

The Scene at Summit

**Newsletter of Summit Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
8778 Cottonwood Ave., Santee, CA 92071**

Vol. 26 No. 2

February 2016

Monthly

Summit's services and programs are held at the address above, phone number, 619-562-0833. Our website is www.summituuf.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 - 5:00 pm

Services begin at 10:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

February 7th: *"What Makes America a Good Country?"* Rev. Tom Owen-Towle

As a guest minister, this will be my only chance to talk about morality and politics during this election year of 2016, so bear with me as I explore the core qualities of what makes America a good nation. Frankly, I'm tired of all the political rhetoric about "America being great again." I would settle for us simply being a good people, a good enough nation. I will have my books available, both free and for purchase, following the worship service.

The Rev. Dr. Tom Owen-Towle has been a parish minister since 1967 and is the author of two dozen books on personal relationships and spiritual growth. Tom and his life-partner, The Rev. Dr. Carolyn Sheets Owen-Towle, are the active parents of four children and seven grandchildren. Tom is a guitarist and parlor magician, who currently sings with seniors, mentors children and youth-at-risk, and volunteers with San Diego's homeless. Tom considers it a privilege and joy to return to our Summit UU Fellowship where he served a two-year interim-ship.

February 14th: *"The Power of Presence"* Rev. Jason Cook

In these busy and troubled times, what does it mean to truly be present to each other? How do we build on this foundation to offer transformation to the world? Through sharing stories of his experiences working with youth at camp, Rev. Jason Cook will explore the core of building community - and what it truly means to be Unitarian Universalists.

February 21st: *"Now's the Time"* Rev. Frank Placone-Willey and the Chris Klich Quintet

The sap is rising and spring is on its way! Now is the time for breaking open, improvising, and growing in new directions! Now is the time to offer love supreme to ourselves, one another and our world! Chris Klich and his jazz band return to grace our worship and reflection with the music of social and spiritual liberation. You won't want to miss this!

February 28th: *"Reach for the Summit"* Rev. Frank Placone-Willey

This service is our annual celebration that focuses on whence we've come and where we're going as an intentional spiritual community. We are pulling together like never before. New friends and members are taking a public stand with our fellowship in representing our Living liberal Tradition to the world. We have been to the mountaintop, and we are looking to climb on to the next summit in our life and work together. Join us for good music, fun songs, and new vibrations and excitations, as we get the 'rousements goin'!

The Scene at Summit's March 2016 edition

deadline will be *Mon., February 22nd*

Summit's Office Information

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

Emergencies and appointments: 619-562-0833

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 / summitdre@gmail.com

Office Admin.: Linda Peck, 619-562-0833, ex. 202 / summitunitarian@sbcglobal.net

President: Barbara Brooks, bgbrooks@mac.com

Property Steward: Mark Weedman, markatspectrum@hotmail.com

FROM THE MINISTER'S ROLLTOP:

"A Good Report Card"

On January 23rd and 24th, UUA Consultant Kay Crider joined our Fellowship for a time of evaluation and assessment. She was here to advise us as a congregation about how we can continue building an ever-greater spirit of generosity and genuineness in our community. She spoke with the Board of Directors and with representatives from the Social Action and Justice Committees. She trained the visiting stewards for our upcoming Pledge Drive. She preached to us on Sunday morning, then followed-up with a great set of specific observations and recommendations that will help us as we continue to work on cultivating a collective attitude based on a sense of abundance rather than a sense of scarcity. I hope you will join me in recognizing and thanking all who have played such an important role in making this weekend possible, including Board Member Betts Awes, Stewardship Co-Chairs Pam Williams and Bernard Samtoy, Treasurer Debbie Wingard, Office Administrator Linda Peck, and so many others!

Kay was very impressed with our community and gave us an excellent report! In fact, she offered these words, "You are one of the healthiest congregations I've seen." This is, almost word-for-word, what Summit's first full-time minister, the Rev. Ned Wight said at the end of his return visit to Summit a year ago. It is nice to have such positive evaluation from two trust-worthy people whose work and experience support the reliability and validity of their evaluations.

But now is not the time to rest on our laurels. There is much more work to be done, and as laborers in life's vineyard who stand on the side of love, there are many ongoing needs and possibilities yet to fulfill in this hurting world. Now is the time to sink our roots deeper into the ground that is the source of our being and spread our wings in order to soar to new heights of loving community,

healing fellowship, and prophetic witness. We have more mountains to climb before we reach that final summit. I'm ready. Are you?

