



ur Church Circular

September 2015

Septiembre 2015 / Nuestro periódico iglesia

September 2015 Theme:

Compassion

Tema de Septiembre 2015: compasión

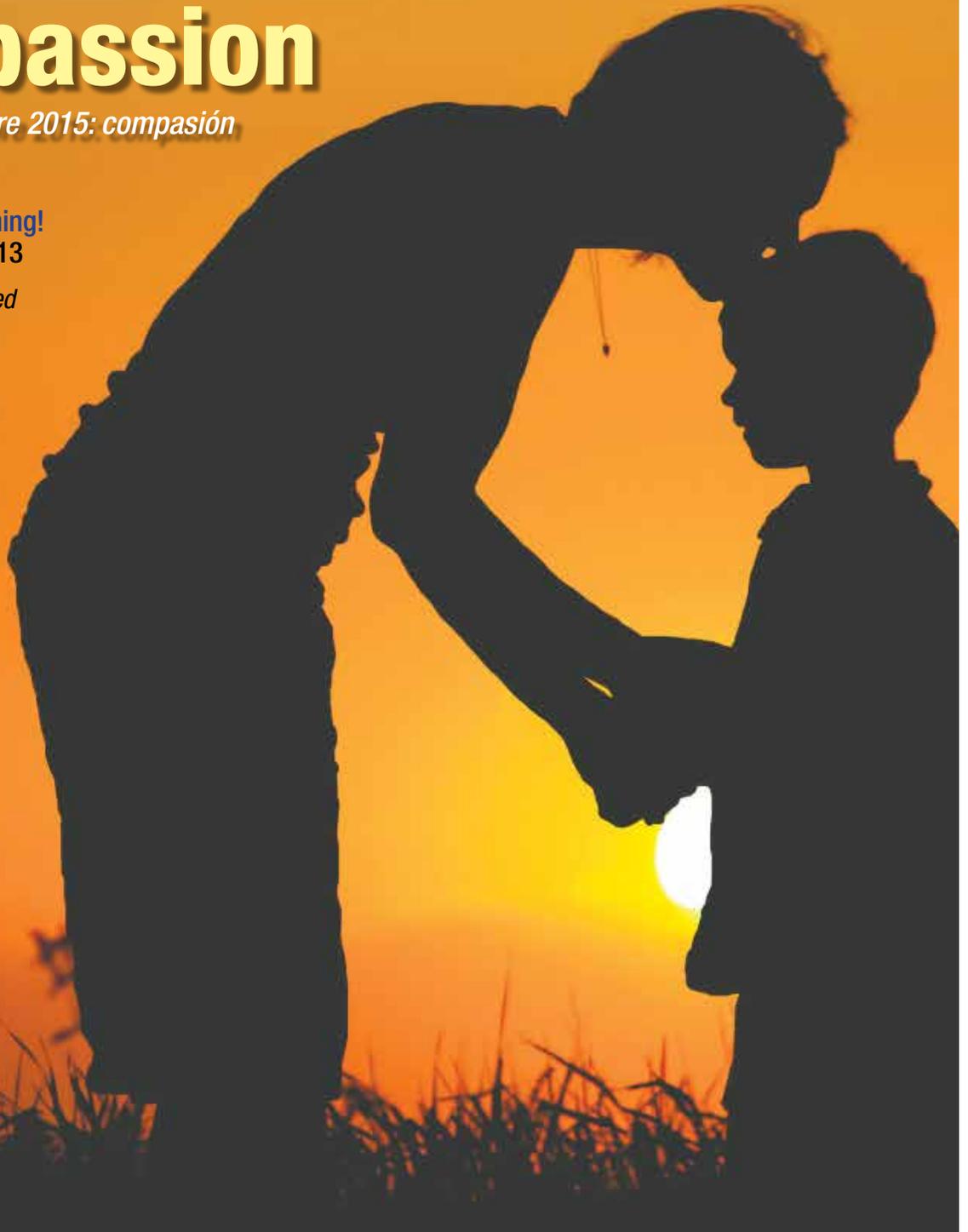
Homecoming is Coming!
Sunday, September 13

*Say what you've learned
at Water Communion*



Save the Date!
Sunday, October 18

*Commemorate the
20th anniversary of
the fire, with many,
many special guests.*





FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH *of San José*



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September Theme: Compassion



Becoming the Loving People We Long to Be

Submitted by the Reverend Nancy Palmer Jones

Have you noticed? Every Sunday we welcome you into worship with these words:

“Just through your presence here this morning, you become a part of this community of love, hope, courage, and change. . . . We hope that being part of this community helps you *to become the loving person that you long to be.*”

Those italicized words are new. I added them this spring, after a congregant pointed out that we aren't really a group of self-satisfied, self-actualized folks who already have it all together in the “love, hope, and courage” departments. Rather, we are a community of people who need and want to change, who long to be more loving, to feel more connected and compassionate instead of, say, judgmental, impatient, anxious, distracted, numb, or . . . Well, we can each fill in the blank with the mental and emotional habits that sometimes keep us from being our best selves.

We, Unitarian Universalists, have a long history of faith in the human capacity to make ourselves and the world a better place. At root, our religion calls us to draw on our own intentions and efforts in order to become the best people we can be. And by “best,” we mean as whole, authentic, and loving as humanly possible. We know now that we can't get to our “best” alone. The old radical individualism that some Unitarians espoused can turn selfish and destructive; it certainly doesn't serve the larger community; and it just doesn't work to create health and happiness, let alone justice and peace.

Instead, we gather in community where we help each other learn and grow, where we build strength in our love by stretching ourselves to see our own and others' lovability alongside our vulnerabilities, and where we practice living with compassionate curiosity about others' experiences and perspectives every single day. Then we take that learning, that personal and communal change, out into the wider world to make a difference in visible, practical ways.

Within, among, beyond—these are the three “locations” of the work we do as a faith community. *Within* each of ourselves—our individual needs, longings, gifts, hopes, education, and change. *Among* groups and teams of people in our own community—through the practice of building loving, compassionate, justice-making Beloved Community at home in our congregation and with our near partners. And *beyond* the open doors of our congregation, out in the wider communities to which we are intimately connected and where our faith takes visible shape in shared action.

Lately I've been thinking about my own process of striving to become the loving person I long to be. In order to make the changes I can and want to make, I need to love my good old flawed self just as it is, complete with the triggers that spring from old traumas, my own particular menu of anxieties, and their troublemaking offspring—fear, impatience, control, perfectionism—not to mention all the standard-issue human shortcomings of limited time, energies, and capacities in some areas but not in others. That's my “within” work . . .

Many of us could spend a lifetime just learning to love ourselves, couldn't we?

