

Compass Rose

December 2010-February 2011

Expanding Our Horizons

by Rev. Vail Weller, Lead Minister



Rev. Mark Kiyimba of the Uganda UU Church preaching at UUSM on Oct. 31, 2010. Photo by Andrea Rosenfeld.

"It starts when you say 'We'
and know who you mean and
each day you mean one more."

- from "The Low Road" by Marge Piercy

"The love of one's country is a natural thing.
But why should love stop at the border?"

- Pablo Casals

"We shall not cease from exploration,
and the end of all our exploring
will be to arrive where we started
and know the place for the first time."

- T.S. Eliot

This past July, I had the tremendous privilege of attending the first-ever international gathering of Unitarian Universalist ministers, in Kerkrade, the Netherlands. We stayed at the Rolduc Abbey, built in the 1100's. The ministerial gathering was followed by a theological symposium, where scholars from around the world presented papers, which we discussed. Both conferences were organized by the International Council of UU's (ICUU). At the ministers conference, we were about 56 souls, from Romania, the Philippines, Uganda, Burundi, Nigeria, South Africa, Canada, the Czech Republic, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and all over the United States. I came to appreciate cellist Pablo Casals' words: "The love of one's country is a natural thing. But why should love stop at the border?" Truly, all borders are artificial, once we understand the truth of our interconnectedness.

If world peace begins by the creating of personal relationships, we were doing our part for peace. We shared time together exploring what the life of ministry is like for each of us in our different contexts. We worshipped and shared significant conversations about the realities of our lives. We told one another about our calling into the life of ministry. We spoke of the struggles we face as ministers. We wept together for the joy of this calling, and for the losses we have experienced. And we laughed in one another's company as one does only with one's closest and most trusted friends. We went on long walks together, walked into town to watch the World Cup, surrounded by a sea of orange (we were in the Netherlands!). And at the close of the day, we made

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Mission, Vision, and Purposes

Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo

Mission

We are a religious community of open hearts and open minds working together to transform ourselves and the world.

Vision

We are a growing, welcoming, and diverse congregation, grounded in and living out our liberal religious values.

Purposes

Worshipping

A sense of transcending wonder inspires our life together as a religious community. Through a diversity of services and rituals, we open our hearts and minds, and are moved to take action in the world.

Caring

All people are welcomed, dialogues flourish, and relationships grow and deepen through joyous and difficult times. Individually and collectively, we exemplify love, compassion, respect, and hospitality, both within our congregation and in the greater community.

Connecting

We invite and encourage all congregants to participate in congregational life, and we create opportunities, through social and spiritual fellowship, for everyone to form deep and lasting connections. We create meaningful connections with other Unitarian Universalists, and with other religious and service groups.

Learning

We have a cohesive and engaging lifespan religious education program, which inspires us to understand Unitarian Universalism, to nurture our spiritual growth and identity, to live in accordance with Unitarian Universalist principles, and to develop our leadership abilities. Our religious education program attracts and serves the greater community.

Acting

We demonstrate our liberal religious values through effective social action, providing leadership and creating partnerships in the local community and beyond.

Giving

We are generous with our time, talent, and money. Through our stewardship, our congregation thrives, and we create greater justice, equity, and compassion in the local and global community.

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Compass Rose

A compass rose is a diagram, usually displaying the cardinal directions of north, south, east, and west, that appears in virtually all maps, charts, and other navigation systems. (The "rose" in the term refers to how the compass points resemble the petals of the flower.) It is our hope that *Compass Rose*, the quarterly journal of the Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo, will likewise serve as a guide to help you get your bearings as you travel in your spiritual journey.

Why Do We Need a New Building? Why Now?

by Christy Conklin, Capital Campaign Steering Committee Member

When I think about why I'm excited about the possibilities of buying a new building and why I have gotten involved in the Capital Campaign Steering Committee, it boils down to a few, simple things.



1) I want the best possible future for myself, my children, and Unitarian Universalism as a whole, and I have come to realize that our current space, while cozy and adequate, is far from the inspiring and aspirational church I want to be a part of. Deep down in my guts, I want to be part of a big, beautiful, thriving, growing, and vibrant church community; if I admit it, I get a little envious of those mega-

churches sometimes...I want to be excited and proud to enter an awe-inspiring space that will fill me up each week for the challenges of the days ahead, and every week it is more clear to me that our current space does not fill this need in my life. Of course we can make do, but why should we? Don't we deserve the very best facility and community we can create?

2) We're only scratching the surface of our mission and vision in our current building, and that makes me sad. I see so many more possibilities for serving the community, in ways that only we Unitarian Universalists can, that can only happen with more space and more members. I envision being a vibrant multi-cultural community center that offers food, clothing, shelter, hope, and community to people in need, as well as a place that hosts lectures, community choirs, art shows, and activi-

ties for kids and youth throughout the week. The church I envision has an open door – literally – all day every day.

3) What does it mean to transform myself and the world? Transformation is always bold: it means walking into the unknown and walking out the other side utterly different than one could have ever imagined. I find this vision much more compelling and exciting than tiptoeing into my future, scared and worried about whether it's going to be OK. For me, faith means living boldly and fully, at my growing edge. It's scary at that edge, too, but in an expansive and hopeful way, rather than a timid and fearful way. And I want to live my faith fully, for the joy and satisfaction it brings me, and for the good it may do others and future generations.



The prospective new building on Oak Grove, Burlingame

Article Submissions

Articles for *Compass Rose* (max. 500 words) may be submitted for consideration to office@uusanmateo.org. (Contact the office if you have ideas for longer articles.) Poetry, photos, and art work are also welcome. Deadline for the next issue (covering March-May 2011): **February 10, 2011**.

Events and calendar items for *Compass Rose*, the UUSM website, and other UUSM publications may also be submitted at any time to office@uusanmateo.org. Please include a title, inclusive dates and times, location, description (max. 50 words), cost (if any), and contact information. Longer announcements may be considered – please contact the office.

All submissions are subject to editorial discretion and revision.

Whole for the Holidays

by Rev. Lauren Smith, Assistant Minister

There's so much I love about the holiday season – Christmas carols, strategic plotting about what surprises to get for friends and family, and all the decorations. I'm a sucker for festivity. But there's a shadow side to the season as well – the commercial juggernaut that descends upon us as soon as Halloween is over and then proceeds to come at us relentlessly for two months, pounding us with demands to buy, buy, buy. And if our family situation is less than full and perfect (whose is?), we may be doubly affected those same incessant ads, which bombard us with images of pretty, happy families breaking bread and laughing together. All of this can leave us feeling less-than or lacking.



