



# THE SCENE AT SUMMIT

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

Multi-Platform Sunday Services begin at 10:00 a.m.

Theme: Cultivating Compassion

October 5

**“Dog Sees God: Lessons on Four Legs”  
Animal Blessing Service  
Rev. KC Marie Pandell**

Humans throughout history have considered themselves the top of the food chain, the beings with the right and strength to conquer Mother Nature. But all wisdom can't come from us alone. What might we learn when we look at the world through the eyes of our beloved pets?



October 12

**“Strange Bedfellows: On Difficult Compassion”  
Rev. KC Marie Pandell**

In a time that feels excessively full of turmoil, when we can feel so at odds with others, and it feels increasingly difficult to connect, what does it look like to live out compassion for those we don't see ourselves in? How do we hear with curiosity, not fear?

October 19

**“Filling Our Cup: On Compassion for Self”  
Rev. KC Marie Pandell**

Being a person is hard stuff. There's always something to do, people to tend, and perfection to be gained. We've all heard the term "you can't pour from an empty cup," but how do we care for ourselves compassionately in ways that help us grow ourselves, our relationships, and our resiliency?

October 26

**“Service Workers are Leading the Struggle for Justice—Join Us!”  
Social Justice in Action Sunday  
Hannah Cano, Guest Speaker**

Western Service Workers Association (WSWA) is an all-volunteer membership association of the lowest-paid workers in San Diego, including workers in caregiving, housekeeping, landscaping, hotel cleaning, and more. These jobs are essential for our local economy but are not paid enough to survive. We will discuss recent government policy and the economic effects on service workers in San Diego, and WSWA's recent victories in ensuring our members' immediate survival while uniting the community together for solutions. We will also discuss many different ways folks use their talents, interests, skills, time, referrals, or resources to support the just cause of low-income service workers in San Diego, so we hope to see you there!

*The Mission Statement of Summit Unitarian Universalist Fellowship*

*In spiritual community, we commit ourselves to building a compassionate, just and sustainable world.*



If you missed a service, or would like to see it again, you can watch it on our [SUUF MEDIA](#) YouTube Channel!



# KC's Korner

~ Reverend KC Marie Pandell

Dear Summitarians and Friends:

Sometimes I'm fascinated at how Spirit works. When I returned last month, I had a regimented to-do list, for work, for school, and for personal life. While most items have been tended to, it's been a lesson in patience and doing things on Spirit's time, rather than my own. Four full weeks back, and I can just about promise that my meticulously planned days have turned out to be anything but. There were some days that felt, frustratingly, like I hadn't done anything at all. I would come home exhausted (in a good way!), wondering just what the heck happened to my day.

And then I would smile.

Because each and every day where I had to throw my to-do list out the window, I could remember with crystal clarity each conversation I had, more in some days than I get in weeks! Conversations full of wonderings, hopes, dreams, and no shortage of laughter and tears. Really lovely, deep, *human* conversations, the kind that I relish as a faith leader, the ones that are really crucial to connecting to others in ways that build beloved community and resilience. Conversations with some of you, with staff, the checker at Trader Joe's, the pharmacist who gave me my Covid & Flu boosters, and the county clerk before this evening's Santee City Council meeting (which I delivered the invocation for at the time of writing).

I've said before that I'm supremely hard on myself, especially when it comes to this work. Sometimes I feel like what I do is never enough – and please, that isn't a cry for pity, simply an honest reflection of my internal life. Sometimes I think I'm not spiritual enough, or theological enough, or academic enough. Sometimes I feel pretty darn average, and sometimes wonder what on Earth I think I'm doing as a minister; surely this is all a dream? And then, if I get really lucky, I feel like I'm "doing ministry right," and can see in the connections we share together that there's some really wonderful conspiracy in

community that we do together, and I am grateful. Sometimes, I'm not too shabby at this "minister" thing ☺

That kind of compassion for self can be difficult, especially when we think others expect as much of us as we do of ourselves, and we're full of all kinds of what ifs, what thens, and how nows. So this month, as we reflect on various forms of compassion (what IS compassion, anyhow?), may we try to live into measures of it for ourselves as much as we do for others, especially when it's hardest. May we find ways for it to feed us, sustain us, and grow us. And to those of you who have come to meet with me: Thank you! It has been joyous, and truly an honor.

