

Our Church Circular

First Unitarian Church of San José * February 1, 2012 * 1 de febrero 2012
160 N. Third Street, San José, CA 95112 * (408) 292-3858 * sanjoseuu.org



The place of love in our lives

by the Rev. Geoff Rimositis

Love is the ultimate spiritual practice. It is in relationships, both human and in nature that we learn to love beyond fear to a fearless openness. It is meeting the world in all its glorious diversity that we experience the Holy, God, and the Creative Interchange that illuminates the meaning of life. Each of us must discover the vessel through which we come to know the ultimate truth that lies at the center of our lives. Religious community is one such vessel.

“In response to a question about why people came to our religious communities at all, Dr. James Luther Adams, [Unitarian and subsequently Unitarian Universalist prominent theologian of the twentieth century] was quite succinct: They came for ultimacy and intimacy. He went on to explain that they came to wrestle with (and from time to time to actually find answers to) life’s ultimate questions. Who am I? In what or in whom do I trust? In what community do I belong? And they came for a sense of intimacy, a safe place in which they could be accepted while making connections with others.” – Rev. John C. Morgan, Covenant Group News, <http://www.smallgroupministry.net/cgnews/index.php?n=021>

Ultimacy and Intimacy: spiritual love and the love shared in the circle of our common humanity.

We get to that place of ultimacy almost every Sunday when we sing with full voices, sit in silence, and share from the depths of our lives when we light a candle. There is ultimacy in seeing the children and youth come down to sit in the center of the sanctuary for the morning’s story for all ages, and know that they are also at the center of our lives and mission as a congregation. The beauty of our round church, the artistic chancel decorations, and the heartfelt words of those who preach the morning’s sermon or offer a personal reflection on the day’s theme take us to that place of ultimacy— to a deep experience of spiritual

love.

When we are spiritually fed we feel strong within ourselves. We can risk opening up to others. We can move beyond fear to trust. When we tell our life’s story and listen to others tell their stories, we make a connection and experience a blessed and invigorating intimacy. Religious community gives us opportunities for intimacy and ultimacy.

I have the joy this year of being a leader in our children’s elementary Sunday morning program. This past month, in honor of esteemed guest Rev. Mark Kijimba from Uganda, the children acted out in their class a Ugandan folktale, Kumba. Kumba, a young boy, was being foolish and thinking only of himself. It made him feel miserable. He didn’t know what to do. But in telling his story he received wise advice from the animals (Children made masks and played the parts of a Lion, Leopard, Rabbit, Antelope, Elephant, Mother and Father.). Kumba learned that to best love himself he must love others with an active and thoughtful love. In doing so he came to know that he was a valuable and special person. This is what we learn by being in religious community together: how to love with ultimacy and intimacy. ●



February theme: love ♦ tema de febrero: el amor

El lugar del Amor en Nuestras Vidas

para el rev. Geoff Rimisitis

El amor es la última práctica espiritual. Es en las relaciones, en que ambos, los humanos y la naturaleza aprendemos a amar más allá del miedo a una apertura sin miedo. Es unir el mundo en toda su gloriosa diversidad que experimentamos la Santidad, Dios y el intercambio creativo que ilumina el sentido de la vida. Cada uno de nosotros debemos descubrir el buque a través del cual llegamos a saber la verdad última que se encuentra en el centro de nuestras vidas. La comunidad religiosa es uno de tal buque.

“En respuesta a una pregunta sobre por qué las personas vinieron a nuestras comunidades religiosas, el Dr. James Luther Adams, [Prominente teólogo del siglo XX, Unitario y posteriormente Unitario Universalista] fue muy sucinta: vinieron por ultimidad e intimidad. Continuó para explicar que vinieron a luchar (y de vez en cuando encontrar respuestas) a preguntas máximas de la

vida. ¿Quién soy? ¿En qué o en quién confío? ¿A qué comunidad pertenezco? “Y llegaron por un sentido de intimidad, un lugar seguro en el que podrían ser aceptados mientras hacen conexiones con otros” — Rev. John C. Morgan, Covenant Group News, <http://www.smallgroupministry.net/cgnews/index.php?n=021>

Ultimidad e intimidad: amor espiritual y el amor compartido en el círculo de nuestra humanidad común.

Llegamos a ese lugar de ultimidad casi todos los domingos cuando cantamos con todas las voces, nos sentamos en silencio y compartimos desde lo más profundo de nuestras vidas cuando encendemos una vela. Hay ultimidad en ver a los niños y jóvenes bajar a sentarse en el centro del santuario para la historia para todas las edades de la mañana y saben que también ellos están en el centro de nuestras vidas y la misión como una congregación.

La belleza de nuestra iglesia redonda, la decoración artística del altar y las sinceras palabras de aquellos que predicán el sermón de la mañana u ofrecen una reflexión personal sobre el tema del día que nos lleva a ese lugar de ultimidad— a una profunda experiencia del amor espiritual.

Cuando somos alimentados espiritualmente nos sentimos fuertes dentro de nosotros mismos. Podemos arriesgarnos abriéndonos a los demás. Podemos ir más allá del miedo a confiar. Cuando contamos la historia de nuestra vida y escuchamos a otros contar sus historias, hacemos una conexión y experimentamos una bendita y vigorizante intimidad. La comunidad religiosa nos da oportunidades de intimidad y ultimidad.