There is an antidote to this experience, however. The underlying message of commercial Christmas is one of material and social insufficiency, but that's not the only holiday message out there. Here at UUSM, we seek to offer an alternative holiday vision, emphasizing human wholeness, worth, and connection. If you feel disconnected, lonely, or inadequate *at any time* during the holiday season, plan to make an extra trip to church. Come help with a food sort at the Second Harvest Food Bank on Dec. 14. Or show up at Hanging of the Greens on Dec. 4 to decorate the Sanctuary, sing carols, and share a simple soup supper. Come to a place where your simple presence is the greatest gift you can offer, whatever your age or ability. Come be reminded that your life makes a difference, is a blessing to the world, and do it alongside others who share your desire to serve and connect.

Christmas, after all, is a religious holiday. We celebrate the birth of a man whose abiding ministry of faith and freedom offers a liberating message of acceptance and love. Winter Solstice reminds us of the promise of renewal and rebirth, in the depth of the darkest night of the year. And Chanukah lights twinkle in the night, reminding us of the miracle of freedom. If we can find a way to root our experience of the holidays *there*, rather than in the commercial, our experience just might be transformed and we'll enter the new year with fresh energy and a peaceful heart.

The worship theme for December is *Waiting/Silence*, in observation of Advent and the Solstice. January's worship theme is *Embodiment*, in celebration of the embodied and prophetic faith of the Rev. Martin Luther King. But we need not wait until January to return to our bodies and spirits. We can think of the holidays as the beginning of a season of celebration, rest, and renewal that will last all winter long – restoring us, enlivening us, and reconnecting us with what is lasting, worthy, and true.

Opportunities to serve, celebrate, and connect are many. We'll join with the larger community and neighboring congregations to host the annual Martin Luther King Day Reception here at UUSM. This is a wonderful annual tradition, the most inter-faith, multi-generational, and multi-cultural event of the year. And, come February, we'll party together New Orleans-style – with music, great food, a shoebox float parade, and more. Winter Carnival promises to be a raucous, joyous, intergenerational evening, and we hope everyone turns out!

This season, let there be joy, peace, and renewal among us, emanating out into the still darkness of winter, brightening our families and communities.

Warm wishes of the season to you,
Lauren



ADORE-ation

by Deanna Vandiver, Intern Minister

“Let’s talk about race, baby
Let’s talk about you and me
Let’s talk about all the good things
And the bad things that may be
Let’s talk about race.”

(with apologies to Salt ‘n’ Pepa)

The Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo have begun A Dialogue On Race and Ethnicity – ADORE!

Beginning by reflecting on a list of questions that accompany the three-part series *Race: The Power of Illusions*, (www.pbs.org/race/000_General/000_00-Home.htm), together we are learning what race is not – primarily that race is not biological – and beginning to learn how race has been constructed and for whose benefit over the past 500 years. Understanding that racism (race prejudice + systemic power) is something that has been *done* to this country and to each one of us, we begin to realize that it is something that can be *undone*.

When Rev. Mark Kiyimba was among us, he said that he had learned “not to despise the seeds of beginning. It is from these seeds that change can grow.” I trust that we, too, will honor this time of reflection and dialogue as the necessary seeds of beginning, out of which our mission of transforming ourselves and our world can grow.

Our faith has long called us to this work, as so clearly named in *Toward an Anti-Racist Unitarian Universalist Association*:

WHEREAS we are called yet again by our commitment to faith in action to pursue this anti-racist, multi-cultural initiative in the spirit of justice, compassion, and community;



THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly urges Unitarian Universalists to examine carefully their own conscious and unconscious racism as participants in a racist society, and the effect that racism has on all our lives, regardless of color...

(The complete resolution can be read at: www.uua.org/socialjustice/socialjustice/statements/14244.shtml)

In *Undoing Racism*, Ron Chisom writes, “When a society is structured on the basis of race, conformity to the norms of racial roles maintains both inequitable treatment and pathological relationships.” As a covenantal faith, we are defined through our relationships. These relationships are profoundly influenced by the structures of racism built into our society. Raised in or viewed through the lens of a racist society, we have all become dehumanized to some degree, and the cost of this dehumanization has been extraordinarily high. While these structures of racism are more visible or less visible depending, generally, on how your race has been constructed by society, as a people of faith we are called to make them very visible – so visible that they can be dismantled, *undone*.



For UUSMers who have not yet formally joined in the dialogue, know that you are welcome to join in dialogue at any time.

Please read the Ten Things Everyone Should Know About Race (and go to the website for explanation around these statements) as you join in the dialogue. Some of the heartache that people fear when beginning to talk about race can be alleviated by starting with a common community language.

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Ten Things Everyone Should Know about Race:

1. Race is a modern idea.
2. Race has no genetic basis.
3. Human subspecies do not exist.
4. Skin color really is only skin deep.
5. Most variation is within, not between, perceived "races."
6. Slavery predates race.
7. Race and freedom were born together in the US.
8. Race justified social inequalities as natural.
9. Race isn't biological, but racism is still real.
10. Colorblindness will not end racism.

(For more details, visit: newsreel.org/guides/race/10things.htm)

Thank you for beginning, as a congregation, this soul-work. Let us continue the dialogue, a dialogue on race and ethnicity. Let us ADORE each other, bringing loving hearts and earnest souls together to begin the work of undoing racism – so that we may then build the world we dream of living in.

With a grateful heart,
Deanna
Your Intern Minister

What Remains

by Christy Conklin

In a hundred years
When my body has returned
To sand and soil and sea
What will remain of me?

Perhaps an artwork or two
A quilt or a book or a painting.
Perhaps a building I helped create
A church or a school.
If I'm lucky, a granddaughter
Who remembers me as the great old lady
Who taught her to love well
And believe in herself.

In a thousand years?
Even my legacy of love
Will have dwindled and disappeared.
In a world so different from ours
Only my DNA might live on.

And in a million years
When mountains have grown and eroded
Just a little
When humans will have evolved
Or disappeared?

Only carbon
And water
Will remain.