But self-esteem, self-acceptance, even compassion and love for ourselves won't on their own solve the existential problems of human loneliness and suffering. So I need—oh, how I need!—this community of the First Unitarian Church of San José, along with other communities to which I belong, where I can practice getting to know and understand people deeply, where I can practice working together across differences, where I can learn how to share my ministries and how to build my trust. That's the “among” work . . .

And all of that makes possible an ever-widening circle of Love, connection, partnership, and change beyond our own community, whether that work takes place in City Hall or Sacramento, in a homeless shelter or at an oil refinery, in the smile I share with a stranger on the street or in the hand I hold as we allies wait to get arrested. That “beyond” work is every bit as central to my becoming the loving person I long to be as the “within” and the “among.”

Let's face it: all of this is the work of a lifetime—and what a great way to spend this one wild and precious life! I am so grateful that we launch this big year at First Unitarian—the beginning of our 150th year of Making Love Visible—with a month focused on Compassion.

I can't wait to see you in church!

Love,

Rev. Nancy



Convirtiéndonos en las Personas Amorasas que Queremos Ser

por la Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones

¿Lo han notado? Todos los domingos los invitamos al servicio con estas palabras:

“Sólo a través de su presencia aquí esta mañana, ustedes pueden convertirse en una parte de esta comunidad de amor, esperanza, coraje y cambio... Esperamos que siendo parte de esta comunidad les ayude a llegar a ser la persona amorosa que desean ser.”

Esas palabras en cursiva son nuevas. Las agregué esta primavera, después que una congregante señaló que realmente no somos un grupo de gente auto satisfecha, auto actualizada quienes ya tenemos juntos todos los departamentos de “amor, esperanza y coraje”. Más bien, somos una comunidad de personas que necesitan y quieren cambiar, que desean ser más amorosas, a sentirse más conectadas y compasivas en vez de, digamos, sentenciosos, impacientes, ansiosos, distraídos, entumecidos, o... Bien, podemos cada uno llenar el espacio en blanco con los hábitos mentales y emocionales que a veces nos impiden ser mejores nosotros mismos.

Nosotros los Unitarios Universalistas tenemos una larga historia de fe en la capacidad humana para hacer de nosotros mismos y del mundo un lugar mejor. En la raíz, nuestra religión nos pide recurrir a nuestras propias intenciones y esfuerzos para llegar a ser las mejores personas que podamos. Y por “mejor”, nos referimos como completo, auténtico y amoroso como humanamente sea posible. Sabemos ahora que no podemos llegar a nuestro “mejor” solos. El viejo individualismo radical que algunos Unitarios apoyan, pueden girar al egoísmo y ser destructivo; ciertamente no sirve a la comunidad; y simplemente no funciona para crear salud y felicidad, por no hablar de justicia y paz.

En cambio, nos reunimos en comu-

nidad donde nos ayudamos los unos a los otros a aprender y crecer, donde construimos fuerza en nuestro amor por la expansión de nosotros mismos para ver nuestros propios encantos junto a nuestras vulnerabilidades y la de los otros, y donde practicamos vivir con curiosidad compasiva acerca de las experiencias y perspectivas de cada día de los otros. Luego tomamos ese aprendizaje, ese cambio personal y comunitario, lo volcamos al resto del mundo para hacer una diferencia en formas visibles y prácticas.

Dentro, entre, más allá—estas son las tres “áreas” del trabajo que hacemos como una comunidad de fe. *Dentro* de cada uno de nosotros mismos—nuestras necesidades, anhelos, regalos, esperanzas, educación y cambios individuales. *Entre* grupos y equipos de personas en nuestra propia comunidad—a través de la práctica de la construcción amorosa, compasiva de la Amada Comunidad en casa para hacer la justicia en nuestra congregación y con nuestros hermanos cercanos. Y *más allá* de las puertas abiertas de nuestra congregación, fuera en las comunidades más amplias a las que estamos íntimamente conectados y donde nuestra fe toma forma visible en compartida acción.

Últimamente he estado pensando sobre mi propio proceso de esforzarme a ser la persona amorosa que quiero ser. Para hacer los cambios que puedo y quiero hacer, que necesito amar mi buenos viejos defectos tal y como están, terminar con los detonantes que brotan de viejos traumas, mi propio menú particular de ansiedades y sus hijos revoltosos—el miedo, la impaciencia, el control, el perfeccionismo, sin dejar de mencionar todos los defectos humanos estándar-problemas del tiempo limitado, las energías y capacidades en algunas áreas pero no en otras. Ese es mi trabajo “interno”...

Muchos de nosotros podríamos pasar toda una vida aprendiendo a querernos, ¿no podríamos?

Pero la autoestima, la auto aceptación, incluso la compasión y el amor por nosotros mismos por su propia cuenta no resolverán los problemas existenciales de la soledad humana y el sufrimiento. Así que necesito—¡oh, cómo necesito!—a esta comunidad de la Primera Iglesia Unitaria de San José, junto a otras comunidades a la que pertenezco, donde puedo practicar el conocer y entender profundamente a la gente, donde puedo practicar trabajando juntos a través de las diferencias, donde puedo aprender cómo compartir mi Ministerio y como construir mi confianza. Ese es el trabajo de “entre”...

Y todo eso hace posible un creciente círculo de Amor, conexión, colaboración y cambio más allá de nuestra propia comunidad, sin importar que el trabajo se lleve a cabo en la Alcaldía o en Sacramento, en un albergue para desamparados o en una refinería de petróleo, en la sonrisa que comparto con un desconocido en la calle o tomándonos de la mano mientras nosotros los aliados esperamos a ser arrestados. Ese “más allá” de trabajo es cada pedacito como centro de mi llegar a ser la persona amorosa que quiero ser como el “dentro” y el “entre”.

Seamos sinceros: todo esto es obra de toda una vida— ¡y qué gran manera de pasar esta vida salvaje y preciosa! Estoy tan agradecida de que nosotros iniciemos este gran año en la Primera Iglesia Unitaria—el inicio de nuestros 150 años de Hacer el Amor Visible—con un mes enfocado en la compasión.

¡No puedo esperar a verlos en la iglesia!

Amor,

Rev. Nancy

Deepening Our Welcome:

Get-Acquainted Light Lunches 2015-16

by the Reverend Nancy Palmer Jones



On certain Sundays, the smell of fresh-baked bread wafts up from the kitchen downstairs, then floats through the sanctuary into the Library. The aroma invites First Unitarian's newcomers to gather with a small group of members and friends for a potluck light lunch (bread, soup, salad, etc.) in the cozy round room just off our entryway right after the worship service.

The host asks everyone in the circle to share their names and a little bit about the journey that has led them to First Unitarian. Like a small-group ministry session, the conversation invites people into FUCSJ's practice of deep listening.