Tengo la alegría este año de ser un líder en el programa de mañana del domingo de de

nuestros hijos de primaria. Este último mes en honor del estimado invitado, el reverendo Mark Kijimba de Uganda, los niños actuaron en su clase un cuento ugandés, Kumba. Kumba, un muchacho joven, estaba siendo tonto y pensando sólo en sí mismo. Esto lo hizo sentirse miserable. No sabía qué hacer. Pero en su historia recibió sabios consejos de los animales (los niños hicieron máscaras y actuaron las partes de un León, un leopardo, un conejo, un antílope, un elefante, una madre y un padre). Kumba aprendió que para amarse mejor a uno mismo, el debe amar a otros con un amor activo y reflexivo. De esta manera llegó a saber que él era una persona valiosa y especial. Esto es lo que aprendemos por estar juntos en comunidad religiosa: cómo amar con ultimidad e intimidad. ●



Yes For My Daughter

By Jean Anderson Embree

*It's getting to us, this whole women's liberation, liberty, the liberal pain:
The surgeon's knife is slicing at the rib
That never quite left Adam. Once again
We're being born, you and I, mother
And daughter. Each of us has stood in a dark
Year and fought the problem for the other—
The problem with no name—that brands the mark
Of battle in our minds. Now worlds of lives
Yawn before us like mouths of giants or bless
With widespread arms of love: which gate gives
Hope? Can each of us alone say YES
To life? Let's practice it as friends who love
Each other; then we can answer when worlds move.*

(1971, Written during the Vietnam War when mother and daughter were going through divorces and daughter was coming out.)

Reflection:

One of the Many Forms of Love

by Bill Bowman

For many years I've been chasing rainbows, and what I've been seeking has never seemed to get any closer than when I began. It's been frustrating for me, but I found a valuable lesson in the process: love takes on many forms. At first I wanted to talk about love of football, but Nancy put the kibosh on that one! The Niners lost anyway.

One strategy I have used is to try to be fully present, to not let the hurt of the past or the fear of the future overwhelm me and increase my unhappiness. This has not been easy to do. To be fully present and not let the past or future affect how I feel right now is difficult, and it takes much practice. To do so requires looking at what love there is in my life that I do have, even though it does not take the form I most desire. I would like to talk about one such love in my life, and how I've been able to share it with others.

I've always been a reader, ever since I was very little. When I was in a private junior high for part of seventh grade, the one safe place for me was the library. The librarians gave me a book for my birthday—*The White Mountains* by John Christopher. The real gift was that they had the insight to know the kind of book I liked. It was a small kindness when I wasn't finding much kindness or love in my life at the time. I always remembered that, and that is part of the reason why I became a librarian: I wanted to pass along the love of reading and books to others.

I moonlight as a part-time librarian at the San Jose Public Library. Once when I was working at the main library in the children's room, a man came up to me

and wanted to find a book on baseball he had loved as a child. His face lit up when I found it. "That smile is why I became a librarian," I told him.

Perhaps the most profound learning experience I ever had was one Saturday afternoon. Someone had called over the loudspeaker, "librarian to computer twenty". I went over to the room, and there was a Latina woman with two children at the computer. She was in her early thirties, but looked tough, and if her visage wasn't intimidating, her first words



to me were.

"Hey, librarian. The other librarian abandoned me," she said by way of greeting.

I made a decision then and there—I would not be deterred that easily. "I will be with you until your

problem is solved," I promised. I soon found out that this was easier said than done. She had never touched a computer before, and was trying to get a visitor's pass for her father for his birthday to visit her sister who was doing time in a correctional facility.

I offered my own computer instead of the public computer for us to work on. The online form was worthy of Kafka, and even with my computer skills it took a great deal of effort to get through. At one point I let her use the phone to call her father to get some information—normally forbidden under library policy, but which I felt was justified in this case. Throughout, I was "the librarian" to her. Eventually, we got through it, and even though we had little personal interaction, we both learned a lot about each other.

We had to learn to trust each other, to help and be helped, and get

through a very tough situation by showing each other mutual respect. I was even able to help her set up an account on Facebook and Yahoo. When she left, she called me "Bill". That is when I knew I really succeeded.

There is a motion right now to close down all the libraries, because they are a "non-essential service". Yet for this woman, who will never own a computer and had never used one, the library was anything but non-essential. If we are to require someone to fill out a form for a correctional facility visitor's pass online, then the library—and librarians—have never been more vital to the community.

One true function of love is making our services available to all who need them. If there is hope for the future, we must all be in this together, for it is with community that gives us hope for all our roses to blossom. ●

Three Love Poems

by Marge Schneider

*life is terrible
at times yet that doesn't stop
us from loving! or
even being overwhelmed
by waterfalls cascading....*

*Mount Tam i've never
scaled yet heard all about and
would love to walk paths
into it and watch for
sun's rays
and initiate even more walks.*

*we've all lost our way
sometimes yet find more
love just
meandering around
and looking for beauty as
well as understanding it all!*

Reflection on Love

By Dani Hope

*It's the heart afraid of breaking
That never learns to dance.
It's the dream afraid of waking
That never takes the chance.
It's the one who won't be taken,
Who cannot seem to give,
And the soul afraid of dyin'
That never learns to live.*

--"The Rose" by Amanda McBroom

I stand here stronger for the path I've walked. The last 10 months have been more difficult than any other struggle I've faced in my life. The pain of a broken heart is like no other ailment. There is no bandage or ointment to help soothe it. There is only time to heal one's broken spirit and the will to pull oneself forward. I've found it crucial to have faith that life goes on and there is a future to live.

