



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sunnyvale

January 2026

Fellowship News & Events



Join us on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in person at 1112 S Bernardo Ave, Sunnyvale, CA,  
or on Zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/958336800>. 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.

### **Good Trouble (Action Sunday, Activities Below)**

January 4 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m. in the Chapel  
By Member Alan Herrmann

Civil Rights activist and Congressman John Lewis wrote: "Freedom is not a state; it is an act. It is not some enchanted garden perched high on a distant plateau where we can finally sit down and rest. Freedom is the continuous action we all must take." Alan will reflect on activism and freedom.

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

The entire congregation, including children, will start in the chapel for brief opening worship. Like other congregants, children will then choose one of the three activity groups described in this update and in the bulletin. Children are welcome without their parent or caregiver in any group that has Religious Education staff listed in its description, if the parent or caregiver has signed that child into our care. After the activity groups, everyone including children will return to the chapel for the closing of the service.

### **A Winter Solstice Ceremony**

January 11 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m. in the Chapel  
By Member Lisa Karpinski

### **The Mosquito: A Symbol of Resistance?**

January 18 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

There is a quote from the Dalai Lama that says, "If you ever think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito." Thinking

about this quote on the eve of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr's birth, think about how your small acts of resistance - of being disruptive, of being impolite, or even simply annoying can lead to changes far beyond our wildest imaginings. That resistance can build. Let's explore together how!

### **Confessions of an Insomniac**

January 25 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

We live in a culture where the lack of sleep is worn as a badge of honor. We live in a culture where taking vacation is often eschewed for the extra money that giving those precious days up can bring. We live in a culture where exhaustion is a way of life, and the idea of "retirement" is a fairytale for many. What do you do then when your body - the most sacred of all temples - forces you to rest? How is rest and rejuvenation a form of resistance?

### **Minister's Musings**



In my personal spiritual belief, this season calls us into reflection that leads toward renewal. It is a time to look honestly at what worked and what did not in the past year, and to begin the work of resetting and reimagining what comes next. Our Strategic Reserve Fund Task Force has fully embraced this spirit, working with care and persistence to chart a path toward goals that may feel ambitious now, but are within reach if we engage them together.

I was deeply encouraged by the strong turnout for in-person supplement held on Sunday December 14, 2025. That presence reflects a shared commitment to the long-term sustainability of this Fellowship—now and for generations to come. I offer my sincere gratitude to Mary Ellen Bercik, Demyn Plantenberg, Scott Walker, and Janet Workman for their generous gift of time, wisdom, and dedication. Their leadership has brought us to a meaningful moment of discernment and possibility.

For those who were unable to attend in person, I strongly encourage you to prioritize the Zoom supplement being offered in January. This gathering is an invitation to listen deeply, ask thoughtful questions, and engage fully in the democratic process that grounds our Unitarian Universalist faith.

This work opens the door to a collaborative, workshop-style process in which we can learn how to steward the funds entrusted to us by the Frobachs in ways that strengthen our Fellowship and deepen our service to the wider community. With shared understanding and intentional participation, we can move forward together—renewed in purpose and better equipped to serve the needs of our community, which remains central to my calling as your minister and spiritual leader.

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



Dear Families and Congregants,

As I reflect on Religious Education at UUFS in 2025, I feel deeply grateful that I work in such an innovative, committed community.

Uppermost in my mind right now is the way we have embraced Action Sundays. It was not that long ago, in the August newsletter, that I introduced the concept of a form of worship that gets people up out of their seats and interacting with each other. I had become aware of it through my professional organization of UU educators. By offering different modes of experience around a common theme, this form of worship can be more inviting to a group that

varies in age and aptitude. By September, intrepid explorers Rev Johnnie, Leah Simmons, Martha Schumacher, Janet Werkman, and the New Brown family joined me on a field trip to see Action Sundays for ourselves at the UU fellowship in Redwood City. Their undaunted enthusiasm proved infectious. Less than a month later, a service inspired by Dia de los Muertos that involved breakout activity groups was planned at UUFS. After that, we were off and running. The service coordinator team agreed to try this new format on the first Sunday of every month, starting right away in December with Debbie Timmers coordinating. Check out the activity group pictured here during the



resulting service on December 7. These multigenerational participants enjoyed each other's company while serving the wider community by decorating cookies to include in a meal UUFS volunteers supplied to a local shelter later that day.

Partly because UUFS has embraced Action Sundays so wholeheartedly, I look ahead to 2026 with joyful anticipation. Together, we can develop this worship model to its fullest potential. Please consider sharing a skill or area of expertise in an activity group. We can also make our Action Sundays even more inclusive—with your help. I need volunteers to enable parents with children age 6 and under to fully participate. If you'd like to know about plans to better welcome this demographic, contact [redirector@uufs.org](mailto:redirector@uufs.org) or hop on the RE Team Zoom meeting January 12. Here's to a great new year together.

### ***Taking Care of Business***

#### **Semi-Annual Congregational Business Meeting**

Sunday, Jan. 25, 10:45 a.m.-Noon, Chapel/Zoom  
Several important votes will be taken at this meeting. The nominating committee who will recruit

candidates for the Board of Trustees will be elected. Voting on the proposal from the Strategic Reserve Fund Task Force will also take place. Look for the Mid-Week Updates in January for more information.