And so, how to live?
With joy, for the miracle of this moment.
With love and kindness, doing small things for others,
For there is comfort in community.
With tranquility, because there is nothing
To do. Just be.

Transforming the Jericho Road

by Kathy van Leuwen, Director of Religious Education

Transforming the Jericho Road was the theme for the National Liberal Religious Educators Association conference and service learning trip to New Orleans that I attended this Fall. The Jericho Road refers to the dangerous, crime-ridden highway where the priest and the Levite stepped around the body of a Jew who was beaten, robbed, and left to die by the side of the road. In this parable taught by Jesus in the book of Luke, only the Samaritan stopped to help the man in need.



What is your Jericho Road?

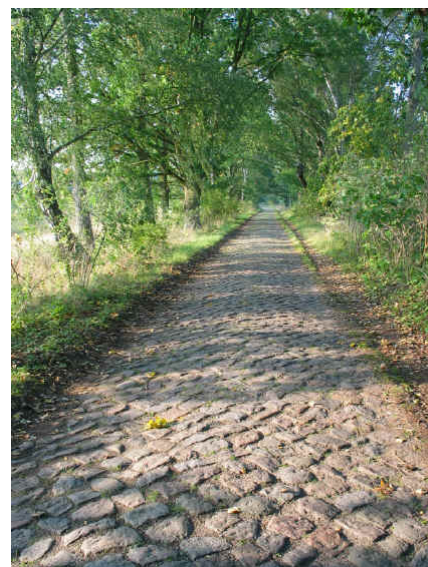
In the wake of the hurricane Katrina, many Unitarian Universalists have made the journey to participate in the recovery and

rebuilding of the Gulf Coast following the devastation of the storm and the failure of the neglected levees that were supposed to protect the people New Orleans. We at UUSM are planning to do the same this June. From my brief time in New Orleans last month, I know that there still is much work to do. Others will be making the pilgrimage to our Partner Congregation in Ulay Cabiguhan, Philippines, in March.

Why take a service learning trip? Part of our living tradition as Unitarian Universalists is living out a call to social justice. Service learning trips offer many special opportunities: intense community building, multigenerational interaction, larger congregational engagement, leadership development, deepening Unitarian Universalist identity, powerful transformational experiences, and direct relationship with participants and people in need. (Principe, 2010)

Entering a community to help those in need, even with the best of intentions, is complicated. Dr. Jenice View, our keynote speaker and Associate Professor of Educational Transformation at George Mason University, reminded the religious educators present in New Orleans that it is important to recognize that communities rarely have control over relief or development projects. Even positive projects can perpetuate internalized inferiority and dependency for those in entered communities and convey unearned status and privilege for those entering. Good intentions can lead to charity and exclusion rather than solidarity and true partnership.

Being aware that I am a person of privilege and an outsider can make me hesitate to offer myself in service of those in need. Dr. View invited us to consider things another way: the reason to help those who have fallen along the Jericho Road is not because we feel responsible for the suffering and injustice of the world, but because we are related to it.



We create solidarity, not charity, by developing ongoing relationships and standing together with people in need as a principle of our faith. As Unitarian Universalists, we acknowledge our connection to one another. As Rev. Patricia Hoertdoerger writes, "[Religion] is the emergence of a conscious awareness of sustaining and transforming relationships." She goes on, "Fundamentally, our religious growth and learning need to be concerned with relationships: our relationships to each other, to our living faith tradition, and to the universe in which we live and move and have our being. (Hoertdoerfer, 2001) Alone we can forge a spiritual path; together we can take a journey of faith.

I propose that some of our best and most valued work as a congregation is the work that develops and strengthens our relationships with the "other" and

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"If you have come to help me you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."

- Aboriginal Activists' Group

Expanding Our Horizons

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our way down the stairs into the old abbey wine cellar, where the cultural exchanges continued. After sharing some Transylvanian palinka (double distilled brandy made from apricots, pears, and plums), the Transylvanians sang folk songs for us, and we responded by singing "American Pie" – yes, all the verses. I can assure you that the jokes got worse as the night wore on. I felt as if I was meeting long-lost beloved relatives I hadn't known I had.



I have never gathered together with Unitarians and Unitarian Universalists from so many places, and of course I was reminded that we are more alike than we are different. It was a privilege, though, to have open and honest dialogues about our differences.

We were reminded from time to time to remember that English was not everyone's primary language, which meant everyone needed to slow down to allow extra time for internal and external translating.

There were many challenges experienced. We found ourselves wrestling with the question, "Who can call themselves Unitarian Universalist?" If what binds us together is openness to non-creedal thought, then what allows a group to claim Unitarian Universalism as its identity, and who decides? Since the widespread use of the internet, people are discovering our faith all over the world and adapting it to their own contexts. This is totally exciting and calls up questions that we didn't know we'd be asking. Poet Marge Piercy writes: "It starts when you say 'We' and know who you mean and each day you mean one more." Who "we" are keeps expanding.

The Unitarian leaders from Africa assured us that soon enough, Unitarian Universalism on that continent will outgrow the faith here in the US. We were introduced to the work of the ICUU, which is most often the first contact for potential UU groups outside of the US. And Kinga Reka Sezekely, a Transylvanian woman minister my age (recently elected by her peers as President of the Minister's Association), said she just doesn't understand why we don't take our faith more seriously.

Many of the Transylvanian ministers know first hand about living in a land in a time of persecution. Under the communist regime of Nicolae Ceausescu, our ministers were forced to choose between cooperating with

the government (and compromising their ministries) or not cooperating with the government and being punished. Those who didn't cooperate were imprisoned, tortured, killed. Those who did cooperate were tortured, as well: many committed suicide, many drank themselves to death. Families were torn apart. My colleagues told us about this time in personal detail, a time about which they rarely speak. The stories were not told with any personal judgment, as we were reminded that each person had to make their own decision under the circumstances, and that we can never know what we would do.



The attendees of the ICUU Theological Symposium in Kerkrade, Netherlands, July 2010.

They were sharing these difficult things with us to make a point. Kinga spoke about the "holy internet" which we all seem to worship. She reminded us that our colleagues who were imprisoned kept themselves alive by reciting to themselves verses and poetry they had memorized. I made a vow to learn more about our heritage, particularly in Transylvania, and to commit more sacred texts to memory. I also made a vow to help our congregation be a place where we are inspired not to take our faith for granted.