In February of 2005 I chose to fall in love with a blind, single parent with cancer, V Kingsley. But she was none of those things to me. I saw her as vibrant, alive and amazingly loving. She came with an eight-year-old boy, Parker. Voila, instant family! We became deeply enmeshed in our life together and our love grew thicker for each other. Initially, I saw our time together as hospice, which would last about a year. I didn't want Parker to experience his mother's sickness and inevitable future alone. So I pledged myself to the cause. I would walk this path with V and Parker; whatever that meant.

Love is a powerful thing. We had many blessings during the next six years. The first of which was five months into our romance. V regained use of her eyes, by the gift and miracle of prosthetic sclera lens. She was able to drive, create art, quilt, and function fully, in her world, independently! Love Miracle #1!

Not long after that she was told there was no cancer in her body! We were excited, in love and planning our future together as a family! We were determined to live intentionally, committed to



being as authentic, honest and real as we possibly could.

Throughout our time together the cancer and related ailments seeped back into V's body. We lived the medical roller coaster. This taught us to live in the moment. Ultimately, Now, is all any of us have. Our love was amazing. It shone brighter than the problems we faced together. We created lasting memories of joy.

V transitioned on April 1, 2011. She was in my arms, at home, like she wanted. She was determined to live as long as possible, so that there was no doubt in anyone's mind that she didn't fight as much as she could. Anyone who knew V would say she lived longer and more feverishly than any of us would have.

Today, I would say I am in the process of healing. There is a wound I am tending. I know I will walk the rest of my life with this mark on my heart. A forever reminder of the love I gave away. I never asked myself whether I should or not. It was my desire to share my life, my heart, my whole self with V and Parker. And in sharing my self I felt so full, expanded and glorious.

I feel my emptiness slowly filling in, thanks to the love I receive from others and myself. A friend told me

how she actively learned to fall in love with herself. I took that to heart. Another strategy has been to surround myself with caring friends. It has made all the difference to be able to share myself with other humans. I am a very social creature. V gave me so much love and attention. There are a lot of minutes in the day to fill. Much of my time I spend caring for Parker, our house, the garden, our pets and my job. But in between all that, the nights are long and the mornings lonely. I also miss sharing all my activities with someone. I am so grateful for the friends who have walked with me, talked with me and connect in between and throughout my day. This is the companionship I crave and yearn for.

The most important feelings for me are being connected, mattering, being heard and understood. These are acts of empathy, and gifts of love I have received from others. These offerings of grace have helped me traverse the trail I have chosen to walk. I started out in the lush garden of flowers, filled with the sweet fragrance of love. I faced the barren desert and am now emerging, like spring from winter.

I have looked into one of the most difficult challenges life has to offer. And I am transforming—becoming stronger and wiser. I still feel the love for my beloved V. I feel her love every day, when I interact with our son, when I tend our garden, when I am cooking or sitting quietly in the home we nurtured and filled together. I believe V's life is here with us. Just not contained by an earth suit, like those we see around us.

February 11 marks our seventh anniversary. Both of our lives have transmuted and all we have left is pure love! This metamorphosis has added to who I am. I am braver now, knowing that I can let myself love in all different ways, allowing my heart to expand. And with each break, more and more purifying the love I share with others.

May I continue to walk in honor and love, into my future, leading with my heart. ●
* Visit www.alotoflife.com for V's words, art and story.

In Our Own Voices: Love

It can be hard to talk about love without slipping into clichés. And we choose one cliché over another based on the current status of our personal history with love. But when we invite a whole community to reflect on love, we hear both heartfelt questions and hopeful suggestions that show just how multifaceted love is and how we too can be creators of more love.

Read slowly through these quotations from members and friends of the First Unitarian Church of San José. What do you want to add about love? How do your thoughts and feelings about love change over the course of a month, a week, a day? Where do you find love in your life right now?

“Love is the doctrine”—the primary teaching—“of this church.” Come, let us learn to love well and truly, and let us put this love into action.

Questions About Love

- ◆ What is love, actually? How do we know?
- ◆ How has love—or our understanding of love—changed throughout history?
- ◆ When has our love grown, both personally and within our Unitarian Universalist movement? For example, how has our love grown when we, as a religion, have broken through sexism, homophobia, or racism? How do we help create such changes in our capacity to love, for individuals and institutions?
- ◆ What is unconditional love, and how do we learn to practice it?
- ◆ It’s easy to have unconditional love for children. How can we extend that love to others?
- ◆ What can our children and youth teach us about love?
- ◆ Love in a relationship often sounds like worry or anger; it often gets mired down in our day-to-day problems. How do we learn to hear and to speak love through compassion and forgiveness, instead?
- ◆ How can we learn to love without manipulation, without treating love as emotional currency?
- ◆ How do we love those who don’t love us?
- ◆ How do we love and forgive our “enemies”?
- ◆ How do we love across political, religious, generational, cultural, and other divides?
- ◆ How do we understand loving relationships that may not fit the “norm”?
- ◆ What does “love of God” mean for some of us Unitarian Universalists?

