

# Compass Rose

September-November 2011



## Looking Forward

### A Message from Your Transition Minister

by Rev. Denise Tracy

I will admit it. I am a person of habit. I like the same breakfast almost every morning. I like the same routine for writing sermons and for exercise. I like to make a few meals well rather than follow new and uncertain recipes. So you might wonder: Why would I choose to be a Transition Minister? Well, I suppose it is because of my sensitivity to change and transition that I like this path of ministry.

When a minister leaves a congregation, whether they have been well loved or disliked (it is usually some of both), there are a variety of habit patterns that have been formed between the congregation and minister during the length of the relationship. How a minister has created relationships, led a congregation, preached and facilitated worship, and who that minister is as a person of quality, all these and more are part of what people need to reflect upon in the transitional time. I suppose, because I am aware of change and my reaction to it, I try to be sensitive and reflective in my role as a Transition Minister.

In some ways it is like living a detective novel. What makes this church and its people unique from every other church in our association? What are its particular gifts? What are the areas of concern? It is like assembling a giant puzzle and seeing the larger patterns made by the many pieces.

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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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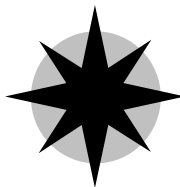
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### Compass Rose

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.

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# It's Inconvenient and Annoying!

by Shawn Reifschneider, Music Director

So, I ask you: What do you think of when you ponder the following words? Transform, grow, learn, challenge, revolutionize, improve, progress, develop, expand, evolve, move forward, upgrade. Aren't they all great, uplifting action words filled with positive connotations for a promising future? On the surface, these words sound so great! But I'll tell you what they really mean to me. They mean INCONVENIENCE and ANNOYANCE! These words mean CHANGE, that I must do something different to become something better. I don't



know about you, but that just annoys the C#%P out of me! Actually, I think I do know about you, and I think it annoys you just as much.

What is it about change that makes us quake in our boots? Is it that we are afraid of the unknown? Is it that something might go wrong? Is it that it might not be any better if we change? Is it that we might fail? Or is it simply being comfortable where we are right here and right now?

When Barack Obama became President of the United States and started working for the change he had promised during his campaign, what happened? The very people who elected him who had wanted things to be different began to push back against the very change they asked for. Because it was going to mean not just change for the country, but change for each

individual, too. Did we all believe that things would get better in this country and that he would bring about change, but we wouldn't have to be different ourselves? That is the rub. We so often want things to get better, but we don't want to be inconvenienced ourselves.

The Rev. Fred Vogel, a significant mentor of mine, once told me, "Improvement without change is impossible." I know this sentiment isn't unique. In fact it bears a strong resemblance to one of George Bernard Shaw's quotes. However, these words have stuck with me over many years. They even seem to haunt me at the times in my life when I'm struggling the most with the changes that face me.

Why can't I just stay as I am? Why can't things around me just stay as they are? I'll tell you why. It is because I am a part of the Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo, and we have a mission. We are working together to transform ourselves and the world. That's why we exist. These shouldn't be words we just say in our worship services each Sunday. They are words that we must live out if we are to make a difference in the world. So, as Gandhi said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." And I would add, "No matter how annoying it may be." May it be so.



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## Article Submissions

Articles for *Compass Rose* (max. 500 words) may be submitted for consideration to [office@uusanmateo.org](mailto: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 December 2011-February 2012): **November 3, 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](mailto: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.

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# Building the World We Dream About

by Kathy van Leuwen, Co-Director of Religious Education



Last Spring, I took advantage of the *Building the World We Dream About* program offered by our then-Intern Minister, Deanna Vandiver, with seven other members



of our congregation. *Building the World We Dream About* is a Unitarian Universalist program that seeks to interrupt the workings of racism and transform how people from different racial/ethnic groups understand and relate to one another. The program creates opportunities for participants to practice dreaming our world otherwise, and then commit to new, intentional ways of being. As Unitarian Universalists, we hope that developing

antiracist, anti-oppressive, and multicultural habits and skills will lead us to build the multicultural world of beloved community we dream about.

As part of the experience, the members of *Building the World* wrestled with the question: "What can we do to make our congregation more multicultural and diverse?" The Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed gave his perspective on this question at this year's Pacific Central District Assembly. According to him, the first step is commitment, e.g., making diversity and inclusion an explicit goal of the congregation. In addition, our leadership, both clergy and lay leaders, should be visible and vocal allies of racial justice in the community and partner with diverse community groups in our social justice work. It is helpful, but not a pre-requisite, to have people of color in leadership roles. This can be a goal to strive for. Leaders need to remain a non-anxious presence in the face of people's anxiety about change. Worship should incorporate multicultural elements with appropriate reverence and reverence, and we should work as a congregation to develop our multicultural literacy. This work takes stamina: this kind of cultural shift takes a decade or more.