For those yet still: I look forward to the time together.

All my love and blessings,

*Rev. KC*

(714) 869-7645

[summitminister@gmail.com](mailto:summitminister@gmail.com)

### MINISTER'S OFFICE HOURS

Reverend KC is delighted to receive your calls and emails. Her regular day off is Monday. She checks email on a limited basis on Friday, her study day. She is available for one-on-one meetings by appointment.

**In Office Hours:**

Tues: 10 am to Noon 2 pm to 5 pm  
Thurs: 10 am to Noon 1pm to 5 pm

**Zoom/Call/Etc (Zoom preferred):**

Wed: 10 am to Noon 1 pm to-3 pm

Schedule an appointment: [Calendly Schedule](#)



## **PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS**

~ **DEBBIE WINGARD, BOARD PRESIDENT** ~

Dear Friends,

In early September the Board of Directors and Finance Committee had a very productive joint retreat.

Our main topic of discussion revolved around our use of savings over the last few years to balance the annual budget. This year we are using \$67,000 from our savings. Half of this was set aside during COVID (from a one-time governmental payment and a year without a minister). Our goal was to use these funds to help support a full-time minister, while we regrew our membership and pledge income. Enough of those savings remain to help support our minister for about three more years. The other half is coming from general savings but will not leave enough to do so for another year at the same level. We are exploring a variety of ways to increase our income and decrease our spending, which we will be sharing over the next few months. The good news is that we paid off our mortgage years ago and had a good amount of savings to help us for the short term with the effects of COVID.

Based on these discussions, the Board set the following short- and long-term goals. Feel free to discuss these goals and any suggestions about the budget with any board member: Debbie Wingard, Ryn Corbeil, Brenda McGuinness, Dan Hand and Miles Beauchamp. We welcome your input!

### **Strategic Goals for 2025-26**

1. Work towards financial stability
2. Address loss of music director
3. Explore political engagement as an expression of our values
4. Establish/reactivate Committee of Right Relations and review Covenant
5. Develop long term strategic plan (5-10 year)
6. Apply/work to be a UUA "Green Sanctuary"
7. Review UUA "Welcoming Congregation" status

### **Strategic Goals for 2-4 years**

1. Achieved financial stability (no use of savings for operating expenses)
2. Supporting a fulltime minister through annual pledging (instead of savings)
3. Increased membership responsibly
4. Maintained our facility
5. Increased understanding of our UU values
6. Known for our values in East County
7. Helped build an interfaith coalition in East County

Looking forward to a productive year of spiritual growth and beloved community, while supporting our values at home and the world at large.

*Debbie*



## LIFESPAN FAITH FORMATION NEWS

MARY CARTER-VAIL, DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

It can feel challenging to cultivate compassion in a world where we are witnessing the absence of empathy in many spaces. This month we will be

practicing compassion through games, projects, stories and more. Bring your heart and let us grow our compassion & empathy muscles together.

**Cultivating Compassion:** This month we lean into a deeper understanding of compassion, not just as a feeling, but as a practice. Together, we'll explore how compassion is something we cultivate, like a garden we tend with care and intention. We'll consider how it shows up in the ways we treat one another, how we listen, how we act, and how we include everyone in our circle of care. How do you practice compassion in your life?

**RE Family & Volunteer Lunch & Conversation – October 26 at 11:30 am** – All of our RE Families and Volunteers are invited to lunch and conversation with Mary to explore what we want to create for children, youth, young adults and families throughout the year. Bring your ideas and let's build connections as we create what is next for Summit's Religious Exploration program. **SAVE THE DATE & join us.** Childcare will be provided as needed. Watch the RE News to RSVP.