Hopes, Suggestions, and Celebrations of More Love

- ◆ Love teaches me that I am human.
- ◆ Love changes during a lifetime and throughout a relationship.
- ◆ Love is an active verb; it’s not passive.
- ◆ Love is a choice.
- ◆ Love is our motivation in life.
- ◆ Love is a mechanism for survival.
- ◆ Unconditional love for myself and others is the path to forgiveness and acceptance.
- ◆ We always have the capacity for love. Being born with “original innocence” means we can change even when we have turned away from our basic loving nature.
- ◆ Let’s invite the long-term partners in our community to share their experiences of love, and then record or document these stories in some way.
- ◆ Thank goodness Unitarian Universalism has a positive, healthy attitude toward our bodies and our sexuality.
- ◆ Youth are central to our community. Let’s support our youth programs!
- ◆ If love doesn’t drive all our social justice activities, then our work for justice will not be sustainable. When we act for justice from a place of love, our hearts grow larger. We see life from another point of view, and we are transformed even as we work to transform unloving systems and situations.
- ◆ Where we put our intention = where we put our attention. Our intention to bring more love to our lives, to the world, helps to guide our actions and make them more effective.

Congregational Meeting Report

The Board of Directors called a special congregational meeting on January 15, 2012, to address two social justice topics.

Corporate Personhood

Patrick O’Connell shared information about the Move to Amend rally taking place in St. James Park this week and read a proposed *Statement of Conscience on Corporate Personhood and Its Destructive Role in Our Society*. A motion to adopt the Statement was made, and discussion followed. A second motion was made to amend the original Statement, shortening it to only include parts of the original third and fourth paragraphs. The motion to amend was defeated. A motion to table the Statement until the March 25 Congregational Meeting was made and defeated. The original Statement of Conscience was voted upon and approved. The idea of revisiting and rewording the Statement was suggested with the possible outcome that the congregation could vote again at the upcoming March congregational meeting after further study.

Immigration as a Moral Issue

Brian Singer then shared reasons that current immigration policies strongly impact our community and the successes that church members involved with PACT have had in working for change.

John Burk, Social Justice representative of the POC, spoke to the steps by which the UUA congregations selected immigration as a study issue in the Social Witness Process and how critical it is to speak to the UUA about this issue.

Julia Rodriguez shared a summary of the results of the recent opinion survey taken by many members of the congregation, which is seen as a first step to moving forward toward action. Several

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SUNDAY SERVICES / SERVICIOS DE DOMINGO

February theme: love ♦ Tema de febrero: el amor

10:15 am

Servicios en español

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 a.m. en una mezcla de inglés y español en la sala Fireside Ramsden. 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) held in a mixture of English and Spanish in the Ramsden Fireside Room. Accessible and welcoming to all, this service provides time to sing, meditate, and reflect in a small group in preparation for the service at 11:00 am.

11:00 am

Services in English

February 5 – 5 de febrero

Love the Flower and You Its Seed

In the song “The Rose,” written by Amanda McBroom and made famous by Bette Midler, love gets compared to a flooding river, a sharpened razor, and an aching hunger. Then the singer digs deeper. She recognizes that if love is actually to bloom, we must be its seed.

Love asks us to take a chance, to risk the journey, to face our fears of all kinds of dying, in order to be fully alive. In what surprising places have you discovered love? What combination of light and darkness allows love to bloom for us Unitarian Universalists? Come share our many stories of love as we launch a month focused on this theme.

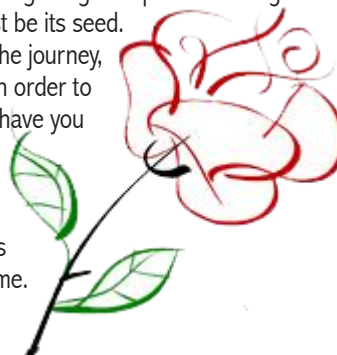
Worship Leader: Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones

Worship Associate: Bill Bowman

El Amor es la Flor y Tú su Semilla

En la canción *La Rosa*, escrita por Amanda McBroom y hizo famoso por Bette Midler, el amor es comparado a un río desbordante, a una navaja afilada y a un hambre dolorosa. Luego la cantante excava más profundo. Ella reconoce que si de hecho el amor florece, nosotros debemos ser sus semillas. El amor nos pide tomar una oportunidad, a arriesgar la jornada, para hacer frente a nuestros temores de todo tipo de muerte, a fin de estar plenamente vivos. ¿En qué lugares sorprendentes han descubierto el amor? ¿Qué combinación de luz y oscuridad permite que el amor florezca para nosotros los Unitarios Universalistas? Vengan a compartir nuestras muchas historias de amor mientras iniciamos un mes centrado en este tema.

Dirige: La Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones



Asociado de Culto: Bill Bowman

February 12 – 12 de febrero

Standing on the Side of Love Sunday

The Story of Us – The Story of Now

Love is a verb as well as a noun. It calls us to action, and it takes many forms: we can love people, things, creatures, causes, communities, family, work, pastimes, and more. So how has your understanding of love changed over the course of your life? How do you speak and act with love now? How has our community's expression of love changed? What does it mean for us to “stand on the side of love”? Come share your questions and launch a community-wide storytelling project to claim where we stand with love now!



STANDING ON THE SIDE OF
LOVE

Worship Leader: Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones

Worship Associate: Debra Fenzel-Alexander

Domingo de Estar del Lado del Amor

La Historia de Nosotros – la Historia de Ahora

El amor es un verbo, así como un sustantivo. Nos llama a la acción y toma muchas formas: podemos amar a personas, cosas, criaturas, causas, comunidades, familia, trabajo, pasatiempos y más. Entonces, ¿cómo ha cambiado su comprensión del amor en el transcurso de su vida? ¿Cómo hablan y actúan con amor ahora? ¿Cómo ha cambiado la expresión de amor de nuestra comunidad? ¿Qué significa para nosotros “estar del lado del amor”? Vengan a compartir sus preguntas y emprender un proyecto de narración de toda la comunidad para iniciar ¿dónde nos encontramos con amor ahora!

