

# ***THE SCENE AT SUMMIT***

**Newsletter of Summit Unitarian Universalist Fellowship**

**8778 Cottonwood Ave., Santee, CA 92071**

**Vol. 23 No. 12**

**December 2013**

**Monthly**

Summit's services and programs are held at the address above, phone number, 619-562-0833. Our website is [www.suuf.org](http://www.suuf.org), where the Newsletter & Sermons can also be read. Mail should be sent to the office at the above address.

**Office hours: Mon. 9:00 am - noon, Tue. - Fri. 9:00 am - 4:00 pm**

**December 1: *"Coming Out and Coming Home"* ~Rev. Frank Placone-Willey**

We can easily get lost in the busyness of December and the predictable tensions that are often stirred up by too much "forced family togetherness." How do we sustain love and compassion in the midst of the spending and hosting and gorging madness? Rev. Frank will invite us to reflect upon and develop those qualities of open-heartedness that can sustain us into the New Year.

**December 8: *"A Holiday Rescue"***

~Nancy Howe, Elinor Weed, Mary Carter Vail and Summit Children and Youth

In this year's intergenerational holiday program Harry Potter and his friends from Hogwarts Academy will have to rescue the holidays from destruction by He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named! The whole fellowship will gather to sing holiday songs, enjoy the Summit Choir, cheer on the dedicated, magical defenders of cultural diversity, and perhaps even learn a few new things about the different religious and spiritual traditions that belong to the December Season of Lights. Come for a meaningful celebration of family fun!

**December 15: *"Entertaining Angels"***

~Rev. Frank Placone-Willey

Celebrate with us the beginning of the season of Las Posadas, which centers around a Latino cultural enactment of the story of Mary and Joseph as they struggle to find lodging and a secure place for the birth of their child. Today's reflection will encourage us to think about what is at stake in our practices of welcome and hospitality.

**December 22: *"Natural Magic: A Jazzy Solstice Celebration"***

~Rev. Frank Placone-Willey and Trish Ladd

Jazz musician Chris Klich and friends will join our Summit Choir in bringing Yule-tide cheer to our beloved community and guests, in this celebration of the Winter Solstice. Come relax in the glow of warm fellowship and music as we anticipate and invite the increase of sacred light in our lives.

**December 24: (5:00 p.m.) *"Raise Your Voice: A Festival of Lessons and Carols"***

Come join us for our informal Christmas Eve Service, featuring the Summit Choir and members of our Fellowship reading traditional and contemporary texts appropriate to the season. Our tradition of singing Silent Night to candlelight is an occasion not to be missed!

**December 29th: "A New Year of Compassion" ~Rev. Frank Placone-Willey**

What is compassion or is it another name for Love? How are we doing at living with compassion toward ourselves and others? How can we grow in becoming more compassionate? In this year-end reflection, Rev. Frank will share some of his recent learnings about the nature of compassion and encourage us to cultivate it for the betterment of ourselves, our families, our communities and our world. Come settle into meditation and song as we give ourselves to recovering from the hustle, bustle and distress of the holiday season.

**Summit's Office Information**

**Minister: Dr. Frank Willey:** UUFrankPW@aol.com

Emergencies and appointments: 619-889-0312

Office Schedule: Tues. - 12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m.

Thurs. - 12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m.

**Children's Religious Exploration:** DRE, Mary Carter-Vail, 619-562-0833, ex. 205 /  
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**Office Admin.:** Linda Peck, 619-562-0833, ex. 202 / summitunitarian@sbcglobal.net

**President:** Jennifer Gorman, captjg6@cox.net

**FROM THE MINISTER'S ROLLTOP:**

**"The Crowning of the Year"**

*"People, look east. The time is near  
Of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able,  
Trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the guest, is on the way."*

~ From the Hymn by Eleanor Farjeon

(1881-1965)

For some of us, the holiday seasons of December and the New Year provide peak experiences of time off, warm gatherings of family and friends, and the gifts given in a spirit of generosity and love. Such experiences are powerful. Such is their power that media, advertisers, and religious groups work hard to capture, shape, and project them into our minds and communities via sentimental imagery and music. In December, the dominant collective mythology witnesses the wheel of the year turning toward its glorious fulfillment in "the Crowning of the Year."