I know well that we are not just a "white church." There are people of color in our pews, and even more children of color in our Religious Education programs. Since much of our diversity sits in young, multicultural families, multigenerational involvement is a key to transforming our culture. As a religious educator, I strive to

select programming that is diverse and inclusive. This is important, but we have more to do. Dr. Mark Hicks, the author of the *Building the World We Dream About* curriculum, gave the Sophia Lyon Fahs lecture at this year's General Assembly, titled "Toward a Religious Education for People of Color." Dr. Hicks believes that in order to respond to the lifelong faith development needs of people of color, we need to promote the historic visibility of people of color, multicultural literacy, empowerment, interconnectedness, collaboration, identity expansiveness, and knowledge of how oppression works. Building diversity means committing ourselves to interrupting oppression and becoming an inclusive, diverse community of beloveds.

The *Building the World We Dream About* experience has challenged me to question the choices I have made about where and with whom I spend my time and has inspired me to make my life and this community richly multicultural. As Mark Morrison-Reed told us at District Assembly this year, the question is not "Why aren't there more UU's of color?" but "Why do I live where I live?," "Who do I invite to my dining room table?," and "Where do we choose to build our congregations?" To grow, we need to put ourselves in situations that we don't normally find ourselves in and process the experience as well as the accompanying emotional anxiety, much like we do when we take our middle-schoolers to Islamic and African-American places of worship as part of the Neighboring Faiths Curriculum.

The reason to do this work is to live big lives and to put our values into practice, not simply to be able to count more brown faces in the congregation. It means committing yourself to a new way of being in the world. It needs to come from a place of love and joy in order to be sustained, and not from a place of guilt and shame. The way beyond race and racism is a spiritual journey, a path of love and acceptance and deepening into the truth that we are, all of us, so much more alike than we are different, and that we have much to learn from one another.

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# The Journey to Your Door

by Nancy Jasa, Co-Director of Religious Education

While driving home from my first official day of work for UUSM, I was overwhelmed with gratitude and awe at the journey that has brought me to your door.



My home congregation, Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church in Walnut Creek put out a call three years ago for Coming of Age mentors. I will never forget my Director of Lifespan and Religious Education standing in the pulpit and asking for adult mentors to support a very large class of youth. I turned to my partner and said "I can do that!", and I did.

What is so important about that moment is that I had wished to support teen youth since I myself had been supported by some key non-familial adults when I was a teen. However, I grew up in the conservative Bible belt as a closeted gay youth at a time when gay people that worked with youth were routinely fired and often put on trial if found out. I set the dream aside, as we too often do in our lives, and moved on to an adventurous life that took me through many varied crossroads in our country. Big cities, large towns, small communities, and rural crossroads – I've been lucky enough to work with many people from various cultures.

The opportunity to work with the High School Youth at MDUUC was offered to me two years ago. I've had the pleasure of serving YRUU as the lead youth advisor and have been completely blessed to witness the beauty of a close and caring community of youth who have strengthened and cared for one another through some tough times. Rev. Patricia Hoertdoerfer said in *Religion as Relationship*<sup>1</sup>, "We need to offer experiences of belonging and a sense of purpose to those who believe and participate in our communities." Each individual, regardless of age, needs a place where they feel welcome and affirmed. I believe in offering as many opportunities for youth as we do for adults to find a group, a place where they can experience the feeling of belonging, find a sense of purpose, and where they can bring their whole selves into community participation.



Photo by Marco Picon

My journey to discovering how to be in relationship with, lift up, partner with, witness the joys and struggles of our youth has included taking many workshops and trainings on youth development as well as classes at Starr King School for the Ministry. Many of my skills and strengths in working with people and administration come from my strong background in sales, marketing, and management in the for-profit world. My minister at my home congregation recognized my passion for youth ministry and my organizational abilities and nudged me for two years in the direction that has brought me to your door.

I am honored to be given the gift of witnessing our UU youth's lives. Youth ministry is, for me, a theology. I believe youth ministry to be the creation of safe physical and emotional spaces where youth are celebrated for their uniqueness, supported in their personal discovery of themselves, and embraced with love. As a Unitarian Universalist I believe that part of my ministry with all youth is to be a visible role model of a life that is active in my community, stretching and committed to living the seven principles, and finding wonder in our humaneness and joy and spirit in our journey.