Dirige: La Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones

Asociada de Culto: Debra Fenzel-Alexander

February 19 – 19 de febrero

What Do Animals Teach Us About Love?

On this Celebration Sunday for all ages, we will look at the February theme—love—as it relates to the myriad species of animals with which we co-exist on this planet. Everyone is invited to bring a stuffed animal to hold and/or a memento or picture of a favorite animal to place on the altar.

Worship Leaders: Mary Martin and Frank Bosche

¿Qué Nos Enseñan los Animales Sobre el Amor?

En este domingo de celebración para todas las edades, veremos en el tema de febrero — amor — lo que se refiere a las innumerables especies de animales con los que coexistimos en este planeta. Todos están invitados a traer un animal de peluche para celebrar y/o un recuerdo o imagen de un animal favorito para colocar en el altar.

Dirigen: Mary Martin y Frank Bosche

Lifespan Faith Development

Programs for all ages

Children and youth attend the first part of the service at 11:00 am, and then are sung out to their morning program. Classes last until 12:30 pm. Parents, please pick up your children in the nursery and in the PreK-1 class. All other students will be dismissed to rejoin their parents in Hattie Porter Hall.

Nursery: Birth through three years

Location: Lower Level Nursery
Childcare Staff: Maria Elena Olvera, and Sandra Sotelo

PreK-Grade 1: Love Surrounds Us

This program explores UU principles in the context of beloved community including family/home, school and neighborhood. (lower level, room 4)

Grades 2-5: Faithful Journeys

Children explore how Unitarian Universalism translates into life choices and everyday actions. (lower level, rooms 5-6)

Grades 6-8: Heeding the Call

Explores oppression in our society and promotes the understanding of values that counteract the marginalization of others. (lower level, rooms 2-3)

Grades 9-12: A Chorus of Faiths

Each Sunday youth address issues of concern to their lives and spirituality through discussions facilitated by adult advisors.



For more information about our programs for children and youth please contact our family minister, the Rev. Geoff Rimositis, GRimositis@sanjoseuu.org

Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education

OWL: Grades seven-nine

◆ Classes run January 8 through May 6, 2012
Facilitators: Michealle Havenhill, Rev. Jack Michael, (First Congregational Church of San José), Rev. Geoff Rimositis ●

The Mosaic Project: peace it together

March 24, 9 am - 4 pm, at FUCSJ

Join children, youth and adults from bay area Unitarian Universalist congregations for a fun, memorable, and transformational experience with the Mosaic Project (MP) of the East Bay <http://www.mosaicproject.org>. We are pleased to host this even here at FUCSJ.

The Mosaic Project reaches children before negative attitudes surrounding difference become entrenched and also trains older youth (mosaicproject.org/youthleader) to work with them. MP enables youth to learn from and befriend others with whom they would not ordinarily interact. Together they begin to recognize their commonalities and gain respect and appreciation for the uniqueness of all individuals, including themselves.

Participants are encouraged to overcome ignorance and insecurities which can lead to fear of difference, prejudice, discrimination, hatred, and violence. MP provides youth with the profound personal experience of building an inclusive, egalitarian community across race, culture, and class barriers, inspiring and empowering them to create such communities throughout their lives.

The Mosaic Project emphasizes building self-esteem and community and empowers students to create a peaceful future. In particular, MP focuses on four themes:

- ◆ The celebration of diversity and awareness of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination
- ◆ Respect for and appreciation of self and others
- ◆ Teamwork and cooperation
- ◆ Communication and nonviolent conflict resolution (including listening skills, expressing feelings productively, assertiveness, and empathy).

For more information, and to RSVP for the day, contact Rev. Geoff Rimositis at GRimositis@sanjoseuu.org. ●

School for Compassion

November 2011 through March 2012
Next meeting: February 12, 1-2:30 pm

We will engage in spiritual practice and support for one another in living a compassionate life that begins with compassion for oneself and then moves that compassion out into the world. Resources for personal learning and transformation include Karen Armstrong's book *The Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life* and Frederic and Mary Brussat's *Spiritual Literacy*.

The Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones along with Christy Baker (Candidate for the Unitarian Universalist Ministry) will be offering the class on the second Sundays of the month from 1:00 to 2:30 pm in the Ramsden Fireside Room through March. RSVP with the Rev. Geoff at GRimositis@sanjoseuu.org. ●

Book Discussion: "From Jesus to Christianity" by L. Michael White

Sunday February 12, 2:45 – 4:45 pm
in the Board Conference Room.

We will discuss pages 1-116, Chapters 1 to 5, with a primary focus on Chapter 5, "The Historical Figure of Jesus." Even if you missed previous months, you are welcome. Questions? Contact Bob Miess, Bob@FloweringEnterprises.com, 408-297-2066. ●



Love is resilient!

With younger children:

This world is nothing but a school of love; our relationships with our husband or wife, with our children and parents, with our friends and relatives are the university in which we are meant to learn what love and devotion truly are.