**Free Little Library is OPEN!** – On September 21 we had a library blessing and book communion. Our children put bookplates in each book with Summit's website information and made bookmarks to celebrate the opening. You are welcome to take or contribute books. Bring book donations to RE so our children can put in the bookplates and enjoy filling the library. Thank you to all who have supported this fun project!

**Join us for All Ages Faith Formation at Summit: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!** We are growing our Religious Exploration program and expanding to an all-ages Faith Formation program. Join us and consider being part of this important part of our congregational life. (Volunteers who work with children will need to be background checked and take Mandated Reporter training.) Contact Mary at [summitdre@gmail.com](mailto:summitdre@gmail.com) to explore ways you can be part of Faith Formation at Summit.

**Our October theme is Cultivating Compassion:** We will be gathering in RE at 10 am on Sundays for our Religious Exploration activities. Our children and youth will participate in the service until after the "Invitation for All Ages" story. We will then split into age centered groups to engage in our activities in the Religious Exploration area and/or outside (depending on weather conditions). After the service, we will be joining our families in the Salon for sustenance & community social time. Nursery childcare will be available until 12 noon.

**October 5 – Compassion's Call to Tiny Actions that Mean So Much** – This Sunday is our annual Blessing of the Animals service. Children are welcome to bring a picture, toy, leash or other symbol of a beloved animal to be blessed. (Watch the E-news for details on bringing pets in person.) During our RE time, we will be making toys for pets or to donate to an animal rescue organization. We will also be discussing how animals, especially pets, can help us to practice compassion.

**October 12 – Compassion's Call to Treat Everyone With Dignity** – This week, we are exploring how compassion takes the form of treating everyone with dignity. As we do that, we will have the chance to learn about how the celebration of Indigenous Peoples Day is a form of compassion, and to lift up our value of equity and its call to recognize that everyone has inherent worth and dignity. We have games to play to learn about the Kumeyaay people, who have lived in this area for more than 10,000 years.

**October 19 – Compassion's Call to Move Outside Our Comfort Zone** – We are going to explore how compassion takes the form of moving outside our comfort zone and responding to the needs of others when they arise before us. As we do that, we will tell the story of one of our inspiring UU ancestors, Clara Barton, and lift up our UU Value of Generosity and its call to compassionately share our faith, presence, and resources. We will be playing a game and making first aid kits and/or blessing bags to share. Donations are welcome.

*(continued on next page)*

**October 26 – Compassion’s Call to Not Single Anyone Out** – We will be celebrating “Spooky Season” through the lens of compassion. Come in costume to play games and prepare some goodies for our Religious Exploration lunch following the service.

**October 26 at 11:30 am – SAVE THE DATE – Join us for our RE Family & Volunteer Lunch & Conversation – see details above.**

*These are the plans at the beginning of the month, and they may be adapted as our community needs*

*change, so please watch the weekly Children’s Religious Exploration Email. To receive the weekly email, send your email address to Mary at [summitdre@gmail.com](mailto:summitdre@gmail.com).*

With deepest love and brightest blessings,

*Mary*

Mary Carter-Vail  
she/they

Director of Religious Exploration

**Children’s Religious Exploration Committee**

**Mission Statement:**

Our Mission is to create a safe and welcoming spiritual home for children & youth through creative exploration of the Unitarian Universalist Principles and Sources.



Mary and Rev. KC at the dedication of Summit’s new Little Free Library!