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<sup>1</sup> *Religion as Relationship* by Rev. Patricia Hoertdoerfer (Essex Conversations, Skinner House, 2001)

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# Voices

*Stories, reflections, and inspiration from the UUSM community*

## Join the Dance

by Andrea Rosenfeld, Board President

After planning celebrations and finally bidding tearful farewells to Rev. Vail Weller, Rev. Lauren Smith, and Intern Minister Deanna Vandiver in the last several weeks, I noticed a kind of hushed calm descend upon UUSM; perhaps a deep exhale after months of anticipating their impending departures and fearing what lay ahead. As a concerned member of this congregation, I continued to move cautiously into the space, thick with an invisible weight. But soon, as the proverbial dust settled, I suddenly felt lighter and could see and feel a shift; or perhaps it was simply that I could see all of the loving faces of our congregation holding on and moving on. We took the first steps together and we're all okay!

As President of your Board of Trustees, the Board and I continue to move through the tasks at hand relating to transition ministry, the ministerial search process, Capital Campaign details, and other matters of governance. We feel so fortunate to have the care and expertise of Rev. Denise Tracy to guide us through our transition process. With our Ministerial Search Committee already in place and planning search-related activities, we will soon be coming together in various forums that will help inform, heal, and unite us as we reach to embrace who we are and who we want to become. As the English Philosopher Alan Watts affirms, "The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance." We've entered the abyss and we're all still okay. Now, does anyone want to Rhumba?



## Matchmaker, Matchmaker

by Christy Conklin, Ministerial Search Committee

The Search Committee is a few short weeks into the intense and ambitious work of finding just the right next minister for UUSM, and I am finding it to be as challenging as it is rewarding. Weekly meetings, endless emails, long lists of action items, and tight deadlines truly take this committee work up a notch from any previous work I've done for this congregation! This is one of the most important ways in which we exercise our principles, especially our democratic process, and we on the Search Committee are humbled by and grateful for the trust you are placing in us.

At this early stage and speaking only for myself as one member of the Committee, I find myself thinking about the selection of a minister as something like the careful selection of a spouse (rather than the shotgun or Vegas approach!) – with the obvious distinction that we are looking for one minister to partner with all 200 of us! I feel a little like Yenta the Matchmaker, except that, since I'm also a member of the congregation, I also feel like the bride. What I mean is that we, the Search Committee, are looking for a "perfect match" for our congregation's future, and my role is to find a minister that is a great partner for the congregation as a whole – and who also fills my own heart with hope and joy.

I'm finding that the qualities I'm hoping for in our next minister include many of the same qualities I value in my husband: integrity, flexibility, empathy, humor, kindness, intelligence, trustworthiness, and a great balance between leadership and teamwork. There are other skills, too, that we will be seeking – administrative, management, financial, and organizational skills – to meet the needs of our congregation, and we will be asking for your help in prioritizing all of these qualities so that we can choose our next partner.

Of course, falling in love when you're on the rebound from a broken heart is tricky business, and this can be



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true for congregations as well as for individuals. Moving too fast into a new relationship might lead to reactive choices and poor judgment, and there is often wisdom in taking time to be alone, to reflect and to heal between major relationships. UUSM may be entering one of these times, and it may be that the congregation needs some time to heal before we start dating our new minister and decide to move in together. The Search Committee will be looking to the congregation and to Rev. Tracy for guidance about the pace of our search in light of recent events, so please do share your thoughts with us.

The coming months will involve lots of talking with each other, lots of listening to each other, both to deal with what has gone before and to begin focusing on the future. When the congregation is ready, the Search Committee will hold cottage meetings to receive as much input as possible from each of you about who we are, who we are becoming, and what sort of minister will help us best fulfill our mission and vision for the future. We will all be asked to use wisdom and discernment to choose the qualities and priorities for the “perfect match” in our ministerial partner. Then, once you have spoken to us through cottage meetings, surveys, and impromptu conversations, the Search Committee will work to find the best ministerial match.

Please stay informed and involved in the search process at this important stage. UUSM is our beloved community, and I know that together we will shape a bright future for our congregation, because I believe in us.

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## Making Beauty in the Sanctuary

by Diana Candee, Aesthetics Team

When I volunteered to help with flowers, I decided to try to make bouquets from local flowers, branches, even weeds, almost as a spiritual practice. Hence you may have seen a *pyracantha* branch in a vase and wondered, “Who the heck thought of that?” Well...it was me. If you see a classic, beautiful, symmetrical arrangement, well, that’s probably Anita Davis. If you see the results of hours of sanding and appreciate the grain of an unusual piece of wood, well, that’s probably Bill Kirkham. An exuberant, colorful, enthusiastic arrangement? That would be Irene Boczek. The Carnivale wall hanging? That was Barbara Du Mond.