Longer-term members then share the church activities that enliven them. "Sign up for Circle Suppers!" one will say. "Join the choir," another urges. "What interests you?" we ask folks who are brand new to our congregation, as well as those who have been coming for a while but haven't yet found a way to connect deeply. "Let us help you get connected."

FUCSJ member Ed Gardner created this ministry a few years ago.

Here's how it works:

Worship Hosts and folks at the Newcomers' Table during Social Hour ask newcomers to sign up. Office Manager Dana

Spinney sends them a welcome email. Then Ed sends an invitation to the most recent batch of newcomers as a Get-Acquainted Light Lunch approaches. We offer childcare in the nursery on request (RSVP 10 days in advance if you need childcare). A team of FUCSJ folks promises to bring food and offer a warm welcome. One or both of our ministers join the circle as soon as they can.

The result: The hour-long gathering deepens everyone's connection to our faith and encourages newcomers to make First Unitarian their spiritual home.

Volunteer to Help!

Please volunteer to help with one of the Get-Acquainted Light Lunches by emailing Ed Gardner with the date(s) when you are available: ednatsj@sbcglobal.net

Ed will ensure a good balance of long-timers and newcomers in each circle.

Lunch Schedule 2015-16

All lunches take place in the Library from 12:15 – 1:15 pm

- Sunday, September 27
- Sunday, November 22
- Sunday, January 31
- Sunday, March 6
- Sunday, May 1

Service Is Our Prayer Day

by Bob Howd

We had a great church work-party this Saturday, August 15, with 10 enthusiastic participants! Important tasks were accomplished, including cleaning the upstairs and downstairs refrigerators, sanitizing the toys in the nursery, and moving and organizing church financial records. The basement door that has been falling apart was reglued, as was the wobbly table in the Fireside Room. Dana's fallen keyboard tray was reattached, the big crack in the balcony was stripped and re-taped (more yet to be done), the flagpole holder out front was fixed, a bookcase in the Archive room was attached to the wall so it can't fall over, burned-out lightbulbs were replaced throughout the church, and bushes were trimmed out in front. And we shared a delicious lunch after our hard labors.

Many thanks to all who provided this great work for the church! Participants included Michael and Catherine Pelizzari, Julia Rodriguez, Steve Saunders, Lilyanne Kurth-Yontz, Lita Kurth, Nicole Fabey, Bob Owen, Nancy Coleman, and Bob Howd.

In Our Own Voices: COMPASSION

Reprise from September 2012

“In Our Own Voices” shares congregants’ free-flowing responses to the theme of the month. We draw these responses from on-line surveys. This month reprises the responses for Compassion that we gathered three years ago. What issues mentioned here still seem relevant today? How have your own experiences with compassion changed in the past three years?

At First Unitarian we now speak of living with “broken-openheartedness”—the capacity to encounter the griefs, losses, and disappointments that life inevitably brings and to allow them to open our hearts to a deeper compassion for ourselves and others. Try the spiritual practices suggested below—even if only for a week, or just a day. What do you notice about how your capacity for compassion shifts when you listen without needing to debate or “fix” another’s longing or pain?

Here’s to a new year of living together with broken-openhearted compassion! Here’s to deepening our mission to make Love visible in all that we do and say!

With love,

Rev. Nancy

Spiritual practices:

1. Pick one or two quotations from the ones listed here. Picture the words being spoken by a dear friend who is struggling to live with compassion. Listen with compassionate curiosity, without needing to debate or fix. How do your friend’s words and experiences resonate in your own life? How would you express your compassion to your friend?
2. Try the same exercise as #1, but imagine the words coming from a stranger or newcomer. Listen with compassionate curiosity, without needing to debate or fix. How would you express your compassion to this person?

Begin bulleted lists under each emboldened subheading below:



Compassion in a Nutshell

- *Compassion starts with forgiving oneself.*
- *Compassion is really the first principle of Universalism. Just look back to Origen of Alexandria (185-254 C.E.), who wrote about universal salvation!*
- *It’s easy to keep at a distance from others through cynicism and fear. When I manage it, compassion keeps me open to a deeper connection.*
- *Compassion is the basis for moving past anger, arrogance, isolation ...*
- *Compassion means leaning into discomfort.*
- *Compassion: com (with) + passion = to feel with another ...*

Compassion Put into Action

- *What is the distinction between compassion and pity? Pity might be called compassion without action. But is what we are feeling truly compassion if does not change our behavior?*
- *What do acts of compassion look like? How do we express our compassion? Serving food to the homeless? Bringing the troops home? Getting the Veterans Administration to treat our veterans properly? Ending our country’s military interventions? Allowing immigrants to do the work we need them for? Ending harassment of immigrants and the homeless? Keeping our promises?*
- *Compassion means engaging in deep listening, in active listening.*

Expanding the Scope of Our Compassion

- *Too much compassion for people and not enough for other creatures is wrecking the biosphere.*
- *What would our world be like if everyone cultivated compassion in himself or herself? I love that story about the people who are starving because their spoons are too long to feed themselves. Finally, they figure out that if they sit in a circle, these long spoons are perfect for feeding each other! Maybe it takes being in community to truly cultivate compassion?*

Compassion and Self-Care

- *What is the best balance of offering compassion for others and attending to our own self-care? How do we know when we are helping and when we are enabling? Are we focusing on others while denying ourselves?*
- *Should there be limits on compassion? What if acting out of compassion toward another is harmful to oneself?*

Compassion Across Differences

- *Compassion is incredibly important as a way to move beyond polarization and hate. Feeling compassion for those we disagree with profoundly, or those who have hurt us, is really difficult, but so important for our spiritual health. I struggle with this all the time! It’s so much easier to be angry.*
- *Should we have compassion for those whom we oppose—religiously, politically, in*

personal conflicts? How can we do that without being dishonest with ourselves and others?

- How can I, and should I, have compassion for political leaders who want to give more and more to the rich and take away services and funds for the poor and struggling? My questions about this theme come up every day, especially as the campaign for the presidency heats up.
- What about the lack of compassion that our legal systems and some leaders show for undocumented immigrants and others?
- In politics, compassion is sometimes seen as weakness.
- We're so quick to blame others—in politics, budget woes, international events. What will it take to remember that compassion is an option?
- I want us to work on developing compassion for our leaders—and compassion for ourselves in our impatience with the world as it is.
- I have a hard time feeling compassion for criminals, especially murderers and child abusers—or anyone who does cruel things to other people. Such acts challenge my sense of the inherent worth and dignity of every person. I can have easy compassion for someone by empathizing from afar, but the challenge is to have active engaged compassion by extending myself with those with whom I feel uncomfortable.
- I wrestle with compassion when I focus on differences between me and others. For example, if I'm not like that [race, creed, age, sexual preference, profession, gender, nationality, you name it—the differences are endless!], then I "don't/can't" share that person's experience; thus, having compassion becomes a challenge. The more I see the sameness in humanity, the more I am able to find compassion.

