



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sunnyvale

December 2024

Fellowship News & Events



Join us on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in person or on Zoom at 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.

Anatomy of Friendship

December 1 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.
By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

They say that if a friendship lasts longer than 5 years, then it's likely to last forever. How does a friendship like this develop? How does a friendship like this endure?

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

Participants will learn how to make a glorious 3-D star out of paper as we collaborate on this prop for the upcoming performance of "A Journey to Bethlehem," a retelling for our times by our very own Rev Johnnie. They will also have the opportunity to make a star of their own to take home.

Sunday Supplement: Amplifying the Charge

December 1 @ 10:30 a.m.–Noon, hybrid
In person in the Conference Room, on Zoom with the Sunday Service link: bit.ly/uufs-sunday-service.

Free Will versus Free Won't

December 8 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.
By Member Martin Manley

Advances in Neuro-science can illuminate the age-old conundrum of whether Free will truly exists. Questioning the validity of Free will has important consequences for our attitudes to moral responsibility, mental health, and the purpose of the justice system. Furthermore, it offers the possibility of cultivating compassion and focusing on solutions rather than on blame.

A Journey to Bethlehem

December 15 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.
By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez and RE Team

Today will be a multi-generational service celebrating the Story of Christmas and how it came to be.

Winter Solstice Celebration

December 22 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.
By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

On this day, we will celebrate the Winter Solstice, or Yule as it was known to the ancients. It is the longest night of the year, and was celebrated by welcoming the light from the darkness.

TBD

December 29 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Details of the Service will be announced in the Mid-Week Update



Minister's Musings

Red lipstick. We think about it as a fashion choice – a bold statement from the wearer. It's a powerful color that can indicate a lot of

things, including confidence and strength, femininity in a bold way, social status, rebellion, and seduction. In ancient times, it was a genderless cosmetic used to show wealth, status, and power, and was used for sun protection. It reached a peak during the renaissance, when Queen Elizabeth I of England and Queen Margot of Navarre, then France used it to show their status: the ingredients to get the color included cochineal (crushed insects), egg whites, fig

milk, and gum Arabic. It also became taboo roughly 125 years later; married women who were found to have used cosmetics could be tried for witchcraft for seducing their husbands by “unnatural means.”

Suffragettes in the 1920’s started wearing it as a symbol of rebellion and women’s rights. It was a badge of courage for the marching women to wear red lipstick.

In the 1940’s during the rise of Fascism, the Nazi party outlawed the wearing of red lipstick, because Hitler hated it. He called it “animal fat rescued from sewage,” and forbade it and many other cosmetics, as a woman’s “Aryan” beauty was enough. What was the American response? Red lipstick again became a symbol of patriotism, and a statement against Fascism. Women again donned red lipstick to show their resilience in the face of the conflict, and to retain their own sense of identity. It was so popular that the American Marine Corps Women’s reserve paid Elizabeth Arden to create a special shade of bespoke red lipstick to complement their service uniforms! It again became a symbol of victory over oppression.

So, ladies (and gentlemen inclined), join me on January 6th, and Inauguration Day to once again don our red lipstick and embrace the rebellion of our feminist forebears.

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



Dear Families and Congregants,

All I want for Christmas is . . . a pun? Well, yes, in a way. At least wordplay does not rely on nonrenewable resources—a definite plus during what can feel like an annual festival of consumption. But of course, waste is not the whole story of this season of generosity and miracles, too. The pun wrapped up in December’s key word reminds us of what really matters whether we’re celebrating Solstice, Christmas, Hanukkah or Kwanzaa: *presence*.

Presents or no in your winter gatherings, this month at UUFS we’ll take some time to appreciate the gift we are to each other as a community.

For example, get ready to glory in what we can do together when all ages are involved in presenting a holiday pageant during the service on December 15. Rev. Johnnie has created a wonderful retelling of the Christian Nativity that will make it seem all the more relevant in our times. Teachers and participants in the Children’s Sunday Morning Community will be preparing for this exciting collaboration over the coming weeks. There are nonspeaking no-rehearsal roles for adults, too! Let me know if you’d like to be part of the magic. All we will ask of you is *presence*.

President’s Message - Karen Enz



There have been so many thoughts swirling in my head and I have had so many conversations with people since the election. I believe that most of us have indulged in the inevitable election post-mortems so I do not think that would be fruitful for me to voice. Nevertheless, I also believe that people work through their feelings in different ways and at different times and we should honor those differences. It might be wise that we should try to make a concerted effort to be sensitive and kind to each other and not let our very understandable distress govern our words and actions, as this can be an unconscious reflex response to trauma.

I would recommend for us to devise strategies for going forward both individually and collectively. I believe the most important thing we can do for ourselves is to concentrate on self-care and the strengthening of our own community so that we can be the light in the darkening shadows that seem to loom over our country at this time.