We all bring ourselves to the mix and we hope that each of you finds something to relate to in our efforts. Perhaps it is a meditative quality, or a joyful “Ahhh.” Or perhaps you have come to appreciate a piece, as Bill would say, to inspire tolerance; tolerance for the artist.

Just as you don’t have to be a professional singer to be in the choir, you don’t have to be a florist or an “artist” to contribute to the Sanctuary on Sundays. Is something blooming in your yard that you want to share with all of us? Maybe you do origami and could make us a mobile? Or could you collaborate with our youth on something? Join us!



*Flower arrangement with Caryl Hughan's lilacs*

If you want to try your hand, let me know and I will put you on the calendar. You can contact me at 650-697-7654 or [albumgal@sbcglobal.net](mailto:albumgal@sbcglobal.net).

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## Social Justice as a Spiritual Practice

by Caryl Hughan, Social Justice Council Chair



*Living our Acting Purpose is a deeply spiritual practice: We are open hearts and open minds working together to transform ourselves and the world.*

Change! Energy! Learning! The UUSM Social Justice Council thrives on positive energy and uses it to satisfy deeply spiritual needs. We work together to make UUSM flourish – on many different levels. Our church is a justice-making place, and this is the perfect year to pull it all together.

We support Marriage Equality and work at phone banks to make it happen. Our League of Women Voters members work to create an informed electorate. We believe in undoing racism and want to continue the *Building*

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*The World We Dream About* class that was started last year. Our Open Door Committee works with the North Central Neighborhood Association on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Essay and Poetry Contest, and we sponsor the MLK, Jr. Reception every January – connecting with our African-American community. We have a Multicultural Lending Library, and we sign letters every month to support human justice causes. Homework Central tutors at UUSM, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center, and Sunnyside Elementary School and touches many Latino and multicultural families. The snacks we provide the UUSM HWC kids provide physical nourishment as well. Our Religious Education program encourages social justice values, and our children are pen pals with our Ulay Cabiguhan Partner Church children. We help with the Ulay Chapel building, scholarships, and educational support for children, the Share-a-Meal Program, emergency funds, and the Ulay Community Capacity Building Project. We promote the UU Church of Philippines' journey toward economic sustainability with our special collections and other contributions to the BUILD UU Philip-

ines Project. We also have life-affirming visits in their community.

We show up for builds for Habitat for Humanity, pack food for Second Harvest, and make donations to many worthy organizations. A UU Immigration Task Force is learning about immigration issues – and that information will be shared with you. We work with Peninsula Interfaith Action (PIA) as they work for change in these challenging times. Through PIA, we sit in a San Mateo County Health Care Committee. Home and Hope offers homeless families a respite and a connection with local churches. Speaking of other churches, they come to us wanting to combine social justice efforts because **we have a reputation for justice making!** We have so much. We have the Pacific Central District through which to make connections. We have the UU Legislative Ministry California for solid information. We have UUA support and curricula. We are awesome! Now we just need you!

## Clouds

Grey foam softly becomes  
This distillation from my being  
Grey form entangles wisps  
Of stolen feeling from my head

Between myself and clouds  
There is no division  
They hurt gently like love come to  
From a hundred years of solitude

Clouds explain the difference  
Between you and me, I'm sorry,  
I can only make you see  
The grey mass among my mystery

The colors underneath are free  
I'm afraid intemperate ugly form  
Would hide from sight and plea  
Against cold accusation

Were your wind to whip away  
This stratus on to stratus lay  
The shroud again reveals the shrouds  
It's only more uncovering clouds

## Two Poems by Robert Voss

### Fog on 280

A sheet of cotton unspun  
Of purple nightfall welkin  
Colored shades if milky tufts  
Picked at and strewn by rug hooks

Spills gently over Skyline  
Filamentous condensate  
Runs in runnels down valleys  
Viridian valleys bound

Down one side, up the other  
Plashing forth like bathtub foam  
Or egg white wisps stiffening  
Flowing up to 280

I zizz through ghostly riders  
Outriders foretell the mass  
Of fog at times covering me  
Whipping well by my windows

Travelling through this planet space  
Prickles the hairs with special grace



# Gather the Spirit Harvest the Power

UUSM Capital Campaign 2011

## To Everything There Is a Season

by Christy Conklin, Capital Campaign Steering Committee

When thinking about how it has felt to be on the Capital Campaign Steering Committee (CCSC) this past year, the first thing that came to my mind was this old Mamas and Papas song, which was of course drawn from Ecclesiastes 3: "To everything...there is a season...A time to be born, a time to die; a time to plant, a time to reap; a time to kill, a time to heal; a time to break down, a time to build up; a time to weep, a time to laugh; a time to mourn, a time to dance."