But beyond the appearances of such celebrations, there is for many another kind of “crowning,” one that is more akin to the slang-use of the word that means a sharp and stunning blow to the head. Many travel hundreds of miles, through snarled airports and along crowded and sometimes icy roads, to spend a few days with difficult people, watching sports, engorging themselves, and giving presents they feel compelled to give.

And then there are those who have even fewer, if any, positive experiences with the holidays—and no family or friends with whom to celebrate them. Each new holiday season only dredges up and re-traumatizes them with painful memories of hurt and disappointments from years past.

A significant minority of the people in our world get “crowned” every year in this way, suffering—often in isolation and silence—so as not to ruin the positive experiences of others, or to avoid having others chastise them for being so negative or cynical. Such people need and deserve a welcoming hearth, a listening ear and an understanding heart, unconditional regard for and acceptance of the reality of their holiday wounds and the historical events which caused them.

...And I would like to offer us all yet a third way to think about “crowning.” A way of thinking that can move us all more in the direction of creating a positive, united experience of the holidays, whatever they may bring. “Crowning” is what happens when birth is imminent. A birthing infant’s head “crowns,” leading the way into this world we all share, a world replete with opportunities both peak-full and painful.

This holiday season, I encourage you to search for the ways in which—whether through the spectral pains of the past or the positive, celebratory occasions of the current holiday season—something new and fresh and beautiful and hopeful is wanting to be born.

In each moment of life there is a “crowning” of one sort or another. Whether the experience of this very moment is one of joy and fulfillment, or more like a stunning, catastrophic blow of grief or sadness, look deeper still for that which is trying to be born in you. In each moment there is something that wants to come into being, to live fresh and new in your journey of life. Search the horizons of your life for the dawn. Even though the holidays may leave you feeling stuck and bereft, abandoned on the banks of some river of suffering, stand up. Stand on tiptoe. Strain to realize the light of love in yourself and your world. Set a table for its arrival. And regardless of the form in which it shows up, welcome it.

Namaste, ~ *Rev. Frank*

## FROM OUR SUMMIT LEADERSHIP

### *From Your President*

Hopefully you've all had a very happy, fulfilling, and grateful Thanksgiving celebration by the time you read this. Wishing you all a joyful, peaceful and relatively stress-free holiday season during the next month!

In the interest of going a little more green by using a little less paper and saving so much duplication in multiple written and email announcements, we are trying something new over the next few weeks and would like input about how this is meeting your needs. Instead of having the same announcements in the Sunday Order of Service as in the E-News and, sometimes, also the monthly Newsletter, we are going to provide fewer copies of a separate Announcement document for anyone who wants an additional written copy, or maybe just one per family. These will be available on the Greeting Room Table and at the Membership Table for anyone who wants to pick one up before or after the service. Any newer announcements will still be included along with the Order of Service and/or by verbal announcement during the service. Please let me or Rev. Frank know how you think this is going and whether you have other ideas to make sure everyone stays informed.

Look for the updated Bylaws Amendment vote notice sometime later this month. We will plan a congregational meeting in February to vote on this important issue. Keep in mind that the same voting procedures, including both Absentee and Proxy voting, will remain in place until the Bylaws are amended.

I want to especially thank the Strategic Planning Committee for all their hard and consistent work toward completing the new 5-Year Plan for our review, which is expected to take place in the near future.

I also want to thank the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee for all the past and upcoming events that are part of that year-long celebration. I hope you will all mark your calendars and consider participating in the following upcoming events:

Friday, December 6: Holiday Sing-Along and Cookie Exchange

Saturday, January 11: Potluck of Summit Cookbook Recipes

Saturday, February 15: Valentine Dance

Sunday, March 16: Empty Bowls Luncheon

That's just a few- there's something at least every month, ending with the Grand Finale on Saturday, August 30!

~ Jennifer Gorman

## **Denominational Connections Committee**

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's yearly fundraiser "Guest At Your Table" was begun during the service November 24. A brief announcement was made to tell what "GAYT" is all about and its importance to support UUSC's world- wide human rights projects. The idea behind GAYT is for UU families to donate money (in a bowl or basket on the dining room table) for the imaginary Guest who is sharing your meals. Sorry all, the colorful boxes are no longer being used by UUSC (the green thing?). Maybe next year we can make something "like" a box for your donations.

