Dogs (Author Rev. Christopher Buice)

September 1 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Member Lisa Lethin

Just as our animal friends have differences and similarities, so do our Universalist and Unitarian roots.

Children's Sunday Morning Program, 9:15-11:30 a.m.

We'll kick off this month's theme of *invitation* within the year's framework of the "Practices of Our Faith" by *doing* something, of course, that makes the idea concrete. Participants will get ready to invite a friend to a UUFS activity by creating a literal invitation card for someone in their neighborhood or at school.

Annual Water Communion and Ingathering

September 8 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

Please come with water from your home, travels, or something that is meaningful to you, as we celebrate our annual Ingathering, and the official start of our 2024-2025 church year!

Why I Love Unitarian Universalism

September 15 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Member Joshua Levy

This service will celebrate the upcoming Autumnal Equinox

Love Means Saying You're Sorry... A Lot!

September 22 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

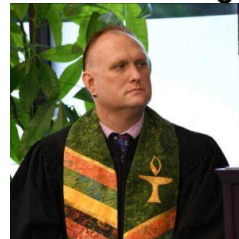
By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

In the film "Love Story," there is a famous quote stated by the protagonist, "Love means never having to say you're sorry." This in itself is an invitation to disagree! What is love, and why can it be the most sacred of invitations?

September 29 Service @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Details will be announced in a Mid-Week Update.

Minister Musings



On July 18, 2024 the world, for the most part, grounded to a halt. Any computer running Microsoft Windows displayed "the blue screen of death." Air Travel, hospitals, and law enforcement were greatly affected. I myself, along with several other flight crews, were stuck in Vancouver, B.C. for 13 hours! Tensions were high and folks wanted to blame everyone that was visible for their delays. I became the voice of reason and broke up several verbal and near-physical altercations by simply being calm and assertive (my vertical privilege and the fact that I'm cis-male presenting probably made it easier). The metaphor here is easy: this is the perfect illustration of interdependence. When a resource disappeared (in this case, the internet), people were quick to blame everyone but the company responsible because they were unaware and uninformed! The moment when they realized that they were NOT the only person affected by this was when they calmed down, listened to reason and were rational. I am genuinely curious if this would

work for the upcoming election. I doubt that it would on the MAGA crowd, but would those on the fence be willing to sit, listen, and process? I dream of purple because it means both sides have a voice.

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



Dear Families and Congregants,

Back-to-school season is a time for new beginnings at church, too. The summer months offered Ms Leah and me an opportunity to design a 2024-2025 calendar of experiences and activities for children to learn about themselves and others and the world we share. This will be our second year implementing the Soul Matters Religious Education curriculum. Last year's Soul Matters framework, called "The Gifts of Our Faith," introduced participants to the value terms chosen by the membership of the Unitarian Universalist Association as a new way to express our covenant. Remember the mnemonic the kids and I showed you during July's Time for All Ages?--yes, I'm sitting at my desk right now with hands in the air and fingers counting off from one to seven: transformation, equity, pluralism, justice, generosity, love, and interdependence. The Soul Matters framework this year is "The Practices of our Faith." This is the year to dig into the idea that love is at the center of what we do as UUs. How does love transform us? How does that loving care make us act equitably? How does it inspire us to honor pluralism, demand justice, share generously, and embrace interdependence? The Soul Matters curriculum leads participants to embody the love at the center of Unitarian Universalism by *doing*. Those verbs are critical. It's not the static value terms themselves that are the practices of our faith, not equity, for example, but acting equitably. As they learn more about practicing Unitarian Universalism this year, there will be a lot of activity in the Children's Sunday Morning Community indeed!

That brings me to another new beginning inspired by this summer's reflections. Rather than calling the weekly RE gathering on the playgrounds and in the classrooms a "program," I'm trying out a new name: Children's Sunday Morning Community. This emerged from studying UU Theology during a course I have been attending the last couple months for DREs and other UU religious professionals involved with children and youth. "Community" in the new name chimes with this year's focus on "Practices of Our Faith." Learning to live in community with others, treating others with love and care on a Sunday morning and throughout the week, is practicing our faith. Whether we call our organizations fellowships, societies, or churches, I have long believed that UU groups at their best are model communities where people can practice working and playing together effectively based on the covenant we uphold. So, on Sunday morning our children, just like the adults in the sanctuary, gather not in a "class," "meeting," "course," or "program" but as a community where we all care about, and work to ensure, each other's well being.

