



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sunnyvale

April 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>.

Flower Ceremony and Easter Egg Hunt!

April 5 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

A beautiful intergenerational celebration of the Unitarian Flower Ceremony offered by Rev. Norbert Fabien Čapek. Join us as we celebrate Flower Communion – a Unitarian Universalist sacrament created by Rev. Čapek, of the Unitarian Church of Prague, nearly a century ago. The celebration continues as the children hunt eggs for Easter!

All-ages Worship Service, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Egg Hunt, 10:30-10:45

All ages will gather together for a service featuring the Unitarian Universalist Flower Ceremony. This year, the traditional exchange of blooms and messages of hope will occur in a storytelling format designed to involve everyone in the sanctuary. No costumes necessary, but show some spirit by wearing floral clothing. And as always for this ceremony, **bring a flower**. Eostre or Easter or spring itself, signs of renewal are everywhere this time of year. Children are invited to join RE staff after the service at the grassy circle outside Shephard Hall to hunt for hidden tokens and treats.

The Possibilities in Darkness

April 12 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Rev. John Bloom-Ramirez

"What if this darkness is not the darkness of the tomb, but the darkness of the womb? What if our America is not dead but a country still waiting to be born? What if the story of America is one long labor?" Valerie Kaur asks those words in a prayer -

are we in the process of being gestated into the country that we are meant to be?

Fighting the Green Fight: Update from the Environmental Regulatory Trenches

April 19 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Member Ursula Syrova

Plastics, grocery bags, recycling confusion, home electrification, fast fashion, and the coming "vape-pocalypse" of disposable e-cigarettes - hear an update of what's been happening at the state and local level to reduce waste, avoid toxins, and get sustainable.

Empowering a Vision

April 26 @ 9:30-10:30 a.m.

By Member Mary Ellen Bercik

Let's prepare for the Next Steps Workshop weekend May 2nd by remembering who we are and what inspires us from within. Let's imagine together how we might manifest the spiritual community we all desire.

Minister's Musings



There is just something about Spring—something that resists being reduced to weather. Yes, the pollen count may be high and the temperatures unpredictable, but beneath it all is a quiet insistence: begin again.

For me, Spring carries a sacred energy. Where Fall invites release, Spring invites return. It asks us to re-

enter our lives with tenderness and a cautious kind of hope. I notice it in the small things—the baby squirrels learning to climb, the birds finding their wings. They do not wait until they are ready. They begin, and in beginning, they become.

Perhaps that is the invitation for us as well.

Spring is a season of renewal, but not necessarily reinvention. It is less about becoming someone entirely new and more about asking: *What is ready to grow now?* For some, that may look like clearing out a home, traveling, or shifting routines. For others, it is an internal stirring—a sense that something long dormant is ready to emerge. Even in the midst of responsibilities—like my own looming 20-page paper—Spring shifts how we experience our work. It becomes less about obligation and more about possibility.

In the weeks ahead, there will be changes and new rhythms. Spring reminds us that growth is not always neat, but it is meaningful. Not everything needs to be rebuilt, but something within us is asking for our attention.

The question is simple: *What in you is ready to begin again?*

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



Dear Families and Congregants,
April, especially the 22nd, as with each day of every month, is a time to honor our ecosystem. To celebrate Earth Day 2026,

participants in the Sunday Morning Children’s Community at UUFS will be making bee houses to increase pollinator habitat in their neighborhoods. We will repurpose things rather than drawing on fresh supplies, which saves on the raw materials, water, and energy that is used to manufacture and ship new products. In fact, repurposing materials is one way our program conserves resources throughout the year. For this project, the whole congregation can help out by donating a common

household item. Do you have a surplus coffee mug? The kind that might have been at the back of your cabinet for years. Maybe it was a gift or souvenir so you haven’t quite brought yourself to get rid of it even though you don’t use it. What better fate for an unused keepsake than to enable a child to repurpose materials to make nesting opportunities for a critical native pollinator? If you have a mug that you’re ready to dedicate to a higher calling, drop it off at the welcome table or social hour on Sunday, April 5 or Sunday, April 12.

The ecosystem we all inhabit is also a source of inspiration for how we function as a group in the Sunday Morning Children’s Community. Like many classroom environments, we have a set of agreements about how we treat each other. It is a living document of the kind often called a covenant in Unitarian Universalist circles. This mutual promise is represented in words as well as by a flock of birds that we co-created. The children painted the colors and markings of particular species of birds onto individuals that fly under clouds we each decorated with our names. Together, the birds and the clouds form a mobile, which Leah Simmons built. Like a flock in the wild, our group soars together, assured of each other’s goodwill just as our feathered friends share protection, food, and favorable aerodynamics when they function effectively as a group. Whether it’s procedures and actions that preserve and support ecosystems or practices and routines rooted in biomimicry that breed mutuality and connection, Religious Education at UUFS celebrates Earth Day year-round.