Our bylaws require a quorum of at least 25% of our eligible voters to be present in order to conduct official business. The right to vote at our business meetings is reserved for members of this Fellowship who have been members for at least thirty days prior to the business meeting who have made a financial contribution of record within the twelve months preceding the meeting notice (which will go out ten days before the meeting), and have attained the voting age. The voting age is sixteen years of age unless our youth have successfully completed a "Unitarian Universalist Coming of Age Program," in which case the voting age is fourteen.

If you have been attending our Fellowship and are interested in learning more about becoming a member, please set up a time to speak with Reverend Johnnie via his [Calendly](#) booking page.

Please note that our pledging friends and visitors are welcome to attend all of our business meetings, but will not be eligible to vote.

### **UUFS Annual Vision Budget Meeting Saturday January 17 2026 at 9:00 a.m. – Noon**

Everyone is welcome to join us in the Chapel or on Zoom to just observe - or to add your thoughts to this uniquely Unitarian Universalist democratic process as we come together to discuss our goals for the next fiscal year. If you've ever wondered how we put our annual budget together, this is your chance to find out! We will develop a first draft of next year's budget, incorporating our vision(s) for UUFS. Use this link to join via Zoom: [budget](#).

### ***Supporting Our Community and Values***

**Strategic Reserve Fund Task Force –  
Zoom Supplement; Week of January 11<sup>th</sup> -  
Date/Time to be determined; link: [here](#).**

Task force members will make a brief presentation to inform attendees about the activities and

milestones completed to date by the task force. We will be presenting the details of a proposal which will be voted on by members at the UUFS Business Meeting on January 25, 2026. There will be time for questions and answers. NOTE: This presentation repeats the supplement offered in December.

SEE ALSO: December UUFS Newsletter for article on Strategic Reserve Fund Task Force

### **Action Sunday – January 4**

Join us on Sunday, January 4, for our third **Action Sunday**—a monthly gathering held on the first Sunday of each month. We'll begin with a brief 25-minute worship service in the Chapel, followed by 20-minute interactive workshops offered throughout the building. Each month you'll be able to choose from three engaging activities, most of which will rotate to keep the experience fresh and meaningful.

- **Music for resistance** - Join Alan Herrmann in celebrating the songs that inspire the movements. Zoom attendees may attend this activity.
- **Communicating Our Consciences** - Join a conversation on how we might connect with others around social issues by drawing on our unique our personal experience, led by Diana Luykx
- **Cooperative Game** - Play a game that reflects our values of communication, understanding, and cooperation led by Richard New. Shephard Hall

The theme of our **February Action Sunday on February 1**, is **Embodying Resilience**. If you're interested in leading a workshop, please contact Janet Werkman. We are also looking for someone to lead an 8-10 minute reflection (in place of a sermon) If you would be willing, please contact [service.coordinator@uuufs.org](mailto:service.coordinator@uuufs.org)

All are welcome—your participation enriches our shared experience!

### **A Twelfth Night Feast and Celebration! January 10, 5 p.m.**

Join us for a night of revelry and Tudor pageantry, as we reenact a full 12th Night Feast! In medieval and Tudor England, Twelfth Night came to signal the

end of Christmastide, with a new but related season of Epiphanytide running until Candlemas. Twelfth Night parties include the singing of Christmas carols, as well as feasting. **The Guild of Sainte Marie** will, with your help, reenact this most glorious of feast days!

Proceeds from this glorious celebration will benefit the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sunnyvale, The Congregational Church of Sunnyvale (UCC), and the Guild of Sainte Marie, Inc., a 501c3 Educational Nonprofit.

[www.guildeofsainteMarie.org/twelfthnight](http://www.guildeofsainteMarie.org/twelfthnight)

## *Activities*

### **Religious Education Team Meeting**

Monday, January 12 @ 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, January 3 @ 5:00–7:00 p.m.  
At UU Fellowship of Sunnyvale

Board-game enthusiasts meet on the first Saturday of every other month from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. All ages, including families with children, are welcome. Pizza provided; other potluck snacks and nonalcoholic drinks invited. Please [click here](#) for more details about our Game Night.

### **The Book Group**

Friday, January 23 @ 10:00-11:30 a.m.  
In person, in a member's home

In January we discuss [The Housekeeper and the Professor](#) by Yoko Ogawa. 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](mailto:book.group@uufs.org) to join us or to be added to our Google Group.

### **Social Justice & Climate Action Meeting**

Wednesday, January 28 @ 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](mailto: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](mailto:mens.group@uufs.org)

### **Meditation Group**

Meets weekly on Thursday @ 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.  
Online via Zoom - Contact: [meditation@uufs.org](mailto: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](mailto:womens.group@uufs.org)

## *Contact Us*

You can reach our office manager, Leah Simmons, at [office@uufs.org](mailto:office@uufs.org) or by calling (408) 739-0549.

Reverend Johnnie's meeting hours are available [here](#) for any pastoral care or operational needs. If the date does not have hours listed, please reach out at [revjohnnie@uufs.org](mailto: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](mailto:webmaster@uufs.org) regarding updates to our website. For questions about this newsletter and for Mid-Week Update and Newsletter or Web submissions, contact [communications@uufs.org](mailto:communications@uufs.org).

**Monthly Calendar**  
[uufs.org/calendar/](http://uufs.org/calendar/)