The CCSC has been on a real roller coaster ride this year, along with the rest of the congregation. We've been at times excited and deflated, enthusiastic and worried, hopeful and distressed. Ours has not been the normal course of a capital campaign, which would usually have taken place in just three months last spring. Instead, following the departures of both our ministers, we asked the Board for time to regroup.

And now the congregation is regrouping once again, coming together at a challenging time. Now is a time for turning toward each other, turning inward to realize how much strength, resilience, and awesomeness we have as a community, even in times of transition and difficulty. Fortunately, the Capital Campaign can be one important way of doing this – of demonstrating our hopes for and commitment to this community, supporting it in good times and hard times, toward our shared vision of a bright future for Unitarian Universalism on the Peninsula.

Through the summer, the CCSC has been meeting with a few dozen church leaders to talk about their hopes for the future and to receive their pledges, if they were ready to make one. These have been very rewarding and mostly very positive conversations.

Most of the families and individuals we have met with say they feel extremely committed to and positive about the future of our congregation – and they have put their pledges in place to show it. We are so thankful to all these generous people!

And now we are looking forward to the next phase of the campaign, when we will invite the rest of the congregation to make their pledges and show their commitment to UUSM's future. We can all be part of something much bigger than any one of us could do alone, and now is the time!

Please get involved in this community-wide, community-building event, which will involve big parties, small groups, and one-on-one meetings. By the end of the year, we will have completed our long and phase-filled campaign for a new building – UUSM's first capital campaign in 50 years! – and we will be able to move into our future, boldly, together.

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# There But for the Grace of God

by Diana Candee

Many years ago, I helped in the leadership class at my children's middle school, where I met Maya. She was an honor student and a cheerleader, with beautiful manners, a special sparkle – and a home life that she did not talk about much. She organized the canned food drive for the leadership class. Our whole family fell in love with her.

In high school, she worked in a restaurant, took AP classes, paid for her own SAT's. During her junior year, we talked about where she might go to college, and Maya would then get very quiet. One day she finally told me why. I learned that Maya's parents brought her to this country when she was three. Her parents came to this country as visitors, overstayed their tourist visas, and are "unauthorized residents," also known as "illegal aliens" or "undocumented." She did not really understand her status until she tried to get a driver's license. She could not get a Social Security number, and the DMV and college applications asked for one. She could not tell her high school counselor this, because she was afraid to reveal her family's status. She could not apply for scholarships or loans. Her family did not have enough money to help her go to college. She confided that my children had the only two things she had ever wanted: citizenship and the chance to go to a four-year college.

Thus began my education about immigration. I could not believe that children, through no fault of their own, were denied the right to work hard and learn and thrive in this country. I learned that these kids live in a limbo most of us know nothing about. I took her to see three different lawyers, and each time we were told, "There is nothing you can do until the laws change." There are many myths out there, and one is that marrying a citizen will get you "legal status." It is not true.

I have been following the immigration issue closely for years. Every year I hear that NEXT YEAR, we will take on immigration reform. After Bush, or after Obama is elected, or after the midterms. Now I am hearing that we must wait for Obama's second term. This young woman is doing the best she can, but she is still waiting. She studied hard at community college. After much research and many dead ends, she made her way to a state school. Some generous people helped, and she worked nights in a restaurant. She graduated! She volunteers with autistic children, wants to go to grad school and specialize in autism therapy. The hurdles

seem insurmountable. Without legal status, she cannot get a "real" job. Most scholarships and loan programs require citizenship.

Maya got angry and asked her mother, "Why did you bring me here? My life is so hard and frustrating." Her mother's answer: "Because we were hungry." Maya's grandparents are dead. She knows NO ONE in Mexico. There is no "home" to go back to. Home is San Mateo.

WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? For these young people to spend their adult lives working in car washes and restaurants when they have the drive, talent, and ambition to be mechanical engineers, doctors, teachers, and more?

Why was my daughter born in the US and this beautiful girl born in a small desperate village across a border? Where is God's grace for Maya?

I don't know about God, but I do know that I am tired of waiting for the midterms, or Obama, or a Democratic majority again. I am tired of giving pep talks to our brilliant children to keep the faith that this will change. The only way it will change is if we change it, and we can only change it if we work together. Let's do everything we can for ALL our children. Because there, but for random luck, or God's grace, whatever that is, go all of us.