Compassion Fatigue

- How do we guard against compassion fatigue? How do we establish and maintain healthy boundaries while practicing compassionate relationships?
- As my friends, family, and I get older, I find myself paying more attention to their illnesses and deaths, and my ability to recognize the need for compassion in other situations and areas of life begins to feel tiring. There are so many things going "wrong," one by one, and now with increasing frequency. At the same time, there seems to be a continual stream of horrible events and situations around the world. These motivate me to offer compassion, but I feel like the only realistic compassion I can offer has \$\$ attached. How do we remain compassionate when there is so much of life that seems to need our compassion?



Worship Themes 2015-16

At First Unitarian, a three-year cycle of spiritual and religious themes encourages us to ask the timeless questions about who we humans are and how we are to live, and then apply what we discover to this very moment. This year, as we move through some of the revised themes below for the second time, we spiral deeper into what they mean for us in this time and place. Take a look at these topics, and let them begin to play in your mind and heart. Then look for the online Worship Survey in September. There you can offer your brief reflections on these themes and help set the course for First Unitarian in the coming year, as we live, learn, and grow together.

September: Compassion **February:** Belovedness
October: Forgiveness **March:** Refilling the Well
November: Trust **April:** Coming Home
December: Joy **May:** Letting Go
January: Justice

Temas de los Servicios 2015-16

En la Primera Iglesia Unitaria, un ciclo de tres años de temas espirituales y religiosos nos anima a preguntas intemporales sobre que somos los seres humanos y cómo estamos para vivir y luego aplicar lo que descubrimos en este mismo momento. Este año, a medida que avanzamos a través de algunos de los temas debajo, revisados por segunda vez, nosotros en espiral más profunda en lo que significan para nosotros en este tiempo y lugar. Echen un vistazo a estos temas y que comiencen a jugar en su mente y corazón. Luego busquen la encuesta en línea del servicio en septiembre. Allí ustedes pueden ofrecer sus breves reflexiones sobre estos temas y ayudar con el rumbo para la Primera Iglesia Unitaria en el año que viene, mientras vivimos, aprendemos y crecemos juntos.

Septiembre: Compasión **Febrero:** Ser Amado
Octubre: Perdón **Marzo:** Rellenando el Bien
Noviembre: Confianza **Abril:** Llegando a Casa
Diciembre: Alegría **Mayo:** Dejando Ir
Enero: Justicia

Democratic Governance

July 23 Board Meeting & August 15 Retreat

by Rob Strong

The Board met Thursday July 23 for business, and held a day-long planning retreat on August 15.

During the Retreat, the Board focused upon our congregation's Vision 2015 statement.

Vision 2015

We seek to build a religious community that makes Love visible in word and deed. Therefore we are called to:

1. Create a caring, connected congregation that actively reflects the richness and diversity of our community, honoring and nurturing with justice and compassion all that makes each of us unique.
2. Undertake bold initiatives to transform ourselves and our community.
3. Worship together so that we connect with the divine, transcending the boundaries that limit us, to become part of something greater than ourselves.
4. Care for, nurture, and empower the growth of our children and youth through vibrant and engaging lifelong faith development and social programs.

The Board considered how it has served us well, and whether and how it might be refocused to be clearer: Vision 2020. Recognizing and expressing our community's Vision 2020 will need your thoughtful involvement! Please watch for additional information on how to participate in the coming months.

During the July Board business meeting, another action needing similar congregational involvement was discussed: creation of needed "Moral Position" statements. When the congregation adopts a "Moral Position" on an issue, the congregation can voice more simply and quickly its concerns on that issue. The Board discussed whether and how supporters of our congregation's existing concerns may benefit by developing a "Moral Position", and who we can involve. Please watch for more information about these as this centennial year progresses!

Also at that meeting, reports were received from the Treasurer, the 150th Committee, and two of the "Ends Monitoring" reports: Lifespan Faith Development and Stewardship. There was also a discussion of whether existing policy adequately covers "In-and-Out Fundraising" practices. No motions were made.

The next Board Meeting will be Thursday, September 3 (and generally on 1st Thursdays going forward). Any member of the congregation may attend.

Join the People in the Know!

Photographers! Writers! Editors! Designers! Admins!

The Communications Team needs your help with the church's website, newsletter, Facebook page, Twitter stream, public relations, advertising, branding and more. You can do as little or as much as you want. It's a great way to meet people, gain experience, and have fun. .

Contact: **Henry Ruddle** at rcreative1@gmail.com





Roots and Wings

UU Parenting In The Millennium

Ages Birth-10 Years

2nd Sundays (Sept. 13, Oct. 11, Nov. 8...) 9-11 am, Childcare provided

Facilitator: Rev. Geoff Rimositis

Contemporary parenting brings with it challenges never faced by parents in quite the same way before. Families live in a world which is highly mobile, technologically advanced, highly sexualized, media-saturated and consumer-oriented, all of which present challenges for parents.

This curriculum fills a need for today's parents to explore and discuss recent research on issues within contemporary culture, as well as to learn new parenting strategies within a supportive and spiritual environment.

Topics:

- Roots and Wings: What Children Need
- Family Rituals
- Character and Success
- Inherent Worth and Dignity
- Attachment and Connection
- Raising Children in an Affluent Age
- Children and Money
- Children and Spirituality
- Children and the Media
- Raising Girls
- Raising Boys
- Children and Nature
- Joys and Challenges
- When Your Child Needs Help

Unitarian Universalist Parents Meetup Group

<http://www.meetup.com/UUParents>

The Meetup group is a safe venue for parents and children who embrace a Unitarian Universalist philosophy to connect. The group was formed by parents in the **First Unitarian Church of San José** <http://sanjoseuu.org> who wanted an easy way to get to know like-minded parents. The philosophy of the church, and the Unitarians of this group, is love. Parents belonging to this group have many different lifestyles and beliefs, but we are unit-

ed in our commitment to acceptance of each other and our children. You do not have to attend any church or consider yourself religious to be part of this group. Just go to our Meetup site, <http://www.meetup.com/UUParents/> and fill out a few profile questions, which are meant to verify you are a parent with some interest in this group, and an organizer will approve you. For more information contact the Rev. Geoff Rimositis, Grimositis@sanjoseuu.org, (408) 292-3858, ext. 25.