With this in mind, consider that December is an important transitional month in both the Earth-based traditions and in the Christian religion with the celebration of hope in the return of the sun and the

birth of its Savior, respectively. Let's think of nurturing within ourselves this hope and remember that if fear can be contagious, so can hope. I fervently believe that our faith offers a beacon of hope to those grappling with what has and is happening in the political sphere.

I know that as a faith we do not characteristically proselytize, but maybe this is a time to rethink that notion. Rev. Johnnie and I meet on a regular basis and at our last meeting we talked about using social media to reach out to people that might be receptive to our message. Stay tuned!

This year, December 1 is the first Sunday of Advent in the Christian calendar. I know many of us do not subscribe literally to its meaning, but I also think it has a symbolic significance that would be useful at this time. I think that this can be a time of watchful waiting and thought that is the prelude to developing action to resist hatred and injustice. Let's move forward in both hope and faith.

In faith,
Karen

Adult Education and Spiritual Enrichment Opportunities

Amplifying the Charge

What Keeps Us Here: A short overview of Unitarian Universalist theology is the topic for December 1 after the service, in the conference room. The "Amplifying the Charge" adult education program is aimed at deepening personal, communal, and denominational grounding. Childcare is available upon request. Join in for a journey of exploration and connection. Please see Rev. Johnnie or email him at revjohnnie@uufs.org for more information or questions and read about it on the website [here](#).

Soul Matters Covenant Groups

To expand our Shared Ministry together, we will be re-establishing Covenanting Groups for UUFS. A covenant group is a small relational group made up of six to twelve people who meet regularly to establish and nurture themselves in their own

beloved community. Please email connections@uufs.org or revjohnnie@uufs.org for more information or questions.

Supporting Our Community and Values

Expanding the Welcome Table

November 10-December 14, 2024



For more than 25 years UUFS members and friends have been generous supporters of the

Guest at Your Table annual fundraiser for the UU Service Committee (UUSC). Your contribution is boosted by matches: member Janet Werkman with a \$5000 match, UU Shelter Rock with a match for any donation of \$150+, and perhaps even a match by your employer. Donate via our UUFS donation page: [donate](#). If you prefer to donate by check, make it out to **UUSC**, memo line: "UUFS GAYT" and put it in the offering basket or hand it to those at the Welcome Table. Contact social.justice@uufs.org.

Donate to our annual UUndies Sundays drive!

On Sunday December 1st & Sunday December 8th we will be continuing our decades old UUFS tradition of collecting donations to benefit the clients of the North County Homeless Shelter in Sunnyvale. Because HomeFirst is no longer the manager of that shelter, we will be working for the first time with the new shelter manager, the Bill Wilson Center. The shelter now supports families instead of single adults, so their wishlist is somewhat different from past years:

- Diapers: sizes 4,5,6
- Cotton Underwear: children 0-17 and adult underwear: all sizes
- Pajamas: children and adults (S, M, L, XL)
- Cotton Socks
- Twin blankets
- Pillows
- Laundry soap - PODS only

All items are to be new and unused.

Drop off donations at the back of the sanctuary on Sunday 12/01 or 12/08, or contact Laurel Beecher at social.justice@uufs.org to arrange for drop-off or pickup.

If you prefer, you can make an online cash donation at [donate](#). If you would like your cash donation to be included in our final tally of the congregation's donations, get the information to Laurel.

Activities

Inter-Congregational All-Ages Game Night

Saturday, December 7 @ 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, December 21 @ 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Online via Zoom

We consider the tantalizing question *What If We Get It Right?* when we begin discussing the book of this title by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson. This is a collection of interviews, essays, and artwork, which makes it easy for participants to drop in anytime and discuss their favorites—no pressure to attend every month or read every piece. We meet on Zoom (email redirector@uufs.org for the link). As the publisher puts it, “If you haven’t yet been able to picture a transformed and replenished world—or to see yourself, your loved ones, and your community in it—this book is for you.” Join us!

Social Justice & Climate Action Meeting

Thursday, December 19 @ 7:15-8:15 p.m.

Online via Zoom Contact: social.justice@uufs.org

All are welcome to join us at our monthly meeting as we discuss relevant topics and plan activities. Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/96254752500>. If you would like to

join our Google Group or have questions, contact social.justice@uufs.org. Note that we typically meet on the 3rd Thursday of the month.

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

The Book Group

Friday, December 13 @ 10:00 a.m.-Noon,

In person

Our January book, [*The Way We Live Now*](#) by Trollope, is lengthy so please start reading it soon. It is available at Books, Inc. and at local libraries. We meet in a member's home. Contact book.group@uufs.org to join us or to be added to our Google Group.

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/