— Swami Muktananda quoted in *The Inner Treasure* by Jonathan Star

Resilience can mean finding fun things to do without spending money.

re-sil-ience

Pronunciation: ri-'zil-yen(t)s

Function: noun

1 : the ability of a body to regain its original size and shape after being compressed, bent, or stretched :

ELASTICITY

2 : the ability to recover from or adjust to misfortune or change

— <http://www.wordcentral.com>

Exploring together

- ◆ Roast a perfect marshmallow.
- ◆ Collect family photos and artifacts and spend time sharing family stories.
- ◆ Gather a few families at someone's home. Have adults teach a craft or a household skill to other people's children, or form teams to prepare a meal to share. Bonds outside the immediate family can be a souvenir children keep longer than any travel trinket.
- ◆ If no one has a morning obligation, stay up late.
- ◆ If you are up really early, watch a sunrise.

Bringing the Grain to the Storehouse: A Game from Mali

You will need sand or soft dirt, a little water, some shells or pebbles, and a die. First, build a granary for storing millet— a structure two feet square. Use moist sand or dirt. On each side, hollow out five steps, starting three inches from the bottom. Each player starts with six shells or pebbles, which are the millet they must get to the storehouse roof. To reach the first step, a player must roll a one on the first turn. Each player

gets two chances. If they are unsuccessful, they must wait their turn and try again. To reach the second step, they must roll a two, and so on, until a six puts them on the roof. Each time a player rolls a one, they may start a new shell or pebble moving up the steps. Reward cooperation. When a player lands on the same step as someone else, the two proceed together and have twice as many chances with the die of getting the millet to the top. Teamwork: When any player rolls a six, every player's millet waiting on the fifth step goes to the roof.

About Mali

Want to know more about Mali? check out these web sites:

- ◆ <http://africa.mrdonn.org/mali.html>
- ◆ <http://kids.yahoo.com/reference/world-factbook/country/ml--Mali>
- ◆ <http://www.care.org/vft/mali/>
- ◆ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/gallery/2011/jun/16/mali-digital-camera-project-in-pictures>



Talking About Money Problems

You cannot protect children from financial anxiety in the home, and it may be harmful to try. Children will sense adults' worries and become worried themselves, even before obvious changes in family circumstances. Saying nothing can heighten a child's fear as they wonder what horrible secret you are keeping or whether they have done something wrong.

On the other hand, sharing details can give a child even more to worry about. Assure children that you, the adults, are fine. Acknowledge, "We're in a tough spot at the moment, but we are going to work it out." Remind them that you have each other, and that is the most important thing.

Draw out children's questions about how their lives will be affected and answer honestly. Connect economic events, such as teacher layoffs, to help children understand your family's problems are neither isolated nor unique.

Give children ways to help. Invite them to suggest cuts in family spending, and try to honor their ideas. Build children's resiliency by modeling spiritually solid, resilient behaviors: Do not hesitate to ask for, and offer, help in your neighborhood and social networks. Cultivate an attitude of gratitude for all the resources you have. ●

Announcements & Coming Events

Partner Church Benefit Tea and Lunch

February 4, Saturday, 1-3:30 PM

The Tea is coming! It's a great afternoon when we put on more polish and china than is our usual fare. There is great food with tea sandwiches,



sausage rolls and never ending carts of pastries and tea — and musical entertainment for your enjoyment! It is a great time to share fellowship with church friends, neighbors and family. It is also an opportunity to show off your best hat.

Donations will be used to bring villagers from our partner church in Homoródszentmárton, Romania to visit in 2013. Tickets will be available after church and from Connie Bloch. Suggested donation: \$20 Adult, \$10 youth. If you are able to contribute food or a talent (or would like to volunteer someone else who is talented) please contact Connie at Connie_Bloch@yahoo.com or 206-2163. ●

First Sunday Forum

Sunday, February 5, 10-10:45 am in Hattie Porter Hall

Escaping Ignorance of Islam: Redux.



Review of the January 16 presentations, prepare the feedback Samina Sundas has requested. Those who attended can share with those who could not make it. All are welcome to evaluate, teach and to learn. Contact: tjb@timblackwood.com/408-623-3168. (Because of my surgery on Friday, Amy B. may be covering for me.) ●

HUUMANIST Group Meeting

Monday, February 20, 7 pm, Sanctuary

Race, Sex, and Gender: Real or Constructed? I hope to share some of the things I have learned at a class I have been auditing. Is there a biological basis for these concepts or are they constructs of the mind done for other purposes? All are welcome to bring their ideas and questions. blackwoodt@me.com 408-623-3168. ●

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

You make FUCSJ what it is! Whatever your talent and availability, there is an opportunity for you to serve. Contact Volunteer Coordinating Team members Liz Owen at lowen@data-time.com or Bob Miess at bob@floweringenterprises.com



Community Dances

Sunday, February 5, 2:00 - 5:00 pm Hattie Porter Hall

Dance like Miss Bennett and Mr. Darcy – and perhaps try some favorites of George Washington, William Shakspeare, and Henry Ford as well! Dancing Master Bob Fraley will teach you everything you need to know, and live music by William Allen and friends will lift your feet. Casual dress and comfortable shoes are encouraged. Suggested donation: \$10 to \$15; no one will be turned away. Proceeds to benefit the co-sponsors: The Music Program