As you may know, I am a person who is committed to the work of international partnership, particularly as it relates to our UU faith, which is why I serve on the UU Partner Church Board. Attending the international ministers' conference for that work. Because international partnership is a fundamental part of who I am, this will be something that I will naturally share with you through my ministry here.

It was at the ICUU conference in the Netherlands that I met Rev. Mark Kiyimba of Uganda. He mentioned that he was hoping to travel to the US, and I said, "Please come visit us in San Mateo!", which of course he did in October. I sense that Mark's visit, and the hearing of his story of working for justice even in the face of great personal risk, may have served to expand your sense of what our faith does around the world. And I hope that this leads to you to contemplate what your faith means to you and how it may inspire you to stand up for what is right even in the face of great personal risk. Or perhaps his visit simply helped you to feel more proud of what our faith is doing in various places around the globe.

In February, we will have yet another group of special guests. On Feb. 2-6, the Partner Church Board will be meeting in San Mateo. (I have come to believe that the main reason I was invited to serve on the UU Partner Church Board is because they wanted to come to California for their annual meeting!) Folks from within our congregation will be providing home hospitality, transportation, and food for the Board members who will come from all over the US. (If you want to lend a hand, contact Lori Fox or Carol Cook.) Our PCC board members are deeply committed to the work of international partnership, and each and every one of them has experienced personal transformation through their connection with partner churches around the world. I know each of us feels grateful for our expanded horizons, thanks to the brothers and sisters of faith we have come to know and love around the world. I urge you to come meet the Board members and learn about what is new and most exciting in the international partner church movement on Saturday, Feb. 5, 6:00-8:00 pm at UUSM. It is another opportunity for you to connect with powerful and inspiring stories of our faith.

It may look as if these relationships and experiences are about meeting new friends in faraway lands. But I have found that the more I learn about our faith in the world, the more my own devotional life is enriched. As I take in what Unitarian Universalism means in the daily lives of my friends around the world, I feel my own daily spiritual practice affected. The more I explore far away, the more I am affected right here where I live. The more I come to love others, the more I understand myself. As T.S. Eliot said, "We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time."

There are a number of opportunities coming up for you to plug into an expanded sense of Unitarian Universalism. I have no doubt that this is a congregation where we truly engage in transforming ourselves and the world!

Mark the Dates!

Partner Church Reception at UUSM

Saturday, Feb. 5, 6:00-8:00 pm

Come meet UU leaders from around the country. Enjoy stories and images of international UU partnerships. Find out what UUism looks and feels like elsewhere.

Philippine Partner Church Pilgrimage

March 22-28

This trip will include:

- Visiting the UU Church of the Philippines headquarters
- Witnessing a Community Capacity Building Workshop, which utilizes cutting-edge community organizing techniques to allow the villagers to identify their own existing resources and prioritize needs.
- Attendance at the graduation of Mary Grace Lopez, the first UUSM student scholarship recipient

For trip cost information or to join the study group, contact Carol Cook or Lori Fox!

Highly Recommended Reading

Walking in Others' Shoes: Stories from the Early Years of the Partner Church Movement by Gretchen Thomas. Roots and Wings Press, Melbourne, 2010. Available at www.uuabookstore.org.

Maglipay Universalist: A History of Unitarian Universalism in the Philippines by Frederic John Muir. Available at www.amazon.com.

Further Resources

International Council of Unitarians and Universalists website: www.icuu.net

UU Partner Church Council website: www.uupcc.org

Community Capacity Building and the Meaning of Partnership

by Carol Cook

We will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of our partnership with Ulay Cabiguhan in 2011! In March, during the course of our visit there, we'll also participate in another major milestone: our partner congregation's first Community Capacity Building Workshop. Dr. Richard Ford and the UU Partner Church Council (UUPCC) have established a program that helps communities help themselves through planning and action. Easy-to-use tools and local facilitators help communities identify strengths, design action plans and locate resources to solve basic needs, alleviate poverty, and strengthen community development. As partners, our role is to bear witness to this workshop, lending assistance as opportunities arise and, in the follow-up stage, to help identify resources and support the planning and project phases.

Community Capacity Building helps a community address their basic living needs, meet social needs and build a local economy. We will be connected with the Ulay Cabiguhan community from the beginning of the process and stay with them through the action phase (about five years). Our congregation will provide the funding to support the facilitation team through the initial community workshop. Our March 2011 travelers will observe and support this exciting part of the process.



A community meeting at the Ulay Cabiguhan congregation



After the workshop, when the Ulay Cabiguhan community has identified their action plan, we at UUSM will provide encouragement, follow-up and, potentially, some financial support for their action plans. We may help identify other resources in their country with help from UUPCC-developed resource guides.

This is a portion of Richard Ford's report on a recent Community Capacity Building Project in Uganda:

The planning tools used in the workshops stimulated ideas and possibilities among the community groups. Interaction created a synergy that made $2 + 2 = 6$. The more the groups interacted, the more the vision grew. There is, of course, a danger that a visit from outsiders creates expectations that big money will soon be coming. We stressed on every occasion possible that we were not bringing money but, instead, a means to harness their visions and to help the local communities identify, mobilize, and implement their own plans with local resources and match them with resources they can raise themselves. This way the local ownership is absolute and the dependence on outside resources minimized.

Another clear discovery is that local residents already have huge amounts of information and surprisingly helpful resources to implement their plans. The planning tools that the workshop team introduced helped the communities to organize what they already knew and mobilize resources that they already had. It was a breath of fresh air when the community groups realized that the team of visitors had not come to bestow charity or to dispense wisdom, but instead to listen and respond. Interaction among equals is the true definition of partnership.

At the conclusion Dr. Ford wrote, "The talent is already there; the motivation is now kindled; and the potentials for collaboration considerable. All that is needed is the spark that will stimulate the heat that will bring all of this together. The visit has set a tone of collaboration that can continue for some years."