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# Looking Forward

*continued from page 1*

For the first few months, I will be among you. Listening. Watching. Attending and Participating in as many activities as I am able. If you are involved in an activity, invite me. If there is any way I can attend, I will do my best to be there. I want to learn as much as possible about UUSM, its needs, strengths, challenges, and concerns. The more I learn, the better able I will be to assist you in the second phase of Transitional Ministry.

The second phase of Transitional Ministry begins in January. At this point we will have an evening session on the story of UUSM. We will reflect upon this for a few weeks, and I will preach on what I have learned in my time among you. Then we will have an evening on The Identity of UUSM, both its strengths and challenges.

While this is going on, I will be collaborating with UUSM leaders to clarify the roles of the minister, staff, and lay leaders. Are there job descriptions? Is there clarity in how tasks get accomplished? Is there a process flow between minister, staff, and lay leaders that helps the church move in a positive direction? How do questions and instances of unhappiness get resolved within the congregation. How does UUSM deal with conflict?

While we are doing all these things, we will be using denominational resources for the Search Committee and for other questions that arise. What we are trying to do with all this is to move the congregation into a consensus of direction and vision. The last phase of our work together will be engaging in a Mission and Vision Process that involves as many people as possible, so that as the Search Committee looks at candidates, they will know who you are looking for. What style of ministry will be best for the next era of your congregation's life? The more work we can do, the more likely you will have a great match between your new minister and your congregation.

The transition time in the life of a congregation is an exciting time. New ideas, new directions, new attitudes – all are part of our time together. We have much to look forward to as a Transition Minister and a congregation that is in transition.

I want you to know how much I already love and enjoy being among you. You have energy and the capacity to accomplish much. You have delightful staff and lay leaders. I am so thankful for the people who have helped me find my apartment, get my apartment get set up, as well as find my way around the church and the San Mateo community.

Please make an appointment to see me. I want to know who you are. I am good at names. It does help me in the beginning, however, if you wear your nametags at group meetings. Know that I am here to assist you in this important time, so you will be ready to welcome a new settled minister to UUSM.

Blessings,

Denise  
Your Transition Minister

## 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. Our Lay Chaplains are coordinated by Ann Mason and Reeba Lynn. Please contact us at 650-342-5946 x 11 or [office@uusanmateo.org](mailto:office@uusanmateo.org) so that we can provide you with the loving support of this congregation.

# Summer Religious Education

At UUSM, Religious Education continues throughout the year, even in the summer.

These photos (taken by Kelsey Sachs) show the Children's Chapel held on Aug. 7. Thank you to **Emily Ann Hartnett Webb** (in the photo on the right) for being our wonderful 2011 Summer RE Director!



# Announcements and Events

## Religious Education

**Religious Education Sessions Begin**  
Sunday, Sept. 18, 10:00-11:15 am  
RE Space, Youth Room, Petite Sorbonne

The RE Fall session starts for Pre-Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. For more information, check the Learning section of the UUSM website at [www.uusanmateo.org/index.php/Childrens\\_RE](http://www.uusanmateo.org/index.php/Childrens_RE).

**Day of the Dead Children's Chapel**  
Sunday, Oct. 30, 10:15-11:00 am  
Sanctuary

Children in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and up will participate in a child-oriented worship experience remembering loved ones who have died. (Younger children will meet with the RE groups as usual.) Please have your child bring one photograph or drawing of a loved one who has died that they would like to memorialize on this day. All photos will be returned at the conclusion of worship. We ask that you wait with your children in the UUSM Courtyard until we are ready to begin. After Children's Chapel, we will bring children to the Cottage Garden for activities and play time.



**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](http://KinderAcademyMontessori.net)

## Children's Choir

The 2011 Children's Choir will start the year with singing, playing drums, xylophones, and other percussion instruments. It is open to all children Kindergarten and up. Older children will be invited to learn more challenging instrumental parts. Everyone will get a chance to sing and play.

Our first session begins Sept. 18 at 11:30 am. Our first performance will take place on Oct. 30. Parents, sign up for the Fall session *by Sept. 25*. Parents willing to help with practices, instrument set up, and general support, please contact Children's Choir Director Marty Hoffman at 650-876-1904 or [martyjhoffman@gmail.com](mailto:martyjhoffman@gmail.com).

## Community Events

**Congregational Meeting**  
Sunday, Sept. 11, after the service  
(*note change of date*)  
Beck Hall

Join us on Sept. 11! At this meeting, we will hear from the Ministerial Search Committee, announce the plans for cottage meetings where we will listen to the congregation, we will begin to rebuild some church infrastructure (and re-empower the congregation), and we will hear from the Capital Campaign Committee.