A display table was set up after the service that had many types of information material on UUSC and Guest At Your Table. Gives you the big picture of what this organization has done for 70+ years. In many countries (including the U.S.), paid and volunteer workers respond to people who are suffering the loss of basic necessities because of war, poverty, displacement due to political power, health crisis, environmental disasters, and more.

There will be another table display on Dec. 15. Watch for reminders about your Guest At Your Table donation from Summit news items. Also the kiosk in the greeting room will display a few documents for the next month and a half as well as in the office area.

The collection of donations from you (hopefully converted to a check) will be sometime in early January. The Social Action Committee appointed Jennifer White, Chair of DCC, to be the coordinator of UUSC GAYT this year. If you are interested in finding out more about UUSC or becoming a member, contact her or go on the web at [uusc.org](http://uusc.org).

If you still want to donate to the Philippine typhoon disaster, you can contribute on the UUSC web site. The UUSC has partners there and in places, such as Japan, Haiti, Kenya, Darfur, many countries in Central and South America, and all over the U.S. Thank you.

NOTE: SAVE the DATE: the Pacific Southwest District of UU congregations will be having their annual meeting on Fri. Sat. April 25-26, 2014 at First UU Church in Hillcrest.

## **Board of Directors Meetings**

Third Thursday of each month from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Library at Summit. Observers are welcome. Minutes from recent meetings are posted on our website: [www.suuf.org](http://www.suuf.org).

## **RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION FOR ALL**

### **Children's Religious Exploration News**

Wow! This has been an incredibly busy fall and a very exciting time to be part of our faith community.

Fall is always busy in Children's Religious Exploration (CRE) but with this being Summit UU Fellowship's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we are enjoying many more fun activities. I have also had the opportunity to participate in some incredible professional development experiences that allow me to bring new skills and resources to our program. Here are some highlights in Summit RE so far:

***New Classes & Curriculums:*** In September we started our new full-year programs for each of our 5 age groups:

**Pre-K to 1<sup>st</sup> grade - *Spirit Play*:** This group is continuing with *Spirit Play*, a Montessori-based program with storytelling as a central focus. We have also added some elements from another program, *Chalice Children*, to help this group get to know the larger Summit community. In addition, special "work time" activities are being offered each week to explore the story or topic in a deeper creative way. Some of these activities have included chalice making and gratitude turkeys.

**2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade - *Love Will Guide Us*:** This group meets in the tree house room where they have a special secret to share. If you sit under the tree house and look up there is a night sky of glow-in-the-dark constellations! Each constellation is a symbol for one of our six faith sources. So far they are exploring number four: *Awe & Wonder, Science & Reason, Nature and Wise Women & Men*. The group will be adding the last two, then continue to work with all six throughout the year. Some of their activities have included making bubble sculptures, creating their own rain sticks, and making cookies to share with the younger class.

**4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade – *Windows and Mirrors*:** This is currently our smallest group attendance-wise, as upper-elementary is a very busy time for many families. They are looking within and without to discover their own beliefs and see how they fit in the world. Each student has created their own "mirror" that they add to each week as an ongoing exploration. Some of their other activities have included interviewing adults and other youth to see why they come to church on Sundays, creating a Summit timeline, and talking about forgiveness. Come back to the CRE area to see this group's colorful "mirrors" - they are hanging on the room dividers.

**6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – *Riddle & Mystery*:** Our middle school group is very tech savvy and has been using digital media to explore the "Big Questions" this fall. Each week they tackle a question and create a video clip as part of their exploration. Questions that have been explored so far include: Where do we come from? Where are we going? Is there a God? and What happens when we die? These are deep questions and can take a lifetime to answer so they are just getting started. While they most likely will come to differing conclusions, they learn that UUs are question-askers and that life is not about the answers but the ability to explore, experience, and seek. With each question they are making a WCUU news video clip. We plan to share their digital wisdom at the end of the year.

**9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Grade – YRUU Youth Group:** Our youth group is taking on more leadership this year. Working with their adult advising team they came up with a plan of activities for the year that includes

discussion, social action and what they call FUUN! They started working with *Popcorn Theology* this year. It is a discussion-curriculum that involves viewing movie clips and talking about them together. Our youth are picking and leading these lessons themselves. So far they have explored the concept of faith with the movie “*Contact*,” and talked about their Prime Directive after watching “*Wall-e*.” This month they’re going to watch a “*Dr. Who Christmas Carol*” episode. YRUU has plans to participate in SAC activities and to create a few social action opportunities of their own through the Youth Action Kommittee or YAK (see more below). Several of them went to October-Con (a weekend conference for district youth) and are planning to go to winter camp. Our older youth are also getting involved in district leadership! Nick Orr and Anya Vail are on the Sr. High Winter Camp Youth Staff and our own Ryan Beauchamp is the elected district youth board representative. We really have an incredible group of young people.