Let us practice our faith this year and in the years to come, and may we live in Beloved Community, a phrase favored by Martin Luther King, here at UUFS and out in the world.

President's Message - Karen Enz

Where has the summer gone? There seems to be a slight chill in the air in the evenings which lets me know that we are moving into a new season. At this time, I also am remembering Rev. Johnnie's wonderfully creative "Calling of the Directions" service he did last September to welcome the congregation back from their summer peregrinations.

I have now "been in the saddle" for approximately three months, and I want to say how impressed I have been with the resourcefulness and cooperation that I have experienced with working with members of the congregation. When I last met with Rev. Johnnie, I told him about the acronym that I came up with that would (hopefully) be characteristic of how I envisioned my position of Board President. I used the letters in the word "LEAD" to meaning L-LISTEN (in my mind the most important step) E-Evaluate and consult about what

has been heard, A-Analyze for possibilities, and D-Delegate to appropriate and willing individuals. And to repeat, I have found a degree of willingness I did not always expect! This is not to say I will be a taskmaster, a la Simon Legree, who is not willing to do any of the footwork necessary to support the Fellowship! As you know there are many challenges being a Minister/Lay Led congregation and I want to congratulate you on making our Fellowship operate so well in this first crucial year which included necessary foundational work. This is not to say problems have not arisen and will not arise in the future, but they have been and I believe will be taken care of in a cooperative fashion.

I very much look forward to the coming year, especially in the arena of innovation and outreach as well as strengthening our programs. Please feel free to approach me, especially at Coffee Hour, with your ideas and concerns.

In faith,
Karen Enz (and for those who know me well, CCL)

Book Cart/Librarian

Annabel Griffiths, the current librarian, would like to transfer her duties to another person. Is anybody prepared to take on the librarian duties? Also, the book cart is full, and, at the moment, it cannot take any more books!

Supporting Our Community and Values



Join Us on September 1 & 8 to Get Out the Vote!

Social Justice & Climate Action is hosting one event on September 1 with Reclaim Our Vote <https://www.centerforcommonground.org/postcarding> and another on September 8 to write letters with Vote Forward <https://votefwd.org>. Let's keep

building momentum to protect democracy!
Questions? Contact social.justice@uufs.org

Ready to Learn Backpack Drive

From Sunnyvale Community Services: Dear Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sunnyvale,

Thank you so much for supporting our 2024 Ready to Learn program. We were able to put smiles on over 2,200 school-aged children. Please enjoy this short video showcasing the success of our backpack distribution at SCS. [Video Link](#)

Activities

Intercongregational All-Ages Game Night

Saturday, September 7 @ 5:00–7:00 p.m.
At UU Fellowship of Los Gatos

Join us for a fun evening. 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 can play knowing that their kids are happily occupied, too. Enjoy good company and potluck snacks while we play.

Multigenerational Climate Discussion Circle

Saturday, September 21 @ 11:30 a.m.–
12:30 p.m.
Online via Zoom

Feel free to drop in this summer to discuss *The Climate Book* by Greta Thunberg. Suitable for youth and adults, this collection includes her own writings as well as short essays by international experts on a variety of climate-related topics. Come on the third Saturday of the month and discuss your favorites in our circle! Email REdirector@uufs.org for the link and information about discounted copies available for our group at Books Inc. in Campbell.

Social Justice & Climate Action Meeting

Thursday, September 19 @ 7:15-8:15 p.m.
Online via Zoom

All are welcome to join us at our monthly meeting. We will be discussing local issues related to the elections. Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/96254752500>. If you would like to join our Google Group or have questions, contact social.justice@uufs.org.

The Book Group

Thursday, September 26 @ 1:30-3:30 p.m.
In person with a Zoom option

Our September book is *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston, and our October book is *Trail of the Lost: The Relentless Search to Bring Home the Missing Hikers of the Pacific Crest Trail* by Andrea Lankford. Both books are available at Leigh's Favorite

Books <https://www.leighsbooks.com/> with a 50% buy-back option. 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, Leah Simmons, at office@uufs.org or by calling (408) 739-0549. 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: [COVID-19 Policies and Guidelines](#).

Monthly Calendar

uufs.org/calendar/