And let me add my good report to Kay's and Ned's: You are one of the healthiest congregations I've seen, and it is a pleasure and an honor to serve as your settled minister.

Namaste, Frank

FROM OUR SUMMIT LEADERSHIP

President's Report

This past 2015 December, in the Christmas season of welcoming the stranger, Summit hosted the Interfaith Homeless Shelter. Our guests were folks experiencing extremely difficult circumstances, including a family with 4 young children. The oldest was age 8 years, the youngest a baby, 6 months old. The symbolism of this young babe in the Christmas season was not lost on us, a child in a car seat carrier, his small manger. We provided daily shelter, food and often companionship, someone to listen to a difficult story. At times, while listening, we were transported into an alternate reality where our own rules and life experiences did not apply. The “oughts and shoulds” that often govern our lives seemed ill fitting, when life had spiraled downward into depths unfamiliar to most of us. There is a process in nature called abscission, the natural separation of flowers, fruit, or leaves from plants at a special separation layer. In our human lives, when under great stress, we might also pare down to essentials, at the abscission point, shedding the decorative sweetness in our lives, when the great variety of belongings that we have and crave, no longer serve a purpose. In return for shelter, our guests, as in every year, gave us a bounty of spiritual riches. Prior to dinner each evening, we linked hands and spoke words of blessing, gratitude and hope. Several of our guests are now working, including the parents of the young family. Legal Aid and pro bono attorneys assisted two guests to regain possessions and to resolve legal entanglements. We received three very sincere thank you cards signed by all the guests. One was for our Summit youth who made a cozy warm blanket for each guest. The other was directed to the entire Fellowship. The third card came after the guests had moved on to the next Shelter, saying that they miss us and think of us often. Well done, Summit, inspirational work for our loving hearts and helping hands! We hold our guests in thoughts and prayers as they continue their journey.

2015 was a busy and productive year for the Summit Board of Directors. The minutes of each month's Board meeting can be found online. Here are the “GPS” directions to find the minutes via computer. Go to www.summituuf.org. Click on the Log In button, then the Member Area button. Scroll down to click on Governance. Click on Board of Directors and finally on Board Minutes. All this proceeds very smoothly! If you do not yet have a member password, do not despair, ask LaMar Rogers or myself for help. Or, when at the Summit page online, notice that the Member Login area has the bright red word, REGISTER. Click on that and complete your registration instructions. Summit's website has a diverse variety of interesting and fun information. Enjoy the amazing

spiritual home that all of us, together, have created!

Barbara Brooks, President, Board and Congregation

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.summituuf.org.

Planned Giving Committee

Do you want to help Summit build a firm financial foundation to benefit future Summit generations? If so, please think of Summit when making your estate plans. Such planned gifts include bequests through wills, beneficiary designations in life insurance policies or retirement savings plans, and charitable gift annuities, among other methods. One such method is an IRA charitable rollover.

Per the UUA website (www.uua.org/giving/planned), legislation signed into law in December 2015 made the IRA Charitable Rollover permanent. The IRA rollover allows donors who are 70½ or older to transfer up to \$100,000 directly from their IRA to charity each year.

- ❖ You pay no income tax on the gift.
- ❖ The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you do not itemize your taxes.
- ❖ An IRA rollover gift can be used to meet all or part of an IRA required minimum distribution.

If you would like to talk with someone about including Summit in your estate plans, please speak with Frank Placone-Willey or one of the Planned Giving Committee members (Jamie Cleland, Carol Davis, or Don Jania-Smith), or contact the UUA Office of Legacy Gifts at (888) 792-5885 or gift-plans@uua.org.

"Reaching the Summit Together!"

Summit's 2016-17 Annual Pledge Campaign

Update

Kickoff for the Campaign is February 28th. Prior to the Kickoff, we will use this space to give you information about the pledge drive so that you can seriously consider your pledge. This year we are not only aiming to reach our goal of \$286,000, but also aiming for 100% member participation.

You might think that:

"We should not be making such a fuss about money."

Not true - Summit would not exist without the pledge drive.

("You might think that:" continued)

"You should make a large pledge if you pledge."