### **Other Happenings this fall:**

***Summit Nursery:*** Our Nursery is growing as we have more families with young children participating in fellowship activities. This is so exciting as they are our future! Cathy is working with a team of volunteers to provide loving care for our youngest children while their parents enjoy the service and social time with our community. Thank you to all who help out in the Nursery on Sunday mornings!

***Youth Action Kommittee or YAK:*** This is a new group that Children’s Religious Exploration started to empower our youth and to offer them opportunities to develop leadership skills. They picked their own name – including spelling adaptations – and work together to create activities outside of Sunday morning for fun, fellowship, and faith action. This group is comprised of middle and senior high youth, their families, and youth advisers. The youth do all the planning with adults empowering them and supporting their efforts. So far they have planned several outings and their first independent social action project.

***Our Whole Lives (OWL):*** This program is a sexuality-education program developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association and United Church of Christ. We will be offering OWL for 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grades, and in a separate class, for 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grades. We now have a trained OWL team ready to begin here at Summit at the elementary level. Our plan is to start in January 2014 for interested families on Sunday afternoons. If you would like more information on OWL, visit the UUA website at <http://www.uua.org/re/owl>. There will be a mandatory parent meeting for both groups before enrollment. OWL for 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> Grades will be offered at First UU Church of SD in the spring of 2014 and the Senior High OWL in the spring of 2015. Let Mary know if you would like more information on any of these programs.

### ***Upcoming events:***

***CRE Holiday Play – Dec 8:*** holiday play rehearsals are filling our Sunday mornings as we prepare for this service. This year our play is “Harry Potter Holiday Rescue.” Don’t miss this fun and educational

service. It will bring you some holiday cheer!

***Spaghetti Dinner Camp Fundraiser – Jan 18:*** Our Youth Action Kommittee (YAK) is planning a special night out for you to enjoy yummy food and help support our camp scholarship fund. Mary will be making Gelato for dessert so don't miss this delicious evening.

***Making Bowls for Empty Bowls Lunch - Jan & Feb 2014:*** Summit's upper Elementary and Youth will head to the potters' studio to make bowls for the Empty Bowls lunch in March.

***Mosaic Tile Path Project – March:*** All CRE participants will be making special mosaic tiles for a 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary mosaic path to be installed at a later date.

***Youth Service – April 6:*** Save the date as this promises to be a creative and enlightening Sunday morning.

There are other events in the planning as we continue this year of celebration at Summit.

Bright Blessings and a Happy New Year,  
Mary Carter-Vail, Dir. of Children's Religious Exploration

## **Adult Religious Exploration**

**Writers' Workshop/** Lois Santalo: This group meets every Tuesday morning, 9:30 to noon, in the Salon.

**Memoir Writing Group /** Lois Santalo: Friday, Nov. 8th, 10:00 a.m. to noon, in the Summit Library. This is an ongoing workshop. Everyone is welcome.

**Poetry Workshop: We won't meet in December.** We will resume in January on the fourth Saturday (Jan. 25), at 10:00 am in the Library. Come play with words and discover the poet within. All levels of writing experience welcome. Questions? Please call Margo Mariana. No registration necessary.

### ***Meditation- Sunday, 8:00 a.m. -Sanctuary; Wed., 8:30 a.m. -Salon:***

Meditation is a practice, and needs to be practiced, like anything worth doing. We sit in chairs, in meditation and/or silent prayer for the concerns of our hearts or of others who have asked to be remembered. You needn't be experienced. We are lifted by the shared intention and spiritual energy of one another. "[In meditation] you watch your thoughts and they start to flatten down, and your breathing level, and pulse, all slow down. And in that space...there's this feeling of well-being...I think that's the presence that we're all looking for." ~ Phil Jackson