Religious Education and Family Ministries

Group Spiritual Direction

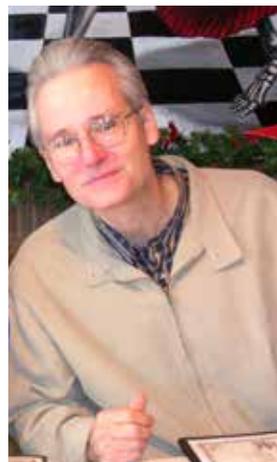
Sundays Nov. 1, 8, 15, 1-3 pm, Church Office Conference Room • Leader: Rev. Geoff Rimositis

Introduction: At some point in the spiritual journey we are awakened to the primacy of love in our lives. For some this may show itself as an insatiable passion for truth or for justice, for others it may be a deep reverence for beauty, and still for others it may appear as the drawing of the heart to compassionate service. Others may sense only that beneath the pain, the joy, the complacency of their lives there is a Reality which can no longer be ignored. However this longing shows itself, it is ultimately a longing for the deep connection that goes by many names. This longing is the bedrock of the spiritual life and of spiritual direction. When we realize this, we may look for a place where we can be accountable for our love. We may search

within our church community or elsewhere for a group or a person who can assist us in the noticing and can support us in the loving. Though we may not name it as such, we are seeking what traditionally has been known as spiritual direction.—*Rose Mary Dougherty. Group Spiritual Direction: Community for Discernment (adapted).*

Process: Through reflections on spiritual texts with deep listening, reflection and with sharing of personal experiences we will offer each other support and help each other to discern what love is calling us to do in our lives.

Leader: Reverend Geoff Rimositis, M.Div., completed the certificate program in congregational-based spiritual direction in 2015 with The Center for Congregational Spirituality in St. Paul, Minnesota sponsored by The Mid-America, Southern and Pacific Western Regions of the Unitarian Universalist Association.



To participate in the class you must register by contacting Rev. Geoff at GRimositis@Gmail.com, 408-292-3858, ext. 225.

Children and Youth Classes



Children and youth in Preschool (3 years) through high school join the community for the first part of worship at 11 am and then go to their respective classes until 12:30.

Nursery: Birth - five years

Location: Nursery, Church's Lower Level
Childcare Staff: Danni Fernandez,
Kimberly Fernandez

We provide a safe, clean environment in which to support each child in initiating play activities at the developmental level they manifest. Each week our paid staff, Danni and Kimberly Fernandez, provides a loving presence, engaging children in games, stories and crafts with seasonal and holiday themes throughout the year.

3-5 Year Olds

Chalice Children (<http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/chalicechildren>)

The curricula, We Are Many, We Are One and Chalice Children, are based on the philosophy that young children learn about religion through relationships. What is a person? Who am I? How am I related to others? What are my responsibilities? What kind of world do I live in? These are religious questions that children begin to answer as they become acquainted with themselves, other people, and their environment; all responses are mediated by the significant adults in their lives.

1st-4th Grades

HOLIDAYS & HOLY DAYS

In this program, children engage in the process of learning about the origins and meanings of holidays and holy day celebrations. "Holidays are the natural, age-old vehicle of religious socialization. Their festivities tell a story which children absorb with delight, through experiences far more than through words. Decorations, colors, costumes, dances, lights, songs, foods, festivity, gifts, excitement, pagantry, solemnity, ceremony, and ritual...

it is of these that tradition is woven, that memories, beliefs, values, fears, hopes and reverence are transmitted. A holiday is not something to talk about; it's something to DO." Through the vehicle of celebrating significant holidays in various cultures and religious traditions, the program's goals are to help children to

- become aware of values that Unitarian Universalists affirm
- learn that celebrating is part of a universal response to life
- honor the diversity and particularity of cultural traditions and the commonality of the human condition
- develop an interest and understanding of the traditions of our world neighbors
- learn some of the heroes and heroines of our liberal tradition
- learn about some of the great religious classics: events, stories, myths, persons
- have opportunities for expressions of social concern

5th-8th Grades

THE QUESTING YEAR

The Questing Year invites participants on four quests tied to the themes of self, church, mystery, and social action:

Inner Quest – Who are you? What are you like? How are you different? What's your place in the world?

Unitarian Universalist Quest – What does it mean to be a Unitarian Universalist? What's special about us? How do we live out our principles?

Mystery Quest – How can you understand what you can't see? Like God? Or the great mystery? Or spirit and spirituality?

Action Quest – How can you make the world a better place?

In addition to the Sunday morning curriculum, youth get together for once a month social activities/First Friday Fun Nights, join with other middle school youth for weekend conferences: [Middle School Unitarian Universalist Gatherings MUUGS](#) (Middle School UUs) and a junior high backpack trip in June.

Grades 9-12: Senior High Youth Group, Youth Room

Youth Group Advisors: Rick Morris, Matt Trask

The senior high youth group meets on Sundays from 11:30-12:30. The group offers its members a safe place to share their lives and find support and friendship among open minded and loving peers. The group engages in discussions about issues relevant to youth's lives and communities. They plan social and service projects throughout the year. And they participate in youth conferences in area Unitarian Universalist churches under the auspices of the Unitarian Universalist Camps and Conferences and Y.R.U.U.P (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists of the Pacific) <http://yruup.org/> The youth group's empowering philosophy educates youth to be leaders within the group, church community and denomination.

In addition the senior high group organizes a summer trip to Santa Cruz Island in the Channel Island chain in Southern California. And every four years the group participates in our partner church trip to Romania.

Children and Youth Classes



SEPTEMBER 13 UPSTAIRS



Water Communion: Celebration Service for All Ages

Please bring water from your travels (inward or outward) and a sentence about what you learned this summer.

SEPTEMBER 20 DOWNSTAIRS

3-5 year olds

Each of us is important and special

1st -4th grades

First Day-Introducing Ourselves and the Curriculum

5th-8th grades

Unitarian Universalists & Inner Quests

9th-12th grades

Group meets 11:30-12:30

Roots & Wings-Unitarian Universalist Parenting in the Millennium

9:30-10:45 am, childcare available

Topic: Roots and Wings: What Children Need

Facilitator: Rev. Geoff Rimositis

Good parents give their children “roots” and “wings.” In today’s world it has become increasingly difficult for parents to do a “good enough” job helping their children develop the “roots” that will help them assimilate into a world whose messages are often quite different from their own. Sending children off with “wings” into such a world can be frightening. This curriculum provides parents with the resources and support they will need in order to face the often daunting challenges in our world today.

Future Topics: Family Rituals, Character and Success, Inherent Worth and Dignity, Attachment and Connection, Raising Children in an Affluent Age, Children and Money, Children and Spirituality...

SEPTEMBER 27 DOWNSTAIRS

3-5 year olds

Here We Meet Friends

1st -4th grades

Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year: Sept. 13-15)

5th-8th grades

Mystery & Action Quests

9th-12th grades

Group meets 11:30-12:30

Like us on Facebook!

Help us grow our online presence and continue the conversation on our Facebook page. “First Unitarian Church of San José.” New articles, thoughtful quotes, and photos every week! www.facebook.com/FUCSJ

Small Group Ministry News — *Work Project Challenge*

by **Mary Martin**



Every summer, the Monday Morning Chalice Circle plans a service project in place of one of its regular Small Group Ministry meetings. This year’s project was a simple one — dusting the church. The project took place the Monday before the quarterly Service is Our Prayer Day, lessening the load on those who came to clean and repair the church the following Saturday.

