



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sunnyvale

August 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>.

A Story of Patience, Persistence, and Joy

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

By Member Tara Martin-Milius

A fractured fairytale of Sunnyvale's new City Hall. A story of a growing community, aging infrastructure, years of spirited public debate, countless challenges, a global pandemic, and an award-winning, sustainable civic building that serves the community today.

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

More values and more fun in August, starting with a day to play in the water and sand.

Guest Homily

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

By Bill Heavlin, member of the Unitarian Universalist Coastside Community.

Are We Having Fun Yet?

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

By Mary Ellen Bercik

Do you take fun seriously enough? If not, consider the numerous ways that laughter and fun bring us together. That connection is real. The emotional bond is human. Your social connections may even be proof of the divine.

Beloved as We Are - Building a Congregational Culture of Disability Inclusion

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

By Barbara Meyers

In *Beloved as We Are*, community minister and mental health advocate Barbara F. Meyers and disability justice activist Shelly Rohe invite members of liberal religious congregations into the ongoing work of creating accessible and inclusive communities for disabled people and their loved ones. The book highlights the experiences of disabled people in Unitarian Universalist communities through personal stories, revealing both moments of healing and belonging and the emotional and spiritual harm caused by exclusion, insufficient accommodations, and ableism.

Multigenerational Social Hour Activity, Conference Room, 10:30-11:30

Show the world where you stand by wearing a pin that expresses your support for a cause. Adults and children are invited to make-n-take an advocacy pin during Social Hour—just in time for the Silicon Valley Pride parade on August 30.

Finding the Wisdom in Other Faiths

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

By Member Matt Peters

This is the first in a series that will explore wisdom found within religions around the world. Join Matt Peters and others as we use the power of love embedded in the UU faith to journey through stories from every corner of the globe, becoming adventurers seeking spiritual growth together.

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



Dear Families and Congregants,

UUFS kids should be proud of work they did on behalf of the congregation this summer, and they will enjoy the fruits of their labors later this month. Led by our youth leadership group "The Deputies," they organized and ran a book sale at our community fundraiser, from collecting and sorting to promotion and sales. They have many of you to thank for this win-win-win. If you answered the call last May for book donations, thank you. If you helped make the Lisa Lethin Memorial Silent Auction, Marketplace, and Potluck come about, thank you. If you shopped for books at this event, thank you. They met with great success! Between purchases by customers on site and bulk buys by three local bookstores, they raised \$274. (A special shout-out to Leah Simmons and Martha Schumacher for selling some of those surplus wares to book stores.) By special request of The Deputies, we were even able to share the bounty with a local organization that supports families with mental health and other services, Pacific Clinics, through their Unicorn Thrift Shop. Now it's time to celebrate our accomplishments with a special outing this month to Sky Zone Trampoline Park. Hooray! This social occasion will strengthen bonds among our families and teachers while children and youth feel the many satisfactions of working to benefit their community.

Board of Trustees News

Help Us Launch Our Listening Circles

One of the clearest recommendations from our Next Steps Workshop with Rachel Maxwell was to hold **listening circles** — small, structured gatherings where members share what they love about UUFS and what they hope for its future.

These circles give us something we need: the congregation's own voice, gathered carefully, to guide our refreshed vision and mission statements

and our plans for the years ahead. The Board is getting this underway, and we'd like your help. We're looking for people interested in **defining, coordinating, or moderating** the circles. Anyone can help; Rachel provided good guides for us to use.

If this sounds like something you'd enjoy, please let me know board.president@uufs.org. A couple of folks have already signed on, and we'd love more.

Welcome Julia Blankenship

We're pleased to share that Julia Blankenship has joined UUFS as our Congregational Support Assistant, a temporary position providing office and administrative support.

With Rev. Johnnie's departure, a number of day-to-day tasks that keep the Fellowship running — mail, deposits, records, scheduling — need attention, and our volunteers have been carrying more than their share. Julia will help with that work over the coming weeks. Please join us in welcoming Julia.

Some Changes Following Rev. Johnnie's Departure

With Rev. Johnnie's active ministry concluded, several people have stepped into the roles he once held. Here's who's carrying what:

- **Diana Luykx** serves as the Board's liaison to our staff, overseeing day-to-day operations and staff support.
- **Denise Kato** monitors minister@uufs.org, receiving and routing messages that come to the Fellowship.
- **Leah Simmons and Julia Blankenship** staff our office and handle general inquiries at office@uufs.org.
- **Our Worship Associates** are coordinating Sunday services, with lay-led worship and guest speakers.
- **Demyn Plantenberg**, as Board President, is available for anything else at board.president@uufs.org.

One housekeeping note: the email revjohnnie@uufs.org is no longer in service. Please use one of the addresses above.

— Demyn Plantenberg, Board President

Supporting Our Community and Values

South Bay Interfaith Climate Justice Summit

Sunday, August 23 | 12:30–4:30 PM

First Unitarian Church of San José, 160 North Third Street, San Jose, CA 95112

Climate protections, clean energy progress, and our social safety net are facing growing threats. Join clergy, lay leaders, youth, and community members from diverse faith traditions for an afternoon of faith leadership and advocacy training, relationship-building, and opportunities to take action together for climate justice and the common good.

Together, we'll explore how our shared values can become a stronger moral voice for protecting our communities, advancing climate justice, and building the relationships and leadership needed to create lasting change.

Open to clergy, lay leaders, youth, and community members of all faith traditions—and anyone inspired by faith-based values.

RSVP: [HERE](#)

Circle Suppers

Just a reminder to respond to the email notice for the monthly Circle Supper gatherings that happen on the second Saturday of the month, August 8th this month. Complete information is on the website: <https://uufs.org/connection/circle-suppers>.

We hope that we can use this as an opportunity to make new friends and build stronger relationships within UUFS – especially for newer members.

You can email circle.suppers@uufs.org with questions or speak with Martin Manley.

Family Campout at Mt. Madonna County Park - August 7-9, 2026

We will return to Mount Madonna County Park, west of Gilroy, at 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. The park is an hour drive from Sunnyvale, west of Gilroy off of highway 152.

Mt. Madonna County Park

7850 Pole Line Rd, Watsonville, CA 95076

West Deer Pen Group Camp (capacity 50)

Stay: Fri 08/07/2025 - Sun 08/08/2025 (2 nights)

Park website:

<https://parks.sccgov.org/santa-clara-county-parks/Mt.Madonna-county-park>

Park map:

<https://files.santaclaracounty.gov/exjcpb1516/2024-11/mt-madonna-guide-map.pdf>

Park brochure:

<https://files.santaclaracounty.gov/exjcpb1516/2024-11/mt-madonna-brochure-cover.pdf>

Activities

Inter-congregational All-Ages Game Night -

Saturday, August 1 @ 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.

Worship Associates Meeting

Sunday, August 16 @ 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

We will meet in the Conference Room to discuss upcoming worship services. All are welcome to help with recruiting speakers and hosts and planning services.

Social Justice & Climate Action Meeting

Wednesday, August 26 @ 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 for the upcoming year. Zoom link: [Social Justice](#) . If you would like to join our Google Group or have questions, contact social.justice@uufs.org.

The Book Group

Friday, August 28 @ 1:30-3:00 p.m.

In person, in a member's home

In August we will enjoy discussion of "[Everything is Tuberculosis](#)" by John Green. Once romanticized as a malady of poets, today tuberculosis is seen as a disease of poverty that walks the trails of injustice and inequity we blazed for it. 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.

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/