## **Upcoming Adult Learning Programs and Activities**

***You might want to calendar the following special programs and classes now, and certainly stay***



*tuned for more information about upcoming offerings by me, other Summitarians and very special guests in this new year of religious exploration. -Rev. Frank*

**Spiritual Praxis Group** meets in the Summit Salon on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, September through May, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. Our next meeting will be on December 10th. In this meeting we will continue with discussion of Rick Hanson, Ph.D.'s book, *Buddha's Brain*, and the first four chapters in his book of spiritual reflections and exercises, entitled *Just One Thing*. -Rev. Frank

**"The Big Questions"** This study group, facilitated by Bernard Samtoy, M.D. and Rev. Frank Placone-Willey, Ph.D. will meet in the Summit Sanctuary on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month from September 2013 through May 2014, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. We will read and discuss brief essays by scientists, religious scholars and philosophers, all commissioned by the Templeton Foundation. The Essays will help us focus our discussion on the following BIG questions:

- 1) "Does the Universe have a Purpose?"
- 2) Does evolution explain Human Nature?
- 3) Does Moral Action depend upon Reasoning? - *Dec. 27th topic*
- 4) Does Science make belief in God obsolete?

### **Tai Chi Chih is available on Fridays NOW!**

...8:30 a.m.- 9:30 a.m. Join us as we improve our flexibility, strengthen our balance and calm. You'll be glad you did! Although T'ai Chi Chih is slow and gentle and doesn't leave you breathless... it does focus your attention on the key areas of your overall health and well-being - muscle strength, flexibility, balance, and improved breathing. Please join us! "Do the difficult things while they are easy and do the great things while they are small." ~Lao Tzu

## **SUMMIT MINISTRIES**

### **Caring Committee**

We would like to remind everyone that Juana Page, and Vic White, are the "ride coordinators" for our committee. If you need assistance with transportation to Summit or appointments, call them, preferably a few days ahead of time.

### **Loving Hands Ministry Has Changed the Day and Time**

The Loving Hands group will now meet on the first SATURDAY of the month (Dec. 7) at 10:00 a.m. in the library at Summit. All are welcome and we invite you to join us! If you like to knit, crochet, or quilt, please join us in the Salon. The Loving Hands Ministry works on blankets for Linus Project, dishcloths for Crisis House, comfort shawls for Summitarians in need of comfort, and is always open to new ideas for outreach projects. Contact Laurel Bernstein for more info.

## **Social Action Corner - *Service Is Our Prayer***

### **Helping Others in East County and Beyond**

#### **Summitarians acting locally:**

**HUNGER!** Did you know that 1 in 6 Americans face hunger daily? Or that 17 million US households are food insecure? Or that nearly 460,000 people in San Diego County are impacted by hunger, including more than 162,000 children?

The theme for social action at Summit in the coming year is hunger. Watch for hunger-related SAC events in upcoming newsletters and the e-news.

**Collection for Veterans:** The collection on November 17 benefited Archi's Acres, a farming enterprise based in Escondido that has developed sustainable, hydroponic, organic farming to create opportunities and business training for our returning veterans. Thank you for your generosity!

#### **The Greater Community**

**Compassion for African Villages:** The next CAV event will be an information tabling day at San Diego State University, from 10-3 on December 3. Drop by and help build excitement for the SDSU chapter of CAV, and hear about progress toward the next village project.

#### **How Can You Help Summit's Social Action Efforts?**

**Adopt-A-Family:** As in past years, SAC is facilitating a collection of goods for local needy families. We are "adopting" two families this time, a 41-year old mom with three daughters (ages 9, 11, & 15); and a 36-year old mom with four children (three girls ages 14, 8 and 3, and a 6 year old boy). Watch for the Christmas tree decorated with ornaments bearing the family's gift requests- take an ornament (or more!), and bring back the gift(s) *by December 15*.

**Social Action Sunday:** Summit's SAC meets on the third Sunday of the month after the service. We welcome you to join us on Dec. 15 for the next Social Action Committee meeting in the library at 11:30 a.m. Questions? Contact Gwen Baldwin, our new SAC chair.