We challenge other small ministry groups to think up their own projects to benefit our spiritual cooperative!

Participants in the Monday Morning Chalice Circle’s cleaning project are (standing l. to r.): Natasha Myers, Gertrud Cory, Bev Clifford, Genie Bernardini, Alice Lynch & Julia Rodriguez, and (seated): Mary Martin. Not pictured: Joyce Miller.

Sunday Services / Servicios Domingo

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 11 AM



Encore Careers - The Many Faces of Retirement

LABOR DAY SUNDAY

Celebrate Labor Day Weekend with personal, spiritual, economic and political reflections on the changing faces of retirement, from new careers and calls for service to continuing economic disparities. Past Worship Leader Greg Larson will be returning to lead our shared exploration as he embarks on his own "encore career."

Worship Leader: Greg Larson

Worship Associate: Bill Bowman

DOMINGO, 6 DE SEPTIEMBRE 11 AM

"Reposicion de Carreras - las Muchas Caras de la Jubilación"

DOMINGO DEL DIA DEL TRABAJO

Celebramos el fin de semana del día del trabajo con reflexiones personales, espirituales, económicas y políticas sobre los rostros cambiantes del retiro, de nuevas carreras y llamadas del servicio para continuar con las disparidades económicas. Último culto líder Greg Larson regresará

para dirigir nuestra exploración compartida mientras se embarca en su propia "carrera de encore".

Dirige: Greg Larson

Asociado de culto: Bill Bowman

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 11 AM



"Love, Come Take Me Home"

HOMECOMING SUNDAY!

Welcome, and welcome back, to this caring, compassionate community, committed to Making Love Visible in all that we say and do! On this Homecoming Sunday, we celebrate with a lively story, two beautiful songs from the Alegría Singers, and our own uplifted voices and spirits.

Water Communion: Whether you bring water from your kitchen tap or borrow some from the bowl we'll provide, please come ready to participate in this annual ritual. You can contribute to the communal poem by filling in the blank on this sentence: "This summer I learned ..." Just a few words to capture this summer's learnings, all poured with a small splash of water into one great big bowl of Beloved Community!

Love, come take us home!

Worship Leaders: the Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones and the Rev. Geoff Rimositis

Worship Associates: Bill Bowman and Karen Conrotto

DOMINGO, SEPTIEMBRE 13 11 AM

"Amor, Ven Llévame al Hogar"

¡DOMINGO DE REGRESO AL HOGAR!

¡Bienvenidos y bienvenido el regreso, a esta comunidad cariñosa y compasiva, comprometida con Hacer Visible el Amor en todo lo que decimos y hacemos! En este Domingo de Regreso al Hogar, celebramos con una historia animada, dos hermosas canciones de Alegría Singers y nuestras propias animadas voces y espíritus.

¡El Amor, Viene y Nos Lleva al Hogar!

Comunión del Agua: Si traen agua, ya sea del grifo de su cocina o la pida prestada del tazón de la fuente que les proporcionaremos, por favor venga listo para participar en este ritual anual. Usted puede contribuir al poema comunal llenando el espacio en blanco en esta frase: "Este verano aprendí..." ¡Unas cuantas palabras para capturar los aprendizajes de este verano, todo vertido con un pequeño chorro de agua en un gran tazón de la Amada Comunidad!

Dirige: La Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones y El Rev. Geoff Rimositis; **Asociados de Culto:** Bill Bowman y Karen Conrotto

SERVICIOS EN ESPAÑOL

10:15 AM

Todos los domingos – Alabanzas en español

Media Hora de Reunión del Pequeño Grupo del Ministerio Multicultural. Venga a unirse a nosotros para este servicio simple de oración-meditación de media hora (sin sermón) a las 10:15 am en una mezcla de inglés y español en la biblioteca de la iglesia, a la izquierda al entrar en la puerta principal de la iglesia. Accesible e incluyente para todos, este servicio ofrece tiempo para cantar, meditar y reflexionar en un pequeño grupo en preparación para el servicio de las 11:00 am.

Every Sunday – Alabanzas (Spanish Lauds)

A half-hour multicultural Small Group Ministry gathering. Come join us for this simple prayer-meditation service (without sermon) at 10:15 am, held in a mixture of English and Spanish in the Church Library, on the left when you enter the front door of the church. Accessible and welcoming to all, this service provides time to sing, meditate, and reflect in a small group in preparation for the service at 11 am.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 11 AM



The Broken-Openhearted Way of Living

“Trauma is an indivisible part of human existence. It takes many forms but spares no one,” writes Buddhist psychologist Mark Epstein in *The Trauma of Everyday Life*. To live broken-openhearted means that we encounter mindfully the griefs, losses, and disappointments that life inevitably brings, and through them, we open our hearts to a deeper compassion for ourselves and others. We “don’t have to shine,” says a modern Buddhist story—we just need to show up. Come, let us learn to be the loving people we long to be.

Worship Leader: the Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones; **Worship Associate:** Bev Clifford

DOMINGO, 20 DE SEPTIEMBRE 11 AM

La Ruptura-Honesta Forma de Vida

“El trauma es una parte indivisible de la existencia humana. Toma muchas formas, pero no perdona nadie,” escribe el psicólogo budista Mark Epstein en el *Trauma de la Vida Cotidiana*. Vivir de una forma honesta la ruptura significa que encontramos conscientemente las penas, las pérdidas y las decepciones que la vida inevitablemente trae, y a través de ellas, abrimos nuestros corazones a una profunda compasión por nosotros mismos y otros. “No tenemos que brillar,” dice una historia budista moderna — solo necesitamos ser visibles. Vengan, vamos a aprender a ser las personas amorosas que deseamos ser.

Dirige: La Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones
Asociada de Culto: Bev Clifford

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 11 AM



Compassion: The Journey to Our Partner Church

This past July, 28 youth and adults from First Unitarian traveled to Hungary and Romania as ambassadors to our Eastern European Unitarian kin. What did we learn about ourselves, about our Partner Church, about our faith, and about what our community can be? This Sunday we bring home our experiences—the joys and the pitfalls, the transcendent moments and the mistakes. Come travel with us and receive the blessings of our multicultural family!