## Adult Enrichment

**In Her Name Circle**  
Led by Joy Reichard  
Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday (see dates below),  
7:00-8:30 pm  
Ann Benner Room

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

- Sept. 9 Inanna, Sumerian Queen of Heaven and Earth
- Oct. 14 Maat, Egyptian Goddess of Justice and Fairness
- Nov. 11 Kali, Hindu Goddess of Endings and Beginnings

For more info, contact Joy at 415-819-8769 or [jreich14@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jreich14@sbcglobal.net).

## Newcomer's Circle

Every 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday, 10:15-11:00 am  
(next dates: Sept. 25, Oct. 23, and Nov. 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.

## Social Action

### Donate to the Alcatraz Swim for BUILD UU Philippines

On Sept. 17, one week before her 62<sup>nd</sup> birthday, Lee Boeke Burke, UUPCC Philippines Networker, is swimming from Alcatraz to San Francisco to raise \$25,000 for the BUILD UU Philippines project. Help Lee and the UU Church of the Philippines by making an online donation at [www.uupcc.org](http://www.uupcc.org) or sending a check to UU Partner Church Council, PO Box 88, Bedford, MA 01730 with "Build Philippines - Lee's Swim" on the memo line.

### Social Justice Letter Signing

Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday  
10:15-11:00 am - Beck Hall  
12:30-1:00 pm - Ann Benner Room  
(next dates: Sept. 18, Oct. 16, and Nov. 20)

Make your voice be heard! For info, contact Peter Cross at 650-591-3642 or [civ2100@gmail.com](mailto:civ2100@gmail.com).

### Social Justice Council Meetings

Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday, 12:30-2:00 pm  
(next dates: Sept. 18, Oct. 16, and Nov. 20)  
Hemingway Lounge

Find out the many ways you can put your faith in action. For info, contact Caryl Hughan at 650-692-4147 or [educaryl@gmail.com](mailto:educaryl@gmail.com).

### Home and Hope at UUSM

Oct. 16-23  
Beck Hall

We host Home and Hope families again for a week. If you'd like to help out, contact Diana Candee at 650-697-7654 or [albumgal@sbcglobal.net](mailto:albumgal@sbcglobal.net).

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# Worship Services

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

**Sunday, Sept. 4**  
(10:00 am)

Worship Leader: Susan Donham

**Sunday, Sept. 11**  
(10:00 am)

"Healing Waters: Water Communion and Homecoming"

Worship Leader: Rev. Denise Tracy

Be sure to bring the water you collected over the summer for our annual water communion rite.

*We return to two-service Sundays (with services at 9:00 and 11:15 am) starting Sept. 18.*

**Sunday, Sept. 18**

"SHMILY: The Most Important Lesson of All"

Worship Leader: Rev. Denise Tracy

**Sunday, Sept. 25**

"The Art of Possibility: How to Dream into Our Potential"

Worship Leader: Rev. Denise Tracy

**Sunday, Oct. 2**

"Forgiveness"

Worship Leader: Rev. Denise Tracy

On the Sunday between Rosh Hashahah and Yom Kippur, we will reflect upon forgiveness.

**Sunday, Oct. 9**

TBA

*During the next four Sundays, we offer a worship series on Transcendentalism.*

**Sunday, Oct. 16**

"Emerson: The Spiritual Person"

Worship Leader: Rev. Denise Tracy

**Sunday, Oct. 23**

"Fuller: Burning with Life"

Worship Leader: Rev. Denise Tracy

**Sunday, Oct. 30**

"Thoreau: Into the Woods"

Worship Leader: Rev. Denise Tracy

**Sunday, Nov. 6**

"Alcott: Behind the Mask"

Worship Leader: Rev. Denise Tracy

**Sunday, Nov. 13**

TBA

**Sunday, Nov. 20**

"Five Kernels of Corn"

Worship Leader: Rev. Denise Tracy

A meditation on scarcity and abundance.

**Sunday, Nov. 27**

"Judy Collins: Singing Lessons"

Worship Leader: Rev. Denise Tracy

**For updates on upcoming services, please visit the website and click on Worshipping.**

## Habitat for Humanity Workday

Saturday, Oct. 29, 8:30 am-4:30 pm  
7555 Mission St., Daly City

Work continues on a 36-unit condominium project in Daly City. We are looking for 10 volunteers for this date. You don't need any prior building experience. You must be at least 16 years old. Please contact John Berdoulay at 650-343-5042 or johnberdoulay@sbcglobal.net if you are interested.

