



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sunnyvale

February 2025

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.

Celebrating Imbolc

February 2 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

Imbolc is the first of the Greater Sabbats of the traditional Pagan calendar. Celebrate the Maiden, rising as a Phoenix!

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

Lunar New Year is celebrated among many people with Chinese, Korean, or Vietnamese heritage in the Bay Area. We'll kick off this month's theme of inclusion by acknowledging this important local festival.

Fighting Hunger in Sunnyvale

February 9 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Marie Bernard

The mission of Sunnyvale Community Services is to prevent homelessness and hunger in our local community. Marie Bernard, the Executive Director of Sunnyvale Community Services, will speak about their programs, successes, and challenges.

This Thing We Have (tm)

February 16 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

UU activist, educator, and consultant CB Beal says, "If we say 'inclusion' but we mean 'We have something that's perfect exactly the way it is, so you should come join us and fit right in,' that's not inclusion, that's colonization..." What ways do we,

as a community, do this? How can we be better, more truly "inclusive"?

We're Not Gonna Take It

February 23 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Member Alan Herrmann

American social protest movements have sometimes resulted in significant political and social change. But some movements just fizzled out without achieving their goals. Can social protest movements be effective in the 21st century?



Minister's Musings

This month I reflect on the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire fell due to a combination of factors including economic instability, political corruption, military overextension, barbarian invasions by Germanic tribes, and a weakening of the Roman legions; essentially, a decline in internal stability coupled with external pressures from surrounding populations led to the empire's collapse. Interesting, right? Sounding a bit familiar? Did you know that the Romans also placed their hands over their hearts to recite their pledge to the Empire? Fascinating parallel, isn't it?

While I do not see a complete and total collapse of our government, perhaps this new administration and our current Felon-in-Chief will allow us to see in deeper detail the cracks and flaws in our current Federal and capitalist system. I have hope that this

will be the wake-up call that we need as a society to realize that we are being fed lies and misinformation intentionally, by the people who we are supposed to trust and respect. I am well-aware of the cult-like behavior of his followers, but some of those closest to me who voted for him are now realizing their enormous error. They see the rest of the world laughing at us wondering, "Why?"

This is not just occurring on "their side." There are folks on the Democratic side that, while not as blatant, are just as guilty of why we are where we are as a Union. My Political Science professor in college always said that if you want to see why politicians vote the way that they do, especially if it seems antithetical to their prevailing views, follow the money. In the meantime, we must continue our Social Justice work, and we must continue to resist.

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



Dear Families and Congregants,

Inclusion is the February theme here at UUFS. The RE program is all in! Fully collaborating as usual, Lead Teacher Leah Simmons and I have planned an extended project where children and youth in their Sunday Morning Community will create a model structure that doesn't leave anyone out. They may choose to design an apartment house, a school, a library, a mall, a church, or an amusement park—any place of their imagining where people gather to work or play. Such places should include folks, right? We'll be learning about how people who rightfully belong sometimes get excluded instead, not just by words or deeds but even by the built environment itself. In light of this understanding, the kids will design, build, furnish, equip, and inclusively populate "Inclusion Square" out of cardboard and paint. Watch this space in March for a pic of the results!

President's Message



My President's message this month will be short and sweet.

I feel privileged in being able to spend most of January every year in this paradise to renew and refresh myself in preparation for the year. As I am writing this, I am watching a refreshing cloudburst outside my lanai.

I want to thank Alan Hermann for constructing and presenting the preliminary budget for the upcoming fiscal year. I know this is an herculean task. I also want to thank all the presenters at our January Congregational Meeting and those who took the time to attend.

Let's go forward this year with faith and optimism.

Mahalo,
Karen

UUFS Annual Vision Budget Meeting

The UUFS Finance team, board president, members, and staff met Saturday, 1/18 and completed a first draft budget for the upcoming fiscal year (FY2026 - July 2025 to June 2026). Using the current FY2025 budget as a basis they made changes to reflect plans for the future.

Thank you to all who participated in this work. A meeting will be scheduled in March or April to update the budget again in preparation for review by the board. The proposed budget will be presented to the congregation for approval at the May business meeting.

Semi-Annual Congregational Business Meeting

The Business Meeting, held on January 19th, was well attended and featured reports by most of our Committees and Teams. This year's Nominating Committee was elected at the meeting. Thank you, Gary Beckstrom, Nicolle Sidovar and Debbie Timmers, for filling this important role. This Committee will recruit nominees to the Board of Trustees for election at the May meeting. The Board

members are elected for a two year term beginning July 1, 2025.

There was particular interest in the generous bequest of the Frohbach family and the fund to which it was allocated, the Strategic Reserve Fund. The Governance Committee reported on changes adopted in September to the policy governing that Board designated fund. The distribution of the funds was restricted to either Fellowship owned real estate or special ministry programs. The policy states that the fund shall be used to realize strategic plans, and members expressed an interest in seeing those plans developed.

The Minister's Report and the Religious Education Report are particularly informative and inspiring. For those who could not attend (and even those who did), you can find the details in the excellent draft minutes sent out by our Secretary Corinne Blankenship: [Minutes](#).

Supporting Our Community and Values

From the new UUFS Librarian, Nicole Sidovar

Do you love books? I do! I have volunteered to take on the role of UUFS Librarian. You can connect with me at librarian@uufs.org.

GRATITUDE- I'd like to thank the previous UUFS librarians for their work on creating and maintaining a lending library for our fellowship. The ones that I am aware of are Annabel Griffiths, who passed the present cart to me. Prior to Annabel, our Ginny (Virginia Merry) was our book organizer. Sarah Lin input our Library Thing database. Pre-COVID Vidhya Ramachandran was involved with our revolving books.

ASK- Currently, we have an overstuffed library cart. The day before she died, our uber-contributor, Lisa Lethin, sent me lists of books to cull. I would like some physical going through our inventory. E-mail librarian@uufs.org with your availability.

VISION- A cozy lending library area with UUFS relevant material for all ages.

Celebration of Life for Lisa Lethin

We will gather on Saturday March 15 in the sanctuary to honor the life of Lisa Lethin. The service will begin at 1:00 p.m. followed by a potluck reception lasting until 4:00 p.m. Volunteers needed for set-up/clean up.

Volunteer to help prepare a meal for shelter residents

Social Justice at UUFS will again be providing a meal to 20 clients at a LifeMoves LGBTQ+ shelter in San Jose on February 2nd. We are looking for volunteers to help prepare food, either together with other volunteers or in your own home. Contact Laurel Beecher at activities@uufs.org to volunteer or get more information.

Activities

Inter-Congregational All-Ages Game Night

Saturday, February 1 @ 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, February 15 @ 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

Wednesday, January 29 @ 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 26 @ 7:00-8:00 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.

The Book Group

Friday, February 28 @ 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

In person in a member's home

Join us as we discuss the entertaining novel [*North Woods*](#) by Daniel Mason. Contact book.group@uufs.org to join us or to be added to our Google Group. We will soon announce our March book on the uufs.org Book Group page and also via our Google Group.

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/