Our March visit will be an amazing opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of the challenges that face our partner congregation, and opportunities to develop personal connections, while demonstrating our commitment to their well-being on a deeper level. If you are thinking of visiting, this is the year to go! **January 11, 2011 is the deadline to register** for the trip on the UUPCC website: www.uupcc.org/secure/trips.php?tripid=154

To learn more about Community Capacity Building, see:

- UUPCC Community Capacity Building page: www.uupcc.org/ccb.html
- Community Capacity Building brochure: www.uupcc.org/communitydev/CCB.pdf
- Three short UUPCC videos on community capacity building: www.youtube.com/results?search_query=UUPCC+Community+Capacity+Building&q=f

There are also reports from recent projects in Uganda and Burundi (Africa) and in the Khasi Hills (India). These are not yet posted on the UUCP website. If you wish to receive them, email me ckca45@gmail.com.



A nearby UU community laying a pipe in Nagbinlod

Transforming the Jericho Road

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teaches us that the "other" is really "us." Our work as a partner church and as a temporary shelter for Home and Hope families are just a couple of examples that come to mind. Those who have committed to this work do so because it is life-changing.

At its best, faith in action is grounded in relationship, whether it takes the form of a pilgrimage halfway around the world or social justice work in your own backyard. Successful service learning includes a lot of contact with people in the community and the creation of a reciprocal relationship characterized by a sense of dialogue and mutual respect. This is challenging work. Working in relationship means taking risks, struggling, and making mistakes. Standing in solidarity means staying in relationship even when you are being challenged and risking that you yourself will be changed.

A service learning journey is a sacred delegation. Why set out for the Jericho Road? Go because your spiritual life calls you to do so. Go because you respect the

worth and dignity of every individual and you honor the interconnected web of all existence. Go not so much to transform as to be transformed.

If you are interested in learning more about a Service Learning Trip to New Orleans, contact Intern Minister Deanna Vandiver at intern@uusanmateo.org.

Hoertdoerfer, P. (2001). Religion as Relationship. In *Essex Conversations: Visions for Lifespan Religious Education* (pp. 125-127). Boston, MA: Skinner House Books.

Principe, A. and McAdoo, J. (2010). *Journeys of the Spirit: Planning and Leading Mission Trips with Youth*. Boston, MA: Unitarian Universalist Association.

Social Justice and Young People

by Caryl Hughan

I am often asked what adults can do to get our youth involved in social justice activities. Let me count the ways!

Second Harvest Food Bank

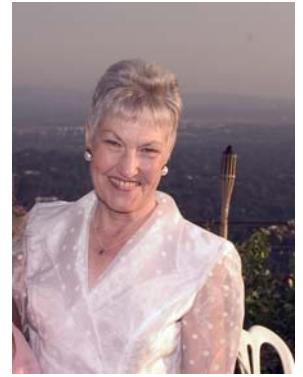
Second Harvest loves to see adult and student teams packing sacks of food for those in need in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. Join the fun at a Second Harvest Food Sort on Dec. 14. Contact UUSM member Anne Silver at annehsilver@yahoo.com for more information. And check out the Second Harvest Food Bank website for volunteer activities for youth ages 14 years and up at www.shfb.org/volunteeropportunities.

Home and Hope

Homelessness is real in San Mateo County and UUSM participates in housing families in need of shelter. We all pitch in, and that includes our youth who will be helping with tent-set up on Sunday, Feb. 19. If you and your family can help the week of Feb. 19, contact UUSM member Diana Candee at albumgal@sbcglobal.net.



An individual letter about a situation in the news. Connecting the article and the letter helps students understand the concept of the relationship of the real world and working to change it.



Learning the Fine Art of Political Letter Writing

Social Justice Sunday (the third Sunday of each month) is Letter Writing Sunday. The adults in the congregation write and/or sign letters that acknowledge our cares, concerns, and thanks to the political and social organizations that support social justice causes that will transform ourselves and the world.

You can't start too early to encourage young people how to recognize justice-making people and organizations and speak out with thanks and suggestions. Letters from young people make a difference to those who want our input and support.

Recently I worked with the RE third graders on how to let President Obama know what is important to them — or just to give him a word of thanks. We worked on social justice vocabulary and identified areas of concern, such as peace, education, and care for the earth. The children learned about cutting out a newspaper article as reference, putting the name of the paper and the date on it, and writing a letter about it.

Only one or two sentences are necessary. For example, "Dear President Obama, Please work on education for all children in our country," says it all. The children signed their names, drew pictures for interest, added their addresses, and stapled the article to the letter. If every young person in our congregation wrote one letter a month, we would be sending a powerful message about our concerns and teaching our young people how



Signing a group letter to President Obama asking that all children be provided with a good education in our country.

to participate in our democratic system. Take a look at a newspaper with your children and help them select a subject to write about.

Address:
 President Barack Obama
 The White House
 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
 Washington, DC 20500

Homework Central

Homework Central has three sites that can use a helping hand with supplies and tutors. Students from middle school up can be invaluable as tutors who listen to children read, help students with their homework, explain and demonstrate concepts in language kids can understand, and provide a supportive environment by playing games with the Homework Central participants. Parent/youth partners can enjoy this activity together and make a huge difference in the lives of neighborhood children. Talk to Barbara Du Mond, Frank Seebode, Raj Ragoobeer, Anita Davis, or see Caryl Hughan at the Social Justice Table on the third Sunday of each month.

Coming up on Dec. 4
The Mitten Tree for Homework Central!



This holiday season, the UUSM Mitten Tree will honor Homework Central's needs. Come to the Hanging of the Greens on Saturday, Dec. 4, 3:00-6:00 pm and help craft beautiful mitten wishes for HWC. See you there!

For the New Year **FreeRice.com**

FreeRice.com is an online game that helps feed the hungry while helping students of all ages improve their knowledge on a variety of subjects, such as art, chemistry, geography, grammar (who doesn't want that?), language, and math. For each correct answer, sponsors of the UN World Food Program donate 10 grains of rice. It is nothing but fun! Check it out at www.freerice.com and sit with your child for 10 to 20 minutes a day to pile up the rice grains and improve their skills. Warning! It's addicting!

The Open Door Committee

The Open Door group reaches out to our neighboring communities through events such as the Street Meet and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Reception. Young adults would be most welcome to join us. Contact UUSM member Steve Davis at ceo@secureplay.com for more information.

A Giving Congregation

We are generous with our time, talent, and money. Through our stewardship, our congregation thrives, and we create greater justice, equity, and compassion in the local and global community.