### **Amnesty International**

Just a note that AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL meetings will be cancelled until we meet again on January 27, 2014 at 7:00 pm. Season's greetings to all! Hope to see you in January! ~Renee Altson

## **WITHIN THE CONGREGATION**

### **Member & Friend News**

♥ Please remember in your thoughts and prayers:

- ♥ MaryEllen Danforth as she recovers from a recent eye surgery.
  - ♥ Karen Cleland, Jamie and the family, as she continues her treatment.
  - ♥ Christian Spring and his family as he recovers from surgery and undergoes treatment.
- ♥ The Celebration of Life service for beloved member Jai Ghorpade will be December 19th at 4:00 pm in the Summit Sanctuary. A reception will follow in the Salon.

## ♥ ARE YOU A SUMMITARIAN WHO WILL BE HOME ALONE ON CHRISTMAS DAY?

You don't have to be. I am inviting up to eleven single people to come to my home and have a Christmas Day meal at 1:00 p.m. Just tell me what you'd like to eat, pay me to prepare or obtain it for you, and come over for fellowship, some games, and a gift exchange. Afterwards, if there are some willing drivers, we could even go touring to see many of the magnificent Christmas Light displays around the County.

If you would be interested in participating, please call the Summit Office and leave your name and contact information. Registration for this gathering will close when 11 people have signed up or by December 18th, whichever comes first. I'll then contact you to arrange meal details. -Audrey Forrest

♥ **The Walden Project:** We are happy to report that we have added four new, very highly valued and appreciated members to our work crew for painting, carpentry and plumbing. All have a busy life and/or busy full time jobs but will find hours here and there to contribute to The Walden Project. We have received a request from the greater San Diego community to drive The Walden Project to their location for teaching regarding voluntary simplicity, spiritually grounded activism and green technology. This request is a bit early since we are not ready, but exciting since it speaks to the purpose of The Walden Project.

Margo was inspired to write the following poem:

### **To Walden Project**

*We build a cottage  
as living celebration to Thoreau,  
a man who found beauty, bounty  
in a pond and its surroundings.  
Though now wrapped  
in the heart of earth, his presence emanates,*

*is a reminder to see ourselves  
in every connection with nature,  
and pause to hear deeper messages  
in the language of stillness.*

Margo Mariana  
Summit UU Fellowship

♥ We NEED YOUR PARTICIPATION. Donate an hour or two of work. The Walden Project thrives on a patchwork of stitched-together good-will, cooperative spirits and helping hands!

### **Summit Now has a Memorial Garden**

It is the patio area under the Chinese Elm Tree between the office wing and the salon. If families would like to have a paver stone in this garden dedicated to their departed Summit member they may purchase the engraving for \$150. For this fee the first and last name and the month and year of birth and death would be put on the stone. The letters would be 1 1/2" high. Please contact me or Linda Peck if you would like to have a paver stone carved for your loved one. Suzanne McQuaide

### **Another Way to Be Informed**

The newsletter you are reading is our monthly *Scene at Summit*. If you wish to receive our weekly eNews in your email, contact Pam Kerr at [Suuf\\_volunteer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Suuf_volunteer@sbcglobal.net) and she will be happy to add you to the email list.

If you would like to contribute an article, or classified ad, or 'something of interest' to the eNews:

- Send your item to [Suuf\\_volunteer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Suuf_volunteer@sbcglobal.net) by 8:00 a.m. Wednesday
- Have your complete information in the body of the email, no attachments
- If you have a picture, include it. If you don't, suggest a theme or just trust me

### **Who will next be caught Standing on the Side of Love?**

Who would you like to nominate? If you would like to recognize someone for their loving and faithful service in our Fellowship, please send an e-mail (or fill out a form, in the office or Greeting Room) to member Donna Daum describing who you would like to have publicly acknowledged and why. The acknowledgement takes place during Community News time in the Service on the 2nd Sunday each month.

## SUMMIT'S POTPOURRI OF PROGRAMS

### **Choir Notes**

We meet every week on Wednesday at 7:00 pm. If you are interested in joining our choir or have questions please contact our director, Jill Reis, at [jillerinr@gmail.com](mailto:jillerinr@gmail.com).

### **Hiking Group**

This month we'll be going hiking on Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:00. We'll be hiking at Goodan Ranch in Poway. Goodan Ranch is a 4.7 mile loop trail which Afoot and Afield in San Diego County rates as a moderate hike with 500' of elevation gain and loss. (It's really pretty easy.) If you have joined us on previous year's hikes, you'll receive an email with all the information, if you haven't joined us in the past and are interested in coming contact Kersitn Crowe to be added to the list.

