



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sunnyvale

September 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.

The Power and Importance of Optimism

September 7 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Member Joshua Levy

Why optimism is good for you and good for society as a whole.

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

The church year begins in Religious Education with a recommitment to our covenant. Everyone in the group is taking part in creating a physical representation of our connections to each other and how to nurture them. It will remain in our space throughout the year as a reminder of our obligations to each other.

Water Communion Celebration

September 14 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

Celebrating our community, this ingathering service is marked by mingling waters from our personal journeys over the past year, bringing into focus what it means to hold each other's joys and each other's sorrows. Come and celebrate this time of unity and connection!

Mabon: The Autumnal Equinox

September 21 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

An interactive and introspective service acknowledging and emphasizing balance, gratitude, and reflection.

TBD

September 28 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Member Alan Herrmann

Check the Midweek Update for the details of this service. See "Activities" for information on the Action Sunday field trip also scheduled for this Sunday.



Minister's Musings

I am writing my musings this month from the living room of my younger brother's home in Texas. Our youngest brother is getting

married tomorrow, and I have the privilege of being asked to perform the ceremony as the officiant. It's a fitting end to a satisfying summer season filled with creative endeavors, challenges, and some exciting changes in the life of my family.

The wedding is tomorrow, and my brother and his partner are just mildly excited. They have known each other since they were 7 years old when she was a shy foster child brought into my parent's home. He instantly became her protector, and they formed an enduring friendship that lasted and supported each other through their respective "mismatched" marriages, when they realized that those relationships were nowhere near as satisfying as the connection they had with one another. Tomorrow, they will be married on the beach here in Galveston, Texas (providing the thunderstorms stay away, if not the wedding will take place at my niece's home). It will be a small family affair, with a

luncheon served before the ceremony, and then a dessert party afterward to celebrate the newlyweds. I will be able to celebrate with cake, then I'll be back on a plane to California, where I will prepare for our Trans Visibility service on Sunday, and then the Silicon Valley Pride Parade right after.

Different beginnings, different challenges. Both are undergirded with love and respect. Both an excellent way to start the Fall and the new church year.

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



Dear Families and Congregants,

Our monthly themes this church year will express more than mere abstractions; now they'll convey action, too. On your marks, get set for building belonging in September. Here come the builders of UUFS—all of us—racing to construct, on the firm foundation of a longstanding community, a special place for folks to call their own.

September is traditionally the time for UUs to gather in, celebrating their own shared sacred spaces. Water Communion, where individuals add their own droplets to the flow of the whole congregation, often marks the season, as it will here at UUFS on Sept 14. Fittingly, all ages will take part in this important annual ritual together in our sanctuary that day.

While circling up with familiar people can strengthen one's sense of identity, journeying outside regular rounds can, too. September will offer UUFS folks of all ages a chance to help expand our version of what it means to be Unitarian Universalists by leaving our normal location on S. Bernardo Ave to attend a different UU service. As I mentioned last month, I have arranged for us to visit the UU Fellowship of Redwood City on September 28. With a touch of symbolism, we will start in our home sanctuary for our usual family-friendly sanctuary time on this last Sunday of the month. When the kids leave the sanctuary at 9:50, however, they and their families, and all congregants who would like to

join us, will keep on going, to a multigenerational Action Sunday service in Redwood City. It starts at 10:30 in their sanctuary, and then groups break out for hands-on, interactive experiences throughout the building. The service in Sunnyvale will continue for those who choose to remain here on September 28. Those who would like to join us in Redwood City are urged to come to an organizing meeting in our chapel on September 14 from 11:00 to 11:30.

Like many travelers, those who go on the field trip will come back with a different sense of UU identity, eager to share their experiences. Who knows, maybe UUFS will feel even more like home. Belonging—let's build it together!

Board of Trustee Changes

Krista Galyen has resigned from the Board on July 18, leaving the position of Board President. Demyon Plantenberg has been elected Board President and Denise Kato elected Board Vice President. Corinne Blankenship remains the Secretary and Ginger Wolnik the Treasurer for the Fellowship.

Supporting Our Community and Values

Get Out the Votes!

In August and September, Social Justice at UUFS will again be calling for volunteers to support nonpartisan campaigns to get out the vote.

The [Reclaim Our Vote](#) campaign will be sending postcards to 920,000 registered Black voters across the state of Virginia as they elect a new Governor, Lt. Governor, and the entire legislature. Through their get-out-the-vote work, they provide early voting locations and times, voter registration deadlines, information for free rides to the polls, and phone numbers for county election officials. Their postcards don't get mailed until Sept 15 – Oct 1.