Save the Dates

- ◆ **February 2, Thursday**, Women's Alliance, Fireside Room 7:15
- ◆ **February 4, Saturday**, 1-3:30 pm, Partner Church Tea, Hattie Porter Hall, contact Connie Bloch, Connie_Bloch@yahoo.com,
- ◆ **February 5, Sunday**, 1-1:45 am, HUUG First Sunday Forum, Hattie Porter Hall; "Escaping Ignorance of Islam: Redux
- ◆ **February 5, Sunday**, Community Dance: Jane Austen and More! Hattie Porter Hall, 2:00-5:00 pm
- ◆ **February 20, Monday**, HUUMANIST Group, 7:15, Sanctuary
- ◆ **March 1, Thursday**, 7 pm, Introduction to Unitarian Universalist Class begins, downstairs classrooms
- ◆ **March 25, Sunday**, Congregational Meeting 12:45, Sanctuary
- ◆ **April 27-29, 2012**, District Assembly, Oakland Airport Hilton Hotel
- ◆ **June 20-24**, General Assembly, Phoenix, AZ

of the First Unitarian Church of San Jose (sanjoseuu.org) and The Bay Area Country Dance Society (bacds.org) ●

Coffee House News

The Lou and Peter Berryman concert was a huge success! Many thanks to Diana Wirt and many others who volunteered to make it so.

If you want to be involved in future Coffee Houses, please contact Claire Wagner, cwagner21@gmail.com. ●

The Alegria Singers

Wednesdays, 7:30-9:00 pm, Sanctuary

Join the FUCSJ choir in singing at regular Sunday services, at special events such as Solstice Celebrations and Coffee Houses, and bringing music to various church activities. ●

UUthful Spirits

Second and fourth Sundays, 12:45 pm, Hattie Porter Hall

Join our young-at-heart fellowship group for Sunday brunch! Meet in Hattie Porter Hall about 12:45 pm. We also host a happy hour on the first Friday. For information, contact uuthfulspiritsowner@yahoo.com. ●

Yoga Classes at our Church

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:15 to 10:15 am; Wednesdays, 6:15-7:15 pm

These beginning yoga classes have a lot to offer experienced yogis as well. Help increase balance, strength and stamina, and help relieve many chronic pain issues. Suggested donation: \$5-\$15, but no one will be turned away.

Morning classes benefit Third Street Community Center; Wednesday evening class benefits the FUCSJ music program. Questions? contact **Shirley Worth**, cischensyogawest@gmail.com. ●

Check the Church Calendar for Recurring Meetings!

If you have a recurring meeting that involves a reservation of church space, please be sure to check the church calendar to ensure it has been done for 2012! You can find the church calendar on-line at www.sanjoseuu.org. Click on "What's Happening" in the upper right and "Calendar" in the lower left. Click on any reservation to view the room(s) reserved. If you need to make any changes, email Susan Burke at the church office at fucsj@sanjoseuu.org ●

Congregational Meeting Report

continued from page 5

quotes were shared from the survey, and Julia plans to put the complete summary on the password-protected portion of the church website.

A motion was made stating: "We, the members of the FUCSJ, appreciate the work on immigration that PACT has performed. We accept the report presented today as a valid reflection of the concerns of this congregation around the issue of immigration. We approve that this summary be passed on to the UUA as our congregational feedback." Motion carried.

Please plan to attend the next Congregational Meeting on Sunday, March 25.

Beyond Belief: Reflections from the UUA President

By the Rev. Peter Morales

I find it painful to listen to their stories. We all do. We heard the stories of six Tucson area Latino and Latina students who were either seniors in high school or recent graduates. They were all near the top of their class, taking advanced placement and honors courses. They dream of college majors in everything from engineering to psychology. They speak fluent English and Spanish—and are wonderfully articulate in both.

I sit and listen with other UUs who are part of a study group visiting Tucson and the Arizona border. The BorderLinks nonprofit is making the arrangements. These students are receiving support from and working for an organization called ScholarshipsA-Z.

Their stories are painful to hear because none of these young people can go to college. Each one of them is undocumented. They came to the United States some years ago with their families. They entered school, studied hard, and did well. They are the kinds of young people colleges are dying to get, the kind

that get scholarships to excellent colleges and universities. Now they are trapped. They can't even get a job, for they have no social security number.

They watch as classmates who have poorer grades and lower test scores head off to colleges. These students have to fend off questions about where they are going to go to school next fall, because most of their teachers and classmates do not know they are undocumented. At worst, they face deportation.

On a personal level, I am struck by how close I came to being one of them. I was a Latino high school kid with good grades and good test scores. I dreamed of higher education, but could not afford it. But I was born on this side of the border. So I was given a full tuition scholarship, then another, then another. I received an education at a private university my family could never have paid for. It shaped my entire life. Doors opened—a graduate fellowship, a Fulbright lecturership. I have been blessed with the



gift of doing wonderfully fulfilling work. None of this would have happened if I did not have that birth certificate.

What madness! What human waste! I find myself wanting to scream. I find myself feeling as powerless as they are feeling. But I know that I am not powerless, that we are not powerless.

How very beautiful these young people are. How stubborn and yet fragile their hope is. What madness. ●

source: <http://president.blogs.uua.org/immigration/from-the-road-tucson/>

Spotlight on Social Justice

The Social Justice Council blog appears on the Church Webpage at: <http://www.sanjoseeuu.org/socialjusticeblog/>. You can subscribe to the YahooGroup For Social Justice News & Events at: sjsjuu-subscribe@yahoo.com.



Registration still open for February's District workshop!