In the past months, UUSM has raised the following amounts at our special collections:

Aug. 1	Samaritan House \$945.00
Aug. 22	Bedari, Pakistan Center \$1,882.00
Aug. 29	Homework Central \$1,536.00
Sept. 12	Red Cross San Bruno \$1,633.28
Sept. 19	Home and Hope \$1,450.80
Sept. 26	Build UU Philippines (at Carol Bodeau's ordination service) \$830.46
Oct. 10	UUA Association Sunday \$2,109.00
Oct. 30, 31	UU Uganda \$5,418.50





Photo by Myrn Calkins



Street Meet

Sept. 18, 2010

On Sept. 18, UUSM held its first ever Street Meet for the local community. Tons of fun and great bargains were to be found as we blocked off East Santa Inez to put up tables with great items for sale!



Photo by Myrn Calkins



Worship Services

Services take place on Sundays at 9:00 am and 11:15 am unless otherwise noted.



The theme for December is
Waiting/Silence

Sunday, Dec. 5

"It Gets Better"
Today is bring a friend Sunday!

Worship Leader: Rev. Vail Weller
Worship Associate: Lynn Ewing

A service which affirms the need for open-hearted, open-minded, life-saving religion. The message will be for all of us, but will be a positive outreach to LGBTQ youth in particular. Bring a youth, young adult, or friend of any age to church today!

Sunday, Dec. 12

"Wholly Family"

Worship Leaders: Rev. Vail Weller and Rev. Lauren Smith
Worship Associate: Joe Sandmeyer

This morning we celebrate whole, holy families of all kinds with both a topical sermon and our familiar ritual of family blessing.

Sunday, Dec. 19

"The Last Straw – Intergenerational Holiday Pageant"

Worship Leader: Rev. Lauren Smith
Worship Associate: Deanna Vandiver

This year's holiday pageant celebrates the Christmas story, told from the perspective of a humble (if somewhat crotchety) camel. No rehearsals required! Children of all ages invited to participate. Nursery care available all morning.

Friday, Dec. 24

4:00 and 8:00 pm

Christmas Eve Services

Come celebrate Christmas Eve with us, as we enjoy lessons, carols, and candlelight.

Sunday, Dec. 26

10:00 am service only

"When Mercy Seasons Justice: Forgiveness as Spiritual Practice"

Worship Leader: Deanna Vandiver
Worship Associate: Irene Boczek

Join your Intern Minister in finding our heart as a beloved community during the dark night of the soul (stice). Come be a part of a ritual of forgiveness and the return of the light on our last Sunday of worship together in 2010.

Monday, Dec. 31

Labyrinth Walk at 7:00-10:30 pm

The Labyrinth will be available for walking 7:00-10:30 pm in Beck Hall on New Years Eve. The walking meditation in the sacred space of the labyrinth is often used for healing and self reflection. To walk at the edge of the new year gives us the opportunity to give thoughtful reflection to the year just ending and to open us to the possibilities of the coming year.



The theme for January is
Embodiment

Sunday, Jan. 2

"Epiphany: Confessions of a Carnival Convert"

Worship Leader: Deanna Vandiver
Worship Associate: Irene Boczek

Sunday, Jan. 9

"Humanity, Food, and God"

Worship Leader: Rev. Lauren Smith
Worship Associate: Julia Wilson

This morning's service explores the relationship with food as a gateway to insight, freedom and at-home-ness in the bodies we inhabit.

Sunday, Jan. 16

"The Fierce Urgency of Now – The Prophetic Call of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr."

Worship Leader: Deanna Vandiver
Worship Associate: David Light

Sunday, Jan. 23

"Acts of Prayer"

Worship Leader: Rev. Vail Weller
Worship Associate: Tom Newman

Sunday, Jan. 30

To Be Announced

Worship Leader: Rev. Vail Weller
Worship Associate: Kenny Preston



The theme for February is
"The Other"

Sunday, Feb. 6

"The Clean Room"

Worship Leader: Rev. Vail Weller
Worship Associate: Joe Sandmeyer

What does authenticity look like? What does it really mean to welcome one another? What places do we keep hidden? This morning is Partner Church Sunday, and we welcome our national UU Partner Church Board members to UUSM.

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Sunday, Feb. 13

"You're Not Supposed to Say the Word Cancer in a Song"

Worship Leader: Deanna Vandiver
Worship Associate: Lynn Ewing

Sunday, Feb. 20

"Walking the Jericho Road"

Worship Leader: Rev. Lauren Smith
Worship Associate: Irene Boczek

Shel Silverstein said it best: "Some kind of help is the kind of help that helping's all about, and some kind of help is the kind of help that we could all do without." This morning's service will explore the Biblical story of the Good Samaritan for wisdom about offering and receiving help that is respectful, compassionate, and...helpful.

Sunday, Feb. 27

"Loving the Flag That We Are"

Worship Leader: Rev. Vail Weller
Worship Associate: Julia Wilson

This sermon will look at the complexities of immigration, which was chosen as one of our Association's study/action issues for the year.

For more information on upcoming worship services, please visit the website and click on **Worshipping**.

Two Holiday Events



Hanging of the Greens

Saturday, Dec. 4, 3:00-6:00 pm
Entire Building

Join us at this lovely, traditional, intergenerational kick-off to the Christmas season! We'll start by decorating UUSM for the holidays and do crafts for kids of all ages. Once the space is beautiful, we'll sing carols and have a simple soup potluck. Bring soup, bread, cheese, or dessert to share – or just show up! The Alternative Gift Faire table will be available and we'll set up our UUSM Mitten Tree to benefit Homework Central.

Caroling Caravan

Saturday, Dec. 11, 2:00-4:00 pm
Offsite

Meet at UUSM at 2:00 pm. We'll go sing for beloved members of our church who don't get out easily. Singers of all ages and experience levels welcome! For info, contact Karyn Collins at 650-212-7560 or sckc2000@sbcglobal.net.

Winter Carnivale!

Saturday, Feb. 19, 2011

For healthy, happy hearts, a people of faith must not only pray together – we must also play together. Play is essential to our call to transform ourselves and the world. And prepare to play like you may never have played before – at **Winter Carnivale!**



Look for more details in the new year and save the evening on your calendars now. *Laissez les bons temps rouler!* (Cajun French for "Let the good times roll!") To join the krewe co-creating this party or to ask questions about the good times we are going to let roll, please contact our resident New Orleanian, Intern Minister Deanna Vandiver, at intern@uusanmateo.org.