Not True - We know that we all have different circumstances. We welcome any pledge.

"Once you pledge, you cannot get out of it."

Not True - You just need to contact the office and let them know that your circumstances have changed, and what you want to do.

If we all do our part we will reach our goal.

Yours in Fellowship,

Pam Williams and Bernard Samtoy, Co-Chairs, Summit's 2016-17 Pledge Campaign

Just a reminder...

Auction hosts who have contributed doing an event, be it dinners, outings, etc., please remember to contact all of your guests at least a week prior to the event. Not all who participate in the auction are members of Summit. So, your guests will need to know your address. And it is nice to have a confirmation the event is on schedule. **Thank you so much for attending to this detail.** Linda

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION FOR ALL

Children's Religious Exploration News

Earlier this fall, I shared a few areas of challenge that we were experiencing in our Children's Religious Exploration program. There has been some new "growth" in these areas that I would like to tell you about.

Spirit Play – This program is for Pre-K to first grade. The year began with no regularly attending children in this classroom. Our teaching team was ready each Sunday for the sporadic guest attendees as we "held the space" so that we could continue to be welcoming to all ages. I am happy to report that we now have five children regularly attending this class! It is because the teaching team understood the importance of keeping the class open as a ready, welcoming space so children, and their parents, felt welcomed when they arrived. This is a beautiful example of our congregation living the Covenant of Right Relations.

Our Community Garden – Last fall our 2nd and 3rd graders took on a project to build and plant a garden outside the classroom wing window. The class helped fill on the soil and plant two 4X4 garden beds. It took several weeks of preparation and work before they could plant any seeds. Mark Weedman had created a custom drip irrigation soaker hose for us to water the garden. Just after the seeds were planted, someone removed our soaker hose from both garden beds. While this was discouraging, it gave us the opportunity to try a new way of watering our plants – ollas. These are unglazed, clay pots that are buried in the soil. They are filled with water through the opening that is exposed at soil level. We fill the ollas and they keep the garden moist for several days. We've also been blessed by the volume of natural irrigation, (rain), so our gardens are thriving. The children have harvested turnips, several types of radishes, Swiss chard and salad greens. The peas are climbing like crazy and the kale is extra curly though our green beans were killed by frost on an extra cold night. We'll continue to plant and harvest, changing out various crops with the seasons. This has been a great project to teach our children about healthy food and caring for the Earth. We hope to feature our garden veggies at our Soup and our Salads lunches this spring!

Invite Children and Families to Summit – Do you know any families who are looking for a community to call theirs? Are there children in your life that could benefit from the opportunity to explore their own sense of wonder? Extend an invitation to them to come visit Summit. Anytime is the perfect time to make friends and build connections. Our program is rich and offers many opportunities for children and parents to connect that are not available in day to day life. We work to build beloved community for all ages. By sharing our treasure we create a richer program for us all.

Peace, Mary Carter-Vail, Director of CRE

Summit's Children's Religious Exploration Mission Statement

"To create a safe and welcoming spiritual home for our children and youth through creative exploration of Unitarian Universalist principles and sources."

Adult Religious Exploration

Poetry Workshop: Saturday, February 20th, at Summit at 10:00 am at a member's home. Please contact Margo Mariana if you interested in participating. All levels of writing experience are welcome.

Memoir Writing Group: Next meeting – February 12th, (second Friday), 10:00 am – noon. Visitors welcome. Joanna Jones, jnajones@yahoo.com

Meditation: Sun., 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 or on the floor, which ever you prefer, in meditation and/or silent prayer for the concerns of our hearts or of others who have asked to be remembered. We are lifted by the shared intention and spiritual energy of one another. *"Whenever you step out of the noise of thinking, that is meditation, and a different state of consciousness arises."* ~ Eckhart Tolle

The Summit Buddhist Sangha (a gathering of meditators) will meet every Sunday **from 2:00-3:30 p.m.** in the Summit Sanctuary. The meetings begin with a brief introduction to meditation, followed by 20 minutes of silent or gently guided meditation. Topics in the form of readings or audio dharma talks are provided, followed by discussion which can include questions about practice. The Summit Buddhist Sangha is a community of practice, learning, and support, open to all who find a Buddhist path meaningful.

SUMMIT MINISTRIES

What is the Caring Committee?