Transforming the Failures of the 20th Century with an Engaged Faith for the Future

Saturday, February 4: 9 am, registration; 10 am - 4 pm, program

UU Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Road
Kensington, CA 94707

This is the first workshop in the *Transforming Ourselves and the World* series. Each workshop in the series will explore:

- ◆ How we can liberate liberal religion and be transformative change agents.
- ◆ How our congregations can thrive and become more vital and alive centers of personal and social transformation.
- ◆ How we can transform our stories of the past into a legacy for the future.
- ◆ How we can work together to create a new future for Unitarian Universalism and the world.

- ◆ How we can be transformed as religious leaders in the process.

Each workshop is independent and builds toward a brighter future. For maximum transformation and impact please consider gathering a team and planning to attend the full series. There will be time built in for working in your congregational teams and in cross congregational networking.

Workshop presenters are: **Rev. Robert T. Latham** (District Executive), and **Rev. Jeanelyse Doran Adams** (Director of Congregational Services).

Registration is \$40. Lunch will be served. Limited work-study scholarships are available.

Register Now! <https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?llr=mk4zlobab&oeidk=a07e59plbkh22dd6b12>

Childcare \$10 (to off-set the cost of food and quality care providers). Please register your child here ASAP <http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e5ap2w0y2aec6292&llr=mk4zlobab> ●

UU Hikers and Friends: February

by Joyce Miller

Here's the hiking schedule for February. As always, we hike rain or shine, unless there is a huge windy storm in which case I will cancel. I may change the venue to the Stanford Dish to avoid muddy trails. I will send out an email if I change the venue or cancel the hike. If you have not heard from me and wonder what the decision is, feel free to call me on my home phone any time after 6:30 am at 408.730.1052.

Call me if you plan to hike unless you are a regular and you know who you are. It is important to call me because if I have not heard from anyone for a given hike, I may go somewhere closer to my home. You may notice that I have scheduled more hikes in south county to give the south county folks a break from traffic jams on 280 heading north. Happy Trails!

Wednesday, February 1

Stevens Creek/Fremont/Older, 5 miles, moderate. Meet at parking lot at Stevens Creek County Park at 8:30 am. Take Foothill Expressway as though you were going to Rancho San Antonio. Don't turn off Foothill. Go about 1.5 miles to entrance to Stevens Creek Park on the left. You can see the parking lot below you as you go around a curve. Turn left and go straight ahead to the parking lot. There is \$6 parking fee.

Saturday, February 4

Joseph Grant County Park, 6.6 miles, moderate. This should be a beautiful winter hike with unrestricted views of the hills. Meet at VTA Park & Ride at Capital and Alum Rock at 8:00 am.

Wednesday, February 8

Windy Hill, 6 miles, moderate. Meet at Page Mill/280 Park & Ride at 8:30 am.

Saturday, February 12

Almaden Quicksilver, Mockingbird entrance, 7 miles, moderate. Meet at Bed, Bath & Beyond at Almaden Plaza at 8:00 am.

Wednesday, February 15

Huddart County Park, 7 miles, moderate. We will do longer hike up to Skyline. Meet at Page Mill/280 Park & Ride at 8:30 am.

Saturday, February 18

Calero County Park, 6 miles, moderate. Meet at Bed, Bath & Beyond at Almaden Plaza at 8:00 am.

Wednesday, February 22

Shuttle hike from Sunnyvale Mt trail head in Sanborn to Indian Rock. Although this hike is in Sanborn Park, we will be doing a trail which is accessed from Skyline. Meet at US Bank parking lot in Saratoga at 8:30 am.

Saturday, February 25

Alum Rock Park, 6 miles, moderate to strenuous. Meet at VTA Park & Ride on Capital at Alum Rock at 8:00 am. ●

"Like"
Us On
Facebook!
[tinyurl.com/
FUCSJ-FB](http://tinyurl.com/FUCSJ-FB)



Remember to bring your recyclable bottles and cans to help cover expenses of this newsletter!

Our Church Circular Team can use some help!

Are you experienced in graphic design and magazine layout, familiar with Adobe InDesign, Photoshop or Photoshop Elements, and MS Word or similar? Or, do you have a background in writing / editing? Perhaps that doesn't describe you, but you have a couple of hours every few weeks to stamp and label paper copies for mailing? On the principle of many hands making light work, we would welcome you to work on the newsletter team. Training provided! Please email circular.editors@gmail.com.



FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH of San José

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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:

fucs@sanjoseuu.org

or join the church's Yahoo Group:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/uusj>

Next issue copy deadline:

3:00 pm Wednesday, February 8

Assembly: Tuesday, February 14

Mailing: Wednesday, February 15

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.

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 reach us: **Nancy** (408) 292-3858, ext. 23 Mon.-Thurs.; cell (408) 952-9418; e-mail: revnpj@yahoo.com. **Geoff**: (408) 292-3858, ext. 25 Mon.-Thurs.; cell (408) 309-7796; e-mail: grimositis@sanjoseuu.org.

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. 23 de Lunes a Jueves; cell (408) 952-9418; e-mail: revnpj@yahoo.com. **Geoff**: (408) 292-3858, ext. 25 de Lunes a Jueves; cell (408) 309-7796; e-mail: grimositis@sanjoseuu.org.

READY TO BECOME A NEW MEMBER OF THE FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF SAN JOSÉ?

Contact Rev. Geoff, grimositis@sanjoseuu.org

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Thanks for all the work you do and care you put into the newsletter.

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