## Ongoing

### Knitters Group

Every Sunday starting Sept. 18, 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 to be discussed:

Sept. 25 *The Financial Lives of Poets* by Jess Walter

Oct. 23 *Four Queens* by Nancy Goldstone

Dec. 4 *The Gift of Rain* by Tan Twan Eng

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

### Walkie Talkies

Every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, 9:00-10:00 am  
(next dates: Sept. 5 and 19, Oct. 3 and 17, Nov. 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

Every 1<sup>st</sup> Monday, 6:00-8:00 pm  
(next dates: Sept. 5, Oct. 3, and Nov. 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.

## Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo

### Ministers

Rev. Denise Tracy, *Transition Minister*  
650-342-5946 x 12  
minister@uusanmateo.org

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

### Staff

Kathy van Leuwen, *Religious Education Co-Director*  
650-342-5946 x 13  
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Nancy Jasa, *Religious Education Co-Director*  
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Shawn Reifschneider, *Music Director*  
650-759-5942  
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Glenn Ricafrente, *Office Manager*  
650-342-5946 x 11  
office@uusanmateo.org

Alicia DeValliere, *Foundations of Fellowship Coordinator*  
510-847-2295  
a.devalliere@gmail.com

### Board of Trustees

Andrea Rosenfeld, *President*  
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Alex Palen, *Trustee*  
Chris LaPaglia, *Trustee*  
Sue Whitten, *Trustee*

### Coordinating Team

Rev. Denise Tracy  
Pam Gehrke  
Francis Prévot

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 minister, please contact her for an appointment.

### Age-ing to Sage-ing

Every other Tuesday, 1:30-3:30 pm  
(next dates: Sept. 13 and 27, Oct. 11 and 25, Nov. 8 and 22)  
Hemingway Lounge

Seniors group meets to prove the adage that with age comes wisdom. For info, contact Dick Davis at 650-348-3966 or davisrlav@aol.com, or Kim Mortyn at 650-574-3250 or kmortyn@sbcglobal.net.

### Women's Age-ing to Sage-ing

Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday,  
7:00-8:30 pm  
(next dates: Sept. 13 and 27, Oct. 11 and 25, Nov. 8 and 22)  
Hemingway Lounge

A Sage-ing group just for women. For info, contact Lillian Barden at 650-401-6089 or lillbarden@astound.net, or Randi Paynter at 510-333-4746 or randi.paynter@gmail.com

### Choir Practice

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

Join the choir and lift your voice in song. Childcare available. Contact Shawn Reifschneider, Music Director, at 650-759-5942 or music@uusanmateo.org.

### Women's Chalice Oval

Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday,  
7:00-8:30 pm  
(next dates: Sept. 14 and 28, Oct. 12 and 26, Nov. 9 and 23)  
Hemingway Lounge

This women's Chalice "Circle" continues! For info, contact Debby Leschyn at 650-591-6616 or dleschyn@gmail.com.

### Men's BBQ Night

Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 6:15-8:00 pm  
(next dates: Sept. 15, Oct. 20, and Nov. 17)  
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.

## In the Wider UU Community

### PCD Annual Men's Retreat

Oct 14-16  
Westminster Retreat Center, Alamo

This annual retreat is a time for UU men to share experiences, to learn, to play, and to form new bonds with fellow men. It's a time of both reflection and of reaching out. To register, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/3zhhtkt>. For info, contact Gordon Smith at 408-393-6182 or pcdmensretreat@gmail.com.

### Immigration as a Moral Issue

Saturday, Oct. 29, 9:30 am-4:00 pm  
(registration opens at 9:00 am)  
Mt. Diablo UU Church  
55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek

This event is co-sponsored by the Mt. Diablo UU Immigration Task Force, PCD Racial and Diversity Network, and UU Legislative Ministry of California. The UUSM Immigration Task Force invites all interested people to join us.

**For more details on upcoming events and an online calendar, please visit [www.uusanmateo.org](http://www.uusanmateo.org).**



## Special Floral Arrangements

Contributing Sanctuary flowers for Sunday services helps beautify the Sanctuary and honors those close to you. This is your chance to say "Congratulations!" "I love you," "I miss you," or "I'm proud of you." The flowers are yours to take home afterwards. Cost is \$100, with the proceeds going to fund UUSM programs. Contact [office@uusanmateo.org](mailto:office@uusanmateo.org) if you are interested. To view samples, go to the website and click on Giving.

**Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo**

300 East Santa Inez  
San Mateo, CA 94401

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