We are a group of volunteers who organize and participate in a network of Summit members who support those in the Fellowship who find themselves in need. We would like to remind everyone that Juana Page is the "ride coordinator" for our committee. If you need assistance with transportation to Summit or medical appointments, call her, preferably a few days ahead of time.

Loving Hands Ministry

The Loving Hands Ministry will meet February 6th in the Summit Library at 10:00 am. We plan to resume in February so if you like to knit, crochet, or quilt, please join us next month at 10:00 am in the Summit Library. We make 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 at laurelbernstein@yahoo.com for more information.

Justice Ministry Committee

... will meet on Monday, February 1st at 6:30 pm in the Summit Library. The work of this group

focuses on social justice issues such as immigration, income equality, and environmental

justice. Rooted in our UU faith and "Standing on the Side of Love," the committee will soon give us more opportunities for us to "Pray with our Feet."

Social Action Corner - *Service Is Our Prayer* **Helping Others in East County and Beyond**

Summitarians acting locally:

Peanut Butter and Jelly Collection- It's time for our annual PB&J collection! Please remember to bring jars of peanut butter and/or jelly (bread is welcome, too) to the service on **February 21st** (Social Action Sunday). How about putting these on your shopping list right now? Your donated sandwich-makings will be taken to Crisis House to provide many low cost, nutritious meals for families and individuals in need.

Summitarians acting globally:

Help for Syrian refugees - The UUSC and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) have launched two new initiatives in response to the global refugee crisis. These are:

A special [UUSC-UUA Refugee Crisis Fund](#), with the goal of raising \$250,000. Donations to this fund will go directly to UUSC/UUA partners already on the ground in countries receiving refugees.

A [petition](#) drive to raise the number of refugees admitted into the United States to 200,000. Please click on the links for more information or to make a donation.

SAC currently meets on the second Sunday of each month after the service. Please join us for our next meeting on **Sunday, February 14th** in the library. All are welcome. Questions? Contact Jerilyn Harris.

Amnesty International...

Welcome to everyone! We look forward to having you join us in writing for justice. Our next meeting will be **February 29th, 2016, in the Summit Salon**. Amnesty International meets on the last Monday night of the month at 6:30 pm. Writing letters on behalf of prisoners of conscience all over the world is a beautiful way to make a difference. Our collected letters land on the desk of some "sir" or "majesty" somewhere, and it forces them to consider action. We have been especially blessed to have had several successful campaigns — where our letters (along with those worldwide) have actually freed a prisoner or changed a sentence. It is an amazing and triumphant feeling. Be the change you want to see in the world!!

Visit the <http://www.amnestyusa.org> website or contact **renee altson** for more details.

Within the Congregation

Member & Friend News

Please keep the following people in heart and mind:

- ♥ For Lynn Feinberg and family, as Larry heals from his recent surgery.
- ♥ For Kyle, Lynn and John Slaughter, as Kyle heals and prepares for his next round of treatment .

- ♥ Harriet Nissenbaum, for continued support, love and encouragement.
- ♥ Chris Wetzel, and her son Peter, as she remains fairly restricted to home.
- ♥ Val Sims as she continues to live her life to the fullest.
- ♥ All who are struggling with the reminder of loss and difficulty.
- ♥ All in our community who are struggling to make ends meet, find work, and provide for their families in these difficult economic times.

Summit's new Music Committee!

Summit's newly formed Music Committee is tasked with enhancing and coordinating all things musical at Summit (Sunday services, concerts, special events, etc.). We will meet next on Tues., February 9th (the second Tuesday of the month) at 4:00 p.m. in the conference room in the Summit Office. All are welcome and we welcome your input. For more information, please contact Laurel Bernstein.

Choir Notes

Rehearsals are on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm. If you like to sing, come join us! Choir Director: Carly Newman carlynewman1021@gmail.com

Summit's Memorial Garden

It's the patio area under the Chinese Elm Tree between the office wing and the Salon. Families can have a paver stone in this garden dedicated to their departed Summit member, by purchasing 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 if you would like to have a paver stone carved for your loved one.

Suzanne McQuaide

PFLAG expanded to include all LGBTQ

There will be a PFLAG Meeting on Monday, February 8th, from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m., in the library at Summit UU Fellowship. PFLAG stands for Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, but it's mission has been expanded to include all LGBTQ people and their friends and allies. This is a support meeting and we welcome your attendance whatever your connection might be. If you have questions or comments contact Mary or Bob Dryden.