Announcements and Events

Religious Education

The Children's March Children's Chapel

Sunday, Jan. 2, 10:15-11:00 am
Sanctuary

Children in 1st Grade and up will participate in a child-oriented worship experience celebrating The Children's March. We'll tell the story of how the young people of Birmingham, Alabama, braved fire hoses and police dogs in 1963 and brought segregation to its knees and consider how young people can be catalysts for positive social change. Younger children will meet with the RE groups as usual. Afterwards, we will bring the children to the Cottage garden for activities and play time.

Follow the Drinking Gourd Children's Chapel

Sunday, Feb. 20, 10:15-11:00 am
Sanctuary

In honor of Black History Month, children in 1st Grade and up will participate in a child-oriented worship celebrating the Story of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad. Younger children will meet with the RE groups as usual. Afterwards, we will bring the children to the Cottage garden for activities and play time.

Adult Enrichment

Getting to Know UU

Sunday, Dec. 5 or Feb. 27 (choose one date), 6:30-8:00 pm
Hemingway Lounge

Visitors interested in learning more about Unitarian Universalism and UUSM or considering membership are invited! RSVP to 650-342-5946 x 11 or office@uusanmateo.org by Nov. 28 (for the Dec. 5 date) or Feb. 20 (for the Feb. 27 date). Childcare available if requested.

In Her Name Circle

Led by Joy Reichard
Fridays (see dates below),
7:00-8:30 pm
Ann Benner Room

The group meets to celebrate the many manifestations of the Divine Feminine.

- Dec. 10 Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of the People
Jan. 21 Grandmother Spider, Creatix
Feb. 11 Neolithic Goddess, the Great Mother

For more info, contact Joy at 415-819-8769 or joy@joyreichard.com.

Meditation Group

Led by Rev. Lauren Smith and lay leaders
Every and 4th Sunday, 10:30-11:00 am
(next dates: Dec. 12 and 26, Jan. 9 and 23, Feb. 13 and 27)
Cottage Living Room

We open with a reading from Buddhist or other contemplative traditions, followed by a brief meditation instruction and 20 minutes of seated meditation. This group is open to long time practitioners and those who want to try it out in a safe setting.

A Dialogue on Race and Ethnicity (ADORE) Group

Led by Rev. Vail Weller and Intern Minister Deanna Vandiver
Sunday, Dec. 12, 6:30-8:30 pm
Hemingway Lounge

Come share your story and listen to others' in order to build appreciation and empathy for similarities and differences in experiences, and strengthen

our community. Let's talk about race until it no longer has the power to separate us. Childcare available.

Grief Support Group

Led by Pam Gehrke
Every 3rd Monday, 7:00-8:30 pm
(next dates: Dec. 20, Jan. 17, and Feb. 21)
Hemingway Lounge

This new monthly drop-in grief/crisis support group welcomes anyone who has experienced loss in their lives and would like to explore their grief in a supportive environment.

Newcomer's Circle

Every 4th Sunday, 10:15-11:00 am
(next dates: Dec. 26, Jan. 23, and Feb. 27)
Hemingway Lounge

This basic introduction to our community allows people a chance to learn what UUSM is all about. All visitors welcome, no RSVP required.

Harvest the Power: Developing Lay Leadership

Every 2nd Saturday beginning Jan. 8, 9:30 am-2:00 pm
Hemingway Lounge

Harvest the Power helps lay leaders grow in spirit as they grow as leaders. The program's six workshops offer op-

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Circle Dinners 2011

Saturdays, Jan. 22, Feb. 12, Mar. 19, April 16

Save these dates and plan to participate in this series of potluck dinners, with participants meeting different interesting UUSM people at each of four gatherings, 8 people to a group. Visit our Circle Dinner table during Coffee Hour on November Sundays for more info or to sign up, or contact the DuFores at 650-340-7145 or brdufore@sbcglobal.net.

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There is also an Intergenerational Circle Dinner group forming, to allow the participation of children. Please contact Diana Chung or Mike Williamson at 408-250-0810 or ladidido@yahoo.com if you'd like to participate.

opportunities for both new and experienced leaders to enrich the skills they bring to their leadership and to experience their leadership journey as a Unitarian Universalist faith journey. Cost: \$35. RSVP at office@uusanmateo.org.

Social Action

Second Harvest Food Bank Sort

Tuesday, Dec. 14
Time and location TBA

Come help sort and pack food for the hungry in our every own county. For info, contact Anne Silver at 650-740-7221 or annehsilver@yahoo.com.

Social Justice Letter Signing

Every 3rd Sunday, 10:15-11:00 am
(next dates: Dec. 19, Jan. 16, and Feb. 20)
Ann Benner Room or Beck Hall

Make your voice be heard in the hallways of power! For info, contact Peter Cross at 650-591-3642 or civ2100@gmail.com.

Social Justice Council Meetings

Every 3rd Sunday, 12:30 pm-2:00 pm
(next dates: Dec. 19, Jan. 16, and Feb. 20)
Hemingway Lounge or Cottage Living Room

Find out the many ways to put your faith in action. For info, contact Andrea Rosenfeld at 415-370-2154 or andrea.rosenfeld88@gmail.com.

UUSM PIA Group

Every 4th Sunday, 12:30-2:00 pm
(next dates: Dec. 26, Jan. 23, and Feb. 27)
Cottage Living Room

Help acting out our faith by organizing for just communities. For info, contact Margaret Cross at 650-591-3642 or marcross33@yahoo.com.

Home and Hope at UUSM

Feb. 20-27

We welcome temporarily homeless families again to UUSM! If you'd like to help, contact Diana Candee at 650-697-7654 or albumgal@sbcglobal.net.

Ongoing

Knitters and Needlecraft Group

Every Sunday, 10:15-11:00 am
Loft (above Beck Hall)

Join us if you like to knit or would like to learn. For info, contact Christina Berdoulay at 650-343-5042 or csberdoulay@sbcglobal.net.

UUSM Book Group

Sundays (see dates below),
12:30-2:00 pm
Hemingway Lounge

Upcoming books for discussion:

Dec. 5 *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett

Jan. 23 *March* by Geraldine Brooks

Feb. 27 We meet to pick new books

For info, contact Anne Silver at 650-740-7221 or annehsilver@yahoo.com.