### **Freethinkers and I'm Not Done Yet! (a.k.a. INDY)**

Dear Friends,

As I announced in the service one recent Sunday, I have been accepted into the Master Gardeners program sponsored by University of California Extension. The Master Gardeners are the "boots on the ground" volunteers who provide a wide variety of gardening information to the public by having booths at all kinds of events, helping with community and school gardens, giving talks, holding a call line service, etc. It is quite an honor to have been accepted into the program, and I am overjoyed that I'll be able share information about good gardening practices that are the basis for sustainable agriculture.

The six-month training is intense and starts the beginning of January, and so I won't be able to continue all my activities, including facilitating INDY and Freethinkers. Wendell has agreed to help fill in for Freethinkers and will be looking for presenters. With respect to INDY, I would be happy if someone else wants to facilitate. I will be back, but I'm not sure how busy I will be once training is over.

I realized this year that the threads of my life finally came together to form a clear vision of what I should be doing with the rest of my time: find a way to use my background in toxicology, genetics, and ecology, to at least try to help us survive the coming upheavals that will affect all of us, our children and grandchildren, and beloved friends.

I have many deeply loved friends at Summit, and will miss being with you at these functions, but I will be back, because, I'm Not Done Yet.

See you in church. Neal

### **Membership Committee**

On December 1st Summit will celebrate a New Member Ceremony during the service. Please watch for their photos in the Greeting Room and welcome them to the Fellowship! The Membership Cmte group meets every first Tuesday of the month (Dec. 3rd) at 3:00 pm in the conference room in the office wing.

### **Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays**

We meet in Summit's library at 7:00 pm on the second Monday (Dec. 9th) of each month. PFLAG is an international organization ([www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)) created by families and friends to gain understanding of and support for our gay loved ones.

Our mission is to promote the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons, their families, and friends through support. For more info contact Bob and Mary Dryden at [r.dryden@cox.net](mailto:r.dryden@cox.net).

**The Summit UU Book Club** will be meeting on Tuesday, December 3rd at 7:00 p.m. in the Salon to discuss "*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*," a novel by Mark Haddon. The LA Times says: "Haddon's book feels as if it was actually written by a special-needs teen. Haddon once worked with autistic people and this experience, and his superior writing ability, have conspired to vividly bring Christopher's story to life."

### **Piano Club**

If you like to play piano, and for others to listen as you do, please join us. Contact Ed Davis, or Roy McDonald, for date information and this month's location.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **Holiday Sing Along and Cookie Exchange**

**on Friday, December 6th from**

**7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Salon.**

**We'll toast the Holidays and each other with Wassail and Spiced Cider while Ed Davis accompanies us on the piano.**

**CBE families will also participate!**

**Just bring two dozen yummy cookies to share.**

**SAVE THE DATE!**

The San Diego UU Network (formerly called the Cluster), is a Board made up of UUs from the 5 congregations in our area. Representatives from each congregation meet monthly for the purpose of establishing better support and communication between our congregations. It is far more beneficial to share resources with each other than to “go it alone” as we spread the Unitarian Universalist denomination. So, with this intention, there will be a workshop: **LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR UUs**

**When:** Saturday, January 11, 2014 from 9:00 am -2:00 pm

**Where:** First UU Church of SD (in Hillcrest)

**What:** The theme of this training is primarily learning Leadership skills to use in a variety of roles in our congregations. The seminar will be particularly useful for those in Board of Directors' positions, Committee Chairs, leaders of Covenant Groups, and other important roles in our community, as well as professional staff in the areas of Administration, Religious Exploration, and Music. Anyone interested in finding out what it takes to be a leader is invited.

So please, put this date on your calendar and watch for news about registration, details of the day, etc. It is going to be a great way to meet other leaders in your area of interest and talk about UUs in the 21st Century.

Submitted by Jennifer White, Interim Coordinator with SUUN and

Denominational Connections Committee Chair

New Book from Tom Owen-Towle

***UNWRAPPING the Inner Gifts of Christmas***

"As a minister for nearly 40 years, I struggle with how to lead and celebrate Christmas . . . every year! Tom Owen-Towle has taken stories and songs and woven a new holiday tapestry. Each page contains the kernel for a potential meditation or sermon. This book is a blessing for those of us who wrestle with Christmas."

~ Denise Tracy, UU Minister