Worship Leader: the Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones; **Worship Associates:** FUCSJ’s 2015 Pilgrims to our Partner Church

DOMINGO, 27 DE SEPTIEMBRE 11 AM

Compasión: El Viaje a Nuestra Iglesia Hermana

Este pasado mes de julio, 28 jóvenes y adultos de la Primera Iglesia Unitaria viajaron a Hungría y Rumania como embajadores de nuestros familiares Unitarios Europeos Orientales. ¿Qué hemos aprendido sobre nosotros mismos, sobre nuestra Iglesia Hermana, acerca de nuestra fe y sobre lo que puede ser nuestra comunidad? Este domingo nosotros traeremos a casa nuestras experiencias, las alegrías y las dificultades, los momentos trascendentes y los errores. ¡Vengan a viajar con nosotros y reciban las bendiciones de nuestra familia multicultural!

Dirige: Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones; **Asociados de Culto:** Los Peregrinos de la FUCSJ del 2015 a nuestra Iglesia Hermana

SAVE THE DATE!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18 11 AM



Phoenix Rising from the Ashes: Celebrating 20 Years of Surviving the Fire, and Launching our 150th Anniversary Year

Be sure to join us on this special Sunday, when firefighters and city officials, generous donors and church leaders return to First Unitarian so that we can honor the courage, strength, and determination that allowed this community to survive a devastating six-alarm fire on October 16, 1995. Fire engines will be parked outside the church, and we’ll have an informal party in the courtyard after worship. Want to help make this celebration memorable for us and the wider community? Contact Dana Spinney, fucsjooffice@gmail.com.

APARTEN LA FECHA!

DOMINGO, 18 DE OCTUBRE 11 AM

Fénix Levantándose de las Cenizas: Celebrando 20 años de Sobrevivir al Incendio y Lanzando Nuestro 150 Aniversario

Asegúrense de unirse a nosotros en este domingo especial, cuando los bomberos y funcionarios de la ciudad, generosos donantes y líderes de la iglesia vuelven a La Primera Iglesia Unitaria para que nosotros podamos honrar la valentía, fuerza y determinación que permitió a esta comunidad sobrevivir a un fuego devastador del seis-alarmas el 16 de octubre de 1995. Los carros de los bomberos estarán estacionados afuera de la iglesia, y tendremos una fiesta informal en el patio después del servicio. ¿Quieren ayudar a hacer esta celebración inolvidable para nosotros y para la comunidad en general? Dana Spinney fucsjooffice@gmail.com.

Announcements

MONDAYS

6-7 PM



Weekly Meditation Group

First Unitarian Church Sanctuary

We meditate starting at 6 pm for 30 minutes. We begin with the ringing of the meditation bell and setting the timer for 30 minutes. Come in the door at end of the ramp and quietly enter the sanctuary. You are welcome, no matter what time you arrive, to sit in a chair or on the labyrinth. You can bring a cushion to meditate on. You can leave after the meditation but all are welcome to stay afterwards for a brief check-in about our meditation experience and practice.

To be put on the meditation group email list, contact meditation group convener, **Rev. Geoff Rimositis**, GRimositis@Gmail.com.

1ST & 3RD SUNDAYS

2:30-5 PM



San Jose Community Dances

Hattie Porter Hall

Great exercise, great LIVE music, great fun! All dances taught - beginners welcome. For more information, see bacds.org/series/community/san_jose or [facebook.com/groups/SanJoseCommunityDance](https://www.facebook.com/groups/SanJoseCommunityDance). **April 19:** After-dance jam session using The Portland Collection (contra

and The Barnes Books (English Country Dance), 5-7 pm. Contact Susan Torngren, storgren@comcast.net, for more information.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 3

1-3 PM



Women's Alliance

The Women's Alliance is kicking off the 2015-2016 series of meetings at a **new time: 1-3 pm**. In addition, we're moving back to our previous location in the comfy chairs of the Fireside Room. We will continue to meet on the first Thursday of each month, from Sept. 3, 2015, to June 2, 2016. We'll begin by discussing the first three essays in Barbara G. Walker's *Belief & Unbelief* (through page 33). We will also be considering whether to read Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's highly acclaimed novel *Americanah*. Come even if you haven't done the reading; the discussion is always rich! Please contact Nancy at 408 985 5778 or nbc Coleman@gmail.com for further information. All are welcome.

MONDAY, SEPT. 7

DEADLINE



Circle Suppers

Circle Suppers offer an opportunity for members of the church community to get to know one another at casual pot luck suppers. Small groups come together in members' homes to share food and conversation. Singles, couples, long-time church members or new to this commu-

nity, all are welcome. Contact Barbara Derbyshire at CircleSuppers@AOL.com.

The suppers in September will be Saturday the 19th and Sunday the 20th. The deadline to sign up is Monday the 7th.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 4

8 PM



Dances of Universal Peace

Sanctuary

Come join us on the labyrinth under the dome of our church. The Dances of Universal Peace are a spiritual practice honoring the inherent worth and dignity of every human being, celebrating the interconnected web of all existence, and using sacred phrases from the world's religions. Beginners and experienced dancers join together in these moving meditations. The words of the sacred phrases, as well as the melodies and the movements, are taught each time.

If you have questions you can email **Patrick Smiley** at patrick.smiley@sbc-global.net or telephone and leave a message at 650.596.8829.

SUNDAY, SEPT. 6

1-3 PM

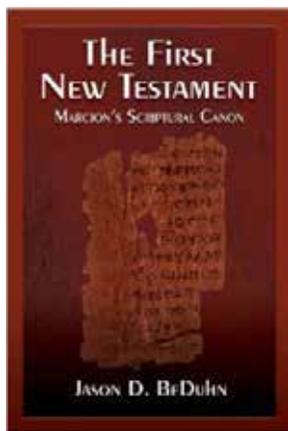
Christian Origins Book Study: The First New Testament: Marcion's Scriptural Canon by Jason D. BeDuhn

Conference Board Room, Led by Bob Miess joining us in a Zoom video conference, which will be set up by Nancy Lucid
NEW: You can also join this meeting from home, by phone or by video conference on your computer

On September 6, we will continue our reading of Jason BeDuhn's book, *The First New Testament: Marcion's Scriptural*

Canon, about Marcion, a second-century heretic, and his New Testament. Marcion was the first known Christian to create a "bible," but his "bible" was different from what we think of as "the" bible today. In September we will continue to discuss Chapter 4 (pages 203-259), Marcion's *Apostolikon* (the letters of Paul that were in his New Testament) and BeDuhn's approach to reconstructing it.

Please bring a Bible with the Paul's letters for comparison – any translation will do – or use one of our copies during the session. If you don't have one, you might pick up "The Authentic Letters of Paul" which provides a copy of the letters, along with some notes about what we know from recent scholarship. Questions? Contact Bob Miess, Bob@BobMiess.com, 925-392-5901.