The [VoteForward](#) campaign will be sending letters to fellow citizens in Pennsylvania who have historically been underrepresented in the electorate. In 2025, three justices on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court

are up for re-election, and the results could influence court decisions on major issues like mail voting, gun safety laws, and public education. Most registered voters do not participate in odd-year elections like this one. Their letters will encourage younger voters to turn out, and will also provide a number to reach a volunteer support team for authentic conversations about this election and the importance of voting. Their letter writing is already started, but letters don't get mailed until September 2 - October 28.

Social Justice will provide all supplies needed to volunteers except colored pencils/pens for decorating postcards and can help you get started if you are a first-timer. Let us know ahead of time if you are thinking of volunteering by emailing social.justice@uufs.org or letting Laurel Beecher know. If you have a preference for postcarding or letter writing, and approximately how many you want to start with, that's even more helpful!

Sun Day - Shine a Light for Climate Justice **An Invitation** from the First Unitarian Church of SJ

As people of faith and spirit, we know that caring for creation and protecting our communities from the harms of fossil fuels is both a moral calling and an urgent necessity.

This September, the San José community will come together, as part of a national weekend of climate mobilization, for two powerful opportunities to stand for climate justice and clean energy — and I hope you and your congregations at UU Fellowship of Sunnyvale will join us.

Saturday, September 20 | 12–3pm 160 N. 3rd, SJ
Faith leaders from diverse traditions will gather in San José at First Unitarian Church of San Jose, to build relationships, share knowledge, and plan collaborative action for climate justice and clean energy. Together, we'll explore ways to expand climate justice work. A light lunch will be provided.

Sunday, September 21 | 12:30pm 160 N. 3rd, SJ
We will march together for climate justice, starting at First Unitarian Church of San José, processing to

City Hall for brief speeches and a photo, then returning to St. James Park for a community picnic and connection. Please wear green, bring signs or banners, and invite everyone to participate. This is a family-friendly event. All are welcome at the 11am church service beforehand, where First Unitarian will host a service about climate justice. Together, we can show that the faith community stands united for a clean energy future.

Activities

Organizing Meeting for Multigenerational Action Sunday Field Trip

Sunday, September 14 @ 11:00-11:30
UUFS Chapel

The time is approaching for our excursion to the UU Fellowship of Redwood City where we will experience one of their innovative multigenerational services called Action Sundays. If you plan to come along on September 28, please attend this meeting. Gear up with fellow sojourners of all ages by reflecting on UU practices, reviewing expectations for guests, clarifying logistics—and maybe finding a carpool! If you plan to join the field trip but can't make this meeting, please contact redirector@uufs.org.

Multigenerational Action Sunday Field Trip

Sunday, September 28 @ 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
UU Fellowship of Redwood City, 2124 Brewster Ave, Redwood City, 94062

Join UUFS folks of all ages to experience a special kind of worship service called Action Sunday at our neighbor UU fellowship in Redwood City. Contact redirector@uufs.org.

Religious Education Team Meeting

Monday, September 8 @ 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Join Director of Religious Education Colleen Hamilton, RE Team Interim Chair Joshua Levy, and interested congregants on [Zoom](#) to discuss operations and vision for the RE program at UUFS.

Inter-Congregational All-Ages Game Night

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

At UU Fellowship of Los Gatos

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. Contact

redirector@uufs.org

Multigenerational Climate Discussion Circle

Saturday, September 20 @ 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Online via Zoom

Join folks interested in ecology and the changing climate. We are reading: [*Sacred Nature: Restoring Our Ancient Bond with the Natural World*](#), by Karen Armstrong (2023). A venerable historian of world religions, Armstrong examines how humans relate to nature in various faith traditions and considers how to transform today's destructive relationship. We meet on Zoom. Email redirector@uufs.org for link.

The Book Group

Friday, September 26 @ 1:00-3:00 p.m.

In person, in a member's home

In September we discuss [*The Acid Queen*](#) by Susanna Cahalan. All future (and past) book selections are posted on the [uufs.org Book Group page](#) and also via our Google Group. Contact book.group@uufs.org to join us or to be added to our Google Group.

Social Justice & Climate Action Meeting

Wednesday, September 24 @ 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Online via Zoom

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.

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. Rev. Johnnie's work phone number is +1 (669) 290-7067. Going forward, please use this number to reach them.

Contact webmaster@uufs.org regarding updates to our website. Please direct questions about this newsletter to: communications@uufs.org.

Monthly Calendar

uufs.org/calendar/