Freethinkers...

We have cancelled the meeting this month. Later in the spring we will host Carl Yaeckel. Carl represents the **Citizen's Climate Lobby**, who help to create the political will for a stable climate. They empower individuals to experience breakthroughs exercising their personal and political power. Please join us!

Book Club

The Summit UU Book Club is going back to the past to read one of the enduring popular classics, Thomas Hardy's *"Far From the Madding Crowd."*

Harvard literature professor Jonathan Cook attributes its lasting popularity to "masterful storytelling, memorable characterizations, and depth of insight into the splendors and miseries of Eros, and the nurturing yet ultimately amoral forces of nature." We'll be meeting on Tuesday, February 2nd, at 7:00 pm in the Summit library.

UPCOMING EVENTS

***Auction night has passed** but there are still opportunities to purchase several of the Community Mixers!* The sign-up sheets for those items are in the Summit library in front of the room divider.

These are great ways to meet other Summitarians, have fun, and support Summit! The Community Mixers are listed below: (for complete descriptions go to your Auction Catalog or click [here](#))

- #111 9 Leprechauns A Leaping (St. Patrick's) **March 12, 2016** \$30 per person
- #107 Salsa Dancing Workshop **March 19, 2016** \$20 per person
- #112 Latin Fiesta 2016 **August 6, 2016** \$40 per person
- #113 Full Moon Sunset Cruise **September 16, 2016** \$50 per person
- #103 Girls Night In **September 23, 2016** \$15 per girl

Additional Info

To Summitarians: The sanctuary tapestry that hangs behind the pulpit must not be taken down at any time. The fabric is fragile. It can be covered with a large black piece of fabric that is kept in the CRE area of the main building. Thank you for your cooperation.

The Summit Directory is available!

Please pick one up to have the current information for the Summit community. If your directory isn't solar yellow, then it is out-of-date! The first copy is free to members and friends, the second, etc., cost \$2.00 each.

Buena Vista Ave. is finally open to through traffic and most curbside parking is back!



Our Website has all the Summit information: summituuf.org/

Summit has a Facebook page! <https://www.facebook.com/SummitUUF>

The monthly newsletter from the UUA: [UU Bulletin](#)

Newsletter of the Pacific Southwest District of the Unitarian Universalist Association (PSWD): www.pswduu.org

Summit's ONLINE DIRECTORY Needs YOU!

Is your info already in the printed Summit directory? Great! It should be on our new website, too.

Register online & upload your photo:

1. Go to www.summituuf.org
2. Select MEMBER LOGIN
3. Click the red REGISTER link
4. Fill out the Registration form
5. When done, click the blue REGISTER button at bottom of form.

Your Profile Photo

You can add your photo to your profile in the Membership Directory after you have registered (once your registration has been activated). Here's how:

1. Select the photo you want to use and place it on your computer desktop.
2. Log in on www.summituuf.org and you will find yourself in the Member Area.
3. Select "Your Profile" to access the Member Profile page.
4. You'll see "Upload" under the shadow of an image. Click "Upload" to upload your photo from your desktop. **Note:** If you want to change your photo at a later date, just repeat this process with a different picture.

Need help? Email LaMar Rogers at lamarrogers@cox.net.

About the eNews:

The newsletter you are currently reading is our monthly *Scene at Summit*. If you wish to receive our weekly source for Summit information, the eNews, in your email, contact Pamela Kerr at Suuf_volunteer@sbcglobal.net.

- ☺ Include your information in the body of the email. Do Not Send attachments.
- ☺ Send your item by early Wednesday morning.
- ☺ Only programs, initiatives and events that are sponsored by an established committee or group at Summit may be featured in the main body of the eNews.
- ☺ Services and goods, jobs wanted, or services offered, or, for sale, and ads relating to member businesses may be featured in the "Classified Ads" and "Bulletin Board" sections of the eNews, at the discretion of the eNews editors.
- ☺ Respond to the contact person noted in an article, do not just "reply."

Now you can find the eNews on our website <http://summituuf.org/>; log in as a member, you'll see "ENEWS" at the top of the banner to the right, click that and it will take you to another page that will give you a link to the current eNews.

Thanks! ~Pamela Kerr