MONDAY, SEPT. 21 7:30 PM



HUUmanati Monday Meeting

Library (the room on the left in the front lobby)

Come join us, rest your feet, check in, and chat about what's on your summer mind. There may be board games and other easy activities, also. For more information, contact Amy, 408-730-9622.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 7 PM
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10 7 PM
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11 2:30 PM



Ultimate Idol

Hattie Porter Hall

The 6th Annual FUCSJ Mystery Musical Comedy fundraiser, "Ultimate Idol," may seem like any other TV talent show, but really it's a cauldron of deep feelings and motives for murder that boil under a surface of hilarious situations, jokes and songs that will keep you laughing and

guessing all the way to the end.

We will cast three cameo roles for each performance during September. If you'd like to join the fun by auditioning for the show within a show during the actual show, watch for details or contact Jay Porter mj.porter7@yahoo.com.

WEDNESDAYS 7-9 PM



Alegria Singers Choir Practice

Join the FUCSJ choir in singing at Sunday services, special events such as solstice celebrations and Coffeehouses, and various church activities.

Hiking Schedule – September 2015

Please contact Joyce Miller if you plan to hike: Home 408-730-1052 or cell 408-769-0534; j408miller@sbcglobal.net.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 2 8:30 AM

Still in Chicago. Sanborn County Park, car shuttle hike, 6 miles, moderate. Meet at US Bank parking lot in Saratoga. Start at parking lot at Sunnyvale Mt trail head off of Skyline after leaving a car at Castle Rock.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 5 8:30 AM

Still in Chicago. Almaden Quicksilver, Mockingbird Hill entrance. 6 miles, moderate. Meet at Almaden Plaza Shopping center across from Bed, Bath and Beyond.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 9 8:30 AM

Still in Chicago. Alum Rock Park, 5 miles, moderate. Meet at VTA Park and Ride on Capitol Ave just off Alum Rock Blvd. Take Alum Rock exit off 680, turn right on Capitol, go three blocks, turn right at VTA station and drive to the back to a lot that is shared with Monte Vista apt. complex.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 12 8:30 AM

Arastradero Preserve, 5 miles, moderate. Meet at trailhead parking lot.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 16 8:30 AM

Long Ridge Open Space to Grizzly Flat, 6 miles, moderate. This is a shuttle hike. Meet at US Bank parking lot in Saratoga.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 19 8:30 AM

Sunol Regional Park, 5 miles, moderate. We will do a flatter hike along the creek. Meet at VTA Park and Ride on Capitol off Alum Rock.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 23 8:30 AM

Santa Teresa County Park, 5-6 miles, moderate. We will go to the Fortini Rd. entrance and do the Stiles Ranch trail. I think I can do it if I pace myself. Meet at Almaden Plaza Shopping center across from Bed, Bath and Beyond.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 26 8:30 AM

Joseph Grant County Park, 5 miles, moderate. We will do a flatter hike and decide the route when we get there. Meet at VTA Park and Ride at Capitol Ave. off Alum Rock Blvd.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 30 8:30 AM

Wunderlich County Park, 6 miles, moderate. Meet at PageMill/280 Park and Ride.



160 North Third Street
San José, CA 95112

Want to Receive the Newsletter?

To receive the newsletter on paper, fill out the form at this link: <http://sanjoseuu.org/form/index.php?sid=2> or call (408) 292-3858

To receive the newsletter via email: fucsjooffice@gmail.com or join the Yahoo Group: groups.yahoo.com/group/uusj

Next issue copy deadline: 3 pm Wednesday, September 16

Mailing: Wednesday, September 30

View this newsletter online in PDF format at: sanjoseuu.org

Donations are welcome to help defray the cost of printing and mailing. Suggested donation: \$18-\$20 per year – please mail to Office Manager – or bring returnable bottles/cans for us to recycle!

Save the Dates

September 3, Thursday, 1-3 pm,
Women's Alliance, Fireside Room

September 4, Friday, 8 pm, Dances
of Universal Peace, Sanctuary

September 6, Sunday, 11 am, Water
Communion: Celebration Service
for All Ages.

September 6, Sunday, 1-3 pm, Book
Study, Board Room

September 7, Monday, Deadline to
sign up for Circle Suppers. Contact
Barbara at CircleSuppers@aol.com

September 13, Sunday, 9-11 am,
Roots and Wings Parenting Group
grimositis@gmail.com

September 19 and 20, Saturday and
Sunday, Circle Suppers. Contact
Barbara at CircleSuppers@aol.com

September 27, Sunday, 12:15 – 1:15
pm, Get-Acquainted Light Lunch

October 9, Friday, 7 pm, **October
10**, Saturday, 7 pm, **October 11**,
Sunday, 2:30 pm, Ultimate Idol, the

6th Annual FUCSJ Mystery
Musical Comedy Fundraiser
for PACT, Hattie Porter Hall

November 1, 8, 15, Sunday,
1-3 pm, Group Spiritual
Direction, Church Office Con-
ference Room

READY TO BECOME A NEW MEMBER OF THE FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF SAN JOSÉ? Contact Rev. Geoff, grimositis@gmail.com

For Pastoral Care

Our community strives to offer compassion, companionship, healing, and joy to all its members. Our pastoral care coordinators can help you find the listening ear or helping hands that you may need in difficult times. Please contact the Rev. Geoff Rimositis.

Contacting the Ministers

Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones and **Rev. Geoff Rimositis** feel honored to serve this congregation, and we cherish your trust! Here is how to reach us: Nancy (408) 292-3858, ext. 223 Mon.-Thurs.; cell (408) 952-9418; e-mail: revnpj@yahoo.com. Geoff: (408) 292-3858, ext. 225 Mon.-Thurs.; cell (408) 309-7796; e-mail: grimositis@gmail.com.

Cuidado Pastoral

Nuestra comunidad se esfuerza en ofrecer la compasión, el compañerismo curativo, y la alegría a todos sus miembros. Nuestros coordinadores en cuidado pastoral pueden ayudarle a encontrar un oído que escucha, o las manos que ayudan cuando ustedes lo pudieran necesitar en épocas difíciles. Para el cuidado pastoral, por favor, comuníquese con el Rev. Geoff Rimositis.

Contactando a los Ministros

La Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones y El Rev. Geoff Rimositis se sienten honrados de servir a esta congregación y apreciamos su confianza! Aquí esta como puede contactarnos: Nancy (408) 292-3858, ext. 223 de Lunes a Jueves; cell (408) 952-9418; e-mail: revnpj@yahoo.com. Geoff: (408) 292-3858, ext. 225 de Lunes a Jueves; cell (408) 309-7796; e-mail: grimositis@gmail.com

How You Can Support This Congregation:

Your Presence and Time

Attend Sunday services, join a Small Group or one of the many social/activity groups, serve on a committee, come to events, like us on Facebook. Visit www.sanjoseuu.org for more ideas!

Contribute to Fundraisers, Weekly Collections

Make an annual pledge of support (fulfill it by check, EFT, stock transfer or Paypal), attend fundraisers such as the service auction and mystery musical, watch for special collections.