Walkie Talkies

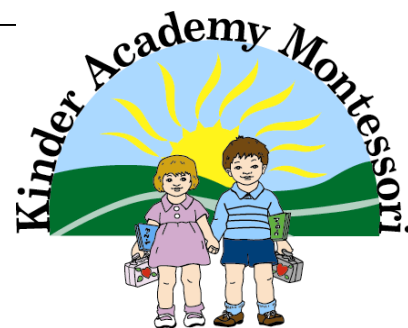
Every 1st and 3rd Monday, 9:00-10:00 am
(next dates: Dec. 6 and 20, Jan. 3 and 17, Feb. 7 and 21)
Offsite

Women's group strolls twice a month. For info, call Phyllis Mitchell at 650-340-9091 or Mary Ann Weisberg at 650-344-5951.

Women's Potluck and Book Swap

Every 1st Monday, 6:00-8:00 pm
(next dates: Dec. 6, Jan. 3, and Feb. 7)
Beck Hall

All UUSM women are invited! Bring a potluck dish and a book to share. For info, call Phyllis Mitchell at 650-340-9091 or Sally Reed at 650-697-8433.



**A warm and happy place
where learning is nurtured with love.**

- Preschool & Kindergarten Ages 2.5-6
- Full & Half Day Programs
- Art, Music, Computer, and Chinese Classes
- 10 % discount for the UUSM members

Open Enrollment

(650) 340-8819
300 E. Santa Inez, San Mateo
KinderAcademyMontessori.net

Age-ing to Sage-ing

Every other Tuesday, 1:30-3:30 pm
(next dates: Dec. 7 and 21, Jan. 4 and 18, Feb. 1 and 15)
Hemingway Lounge

Seniors group meets to prove the adage that with age comes wisdom.

Women's Age-ing to Sage-ing

Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday,
7:00-8:30 pm
(next dates: Dec. 14 and 28, Jan. 11 and 25, Feb. 8 and 22)
Hemingway Lounge

An Age-ing to Sage-ing group just for women.

Martin Luther King Day Reception

presented by the Open Door Committee

Saturday, Jan. 15, 2011, 3:00 pm
Ann Benner Room and Beck Hall

Join us for UUSM's 21st Annual Community Reception honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. All are invited, including children, to attend this wonderful community event!





Special Floral Arrangements

If you'd like to have a special flower bouquet set up in the Sanctuary at a Sunday service in honor or in memory of someone special, contact the office at 650-342-5946 x 11 or office@uusanmateo.org and we will be glad to arrange it. Cost is \$100, with the proceeds going to support UUSM's programs. For details and to view samples, go to the website and click on Giving.

Choir Practice

Every Wednesday, 7:00-8:45 pm
Sanctuary

Join the choir and lift your voice in song. Contact Shawn Reifschneider, Music Director, at 650-558-8192 or music@uusanmateo.org.

Women's Chalice Oval

Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday,
7:00-8:30 pm
(next dates: Dec. 8 and 22, Jan. 12
and 26, Feb. 9 and 23)
Hemingway Lounge

This women's Chalice "Circle" continues! For info, contact Debby Leschyn at 650-591-6616 or debby@belmateo.net.

Men's BBQ Night

Every 3rd Thursday, 6:15-8:00 pm
(next dates: Jan. 20 and Feb. 17, no
meeting in December)
Patio, Beck Hall

Join the UUSM men for a meal from the grill and topical conversation. For info, contact Randy Silver at 650-591-3056 or randy-silver-photo@juno.com.

Spirit Drumming Circle

Every 4th Friday, 7:00-8:30 pm
(next dates: Jan. 28 and Feb. 25, no
meeting in December)
Beck Hall

We join together to make a magical space of rhythm and energy. For info, contact Jeanne DeFelice at 650-349-4136 or defelice_jeanne@hotmail.com.

In the Wider Community

A Merry Little Christmas: Caroling, Caroling Now We Go!

A Concert by the Silicon Valley Gay
Men's Chorus
Dec. 10 and 11, 8:00 pm
Dec. 12, 3:00 pm
Christ the Good Shepherd Church
1550 Meridian Ave., San Jose

Our own Shawn Reifschneider is Artistic Director of this wonderful group! Be sure to attend this holiday concert for a tankard of holiday cheer. Cost: \$20. Tickets available at www.svgmc.org or at the door.

Women and Religion Retreat: Building the World We Dream About

March 4-6, 2011
Enchanted Hills, Napa

Join a caring circle in a time away from the everyday world. Weekend includes 2 nights lodging, 6 delicious meals, Friday spa, workshops for the mind, body, and spirit, conversations with old and new friends. Cost: \$230 (\$190 for first timers). For info or to register, contact Ginger Frederick at 209-943-6428 or docginger@comcast.com.

For more details on upcoming events and an online calendar, please visit www.uusanmateo.org.

Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo

Ministers

Rev. Vail Weller, *Lead Minister*
650-342-5946 x 12
minister@uusanmateo.org

Rev. Lauren Smith, *Assistant Minister*
510-463-7869
lauren@uusanmateo.org

Deanna Vandiver, *Intern Minister*
504-821-9284
intern@uusanmateo.org

Rev. Joy Atkinson, *Minister Emerita*
revjoy@aol.com

Staff

Kathy van Leuwen, *Religious
Education Director*
650-342-5946 x 13
dre@uusanmateo.org

Shawn Reifschneider, *Music Director*
650-558-8192
music@uusanmateo.org

Alicia DeValliere, *Foundations of
Fellowship Coordinator*
510-847-2295
volunteer@uusanmateo.org

Glenn Ricafrente, *Office Manager*
650-342-5946 x 11
office@uusanmateo.org

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300 East Santa Inez Ave.,
San Mateo, CA 94401
650-342-5946 ■ fax 650-342-1777
office@uusanmateo.org
www.uusanmateo.org

Office hours: Tuesday-Friday,
10:00 am-5:00 pm

If you wish to meet with the ministers, please contact them for an appointment.

Ours is a caring community. If you are dealing with a difficult time or simply want someone to be present with you, please know that our ministers are here to support you spiritually, as are our Lay Chaplains. Keep a UUSM card in your wallet so you can call us when you need us. Our Lay Chaplains are coordinated by Ann Mason and Reeba Lynn. Please contact us so that we can provide you with the loving support of this congregation.

Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo

300 East Santa Inez
San Mateo, CA 94401

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