Sunday Morning Children’s Community at UUFS flocks around the mobile of birds and clouds (middle right) that represents our covenant. Artwork by participants and staff. Mobile designed and built by Leah Simmons. Picture by Katy McDonough.

Easter Egg Hunt & Potluck

April 5th @ 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

As we gather for our secular celebration of Easter, we look forward to a joyful morning of connection, play, and shared abundance. While the children enjoy their egg hunt, we invite everyone to participate in a potluck-style meal—a chance to nourish one another not just with food, but with community.

Please sign up here: [Potluck](#), or email Rev. Johnnie directly at revjohnnie@uufs.org with what you plan to bring.

Supporting Our Community and Values

Strategic Reserve Fund TF Workshops

Mark your calendar for the Next Steps Weekend on May 1 – May 3

At our January Business Meeting, our membership enthusiastically approved a proposal to work with a professional consultant from Stewardship for Us to support UUFS in planning our future. We have scheduled an intensive weekend workshop with Rachel Maxwell, a stewardship consultant, that will focus on visioning for the future to determine the best use of our resources, including the legacy gifts in our Strategic Reserves Fund, to further our mission and ensure the sustainability of UUFS.

Prior to the workshop, Rachel will review detailed information about our history, organization, and finances. The workshop will consist of in person meetings with members to understand our unique culture, concerns, hopes and priorities for moving forward. At the conclusion of this intensive workshop, she will present her report and recommendations for actions that will help us realize our vision for the future of UUFS.

The weekend agenda is as follows:

- Friday, May 1, 6:00–8:00 p.m. Dinner and meeting with the Board and Minister
- Saturday May 2, 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. – Hour-long meetings with teams, committees,

and staff, including the Social Justice and Climate Action Team, Connections Team, Communications Team, Caring and Support Team, Worship Associates, Religious Education Team, and the Finance Committee and Treasurer.

- Saturday May 2, 2:00-5:00 p.m. – Plenary session involving the entire membership in an engaging and interactive workshop.
- Sunday May 3, 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. – The consultant will deliver her report with conclusion and recommendations for next steps.

The workshop is a valuable opportunity for UUFS to develop a vision that will help us move forward. Your participation is vital, so please plan to participate.

June 7 Lisa Lethin Memorial Silent Auction, Marketplace & Potluck - Save the Date!

The Lisa Lethin Marketplace, Silent Auction and Potluck is coming up on Sunday, June 7 after the service. This event is a great way to help build our community with fun(d)raising, socializing, and sharing your talents and skills. Start thinking about what you'd like to offer – a party, a lunch, a dinner, an outing, or a personal service like providing a ride to the airport, washing a car, walking a pet or house sitting...make something delicious to eat, share your handmade crafts...consider pooling your time, energy, talents or space by working with others... More details will be shared in upcoming announcements.

UUFS Family Campout at Mt. Madonna County Park - Save the Date: August 7-9, 2026

Mark your calendars for our annual UUFS family campout. This year it will be on the weekend of August 7-9, 2026.

We will return to Mount Madonna County Park, west of Gilroy, to the Indian Rock Group Camp (capacity 50) for two nights, Friday August 7 and Saturday August 8. (Indian Rock is where we camped two years ago. Last year we were in West Deer Pen

Group Camp.) There will be plenty of room for everyone who would like to come. You can join us for one night or two nights, or even just to hike in the redwood forest and enjoy the campfire with us without spending the night if you prefer. Children of all ages are welcome. Invite friends! If you lack any equipment (tent, stove, etc.), or don't know what to bring, help will be available (ask Alan). The park is about an hour drive from Sunnyvale, west of Gilroy off highway 152.

Hearing Help

UFS has assistive listening support with devices at the welcoming Table. The original device is a receiver with an earpiece. Additionally, we now have neck loops for T-coil that can be used instead of the earpiece with the existing receiver. Your hearing aids need to support t-coil. Furthermore, we now also have streaming Auracast that needs no external device if your hearing aids support that. Talk to your audiologist to see if your hearing aids can support t-coil or Auracast. Feel free to contact any audio team member or email activities@uufs.org.

Enduring Democracy -

At the February 22 Sunday service Carolyn McCombs spoke about the film she helped produce and showed a shortened version in a supplement. This film can be viewed in its entirety at [Enduring Democracy: The Monterey Petition | PBS](#). Anyone interested in obtaining more information about educational materials developed in conjunction with the film or having Carolyn speak to their organization, can email Carolyn at eurekacmc@gmail.com.

Activities

Inter-Congregational All-Ages Game Night
Next Game Night is May 2nd.

The Book Group

Fridays, April 24 @ 10:00-11:30 a.m.
In person, in a member's home

In April we will enjoy comparing notes on [The Briar Club](#) by Kate Quinn, a haunting and powerful story of female friendships and secrets in a Washington, D.C. boardinghouse during the McCarthy era. 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.

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](#) 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. For questions about this newsletter and for Mid-Week Update and Newsletter or Web submissions, contact communications@uufs.org.

Monthly Calendar
uufs.org/calendar/