**∞ COMMUNITY EVENTS ∞**

**Saturday, October 4 at 7pm**  
Bluegrass Concert

**Sunday, October 5**  
Fall Volunteer Fair in the Salon during Café time

**Sunday, October 12**  
Fall Volunteer Fair in the Salon during Café time

**Sunday, October 19**  
Fall Volunteer Fair in the Salon during Café time

**Sunday, October 26**  
RE Family & Volunteer Lunch

**Saturday, November 8**  
Summit Auction  
*See details on page 9*

**Sunday, November 23 at 12pm**  
“Getting to Know Us” event in the Library

## WELCOMING & MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

### Welcoming and Membership Happenings

It was exciting to see so many old and new faces at Summit's Revival at Santee Lakes. We couldn't have asked for better weather. I had a great time catching up with people I haven't seen for some time as well as getting to know new people better. Thanks for the tireless efforts of Roland and everyone who helped put this together. This could not have happened without everyone who contributed to the event. And if you haven't been by Summit on a Sunday morning, come by and find out what's going on. It's exciting.

I have a special invitation from Summit UU Fellowship's Welcoming and Membership Committee for a chance for you to "Get to Know Us" better. After the service on Sunday, November 23rd, at 11:30 am we will be gathering in our Library. This will be an opportunity for you

to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and Summit UU Fellowship, its history, and programs. Finally, you will have a chance to get to know people in our community better.

We will be serving a light lunch. The only commitment required from you is to let us know you are coming so we will have enough food for everyone! Please email me back, Jim Weed, if you plan to attend. My email address is [HDSurf@aol.com](mailto:HDSurf@aol.com).

We look forward to seeing you there. Bring your questions!

*Jim*

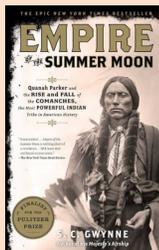
Welcoming & Membership Committee Chair

## ADULT LIFE ENRICHMENT

### THE SUMMIT UU BOOK CLUB MULTI-PLATFORM OPTIONS!

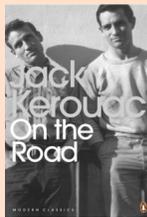
The Summit UU Book Club meets on the First Tuesday, at 7pm. The group meets both in person in the Library and via Zoom, hosted by Debbie Wingard.

This month, on October 7, we will be discussing On the Road by Jack Kerouac.



On November 4, we will be discussing Empire of the Summer Moon by S.C. Gwynne

Everyone is welcome, even new members - either to participate or listen. If you have any questions, please ask Cheryl Smrek at [csmreck@outlook.com](mailto:csmreck@outlook.com)



### GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP Rev. KC, Facilitator

Rev. KC leads a Grief Group for Summitarians and friends who are grieving the loss of a loved one.

The next meeting will be October 5 in the Sanctuary at Noon.



### SUMMIT UU FELLOWSHIP PRAYER CIRCLE

Organized by Seraphina Galante

We meet in the Sanctuary on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month from 1pm to 2:30pm  
All are welcome!

## ∞ SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ACTION ∞

*“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”*



**NO KINGS II**  
**EL CAJON, CA**  
Parkway Plaza  
Fletcher Pkwy & Magnolia Av  
10 am - 12 pm Pacific

**OCTOBER 18**

Activate! San Diego

@flip48eastcounty  
@sdactivate  
@sdactivate619

NO KINGS  
NO KINGS  
NO KINGS  
REJECTING KINGS SINCE 1776

“Our president is presumably not a fan of the Constitution. To the Trump administration, apparently any protest is violent protest - unless of course it’s perpetrated by his supporters. While it was Trump fans who looted the U.S. Capitol and assaulted police officers on January 6, 2020, according to him it’s the “left wing lunatics” who pose a violent threat to America. Stephen Miller has gone so far as to call the Democratic Party a “domestic extremist organization.” The President has now deemed Antifa a “domestic terrorist organization,” even though it’s actually not an organization at all.” -M. Williamson

On October 18, from 10am to 12pm, there will be a NO KINGS II rally at Parkway Plaza in El Cajon. Come join your countrymen and women to protest the corrupt regime's dismantling of our democracy, our right to assemble, our right to live as free citizens supported by a government free of hate, Christian Nationalism, and bigotry.

The Social Justice in Action Committee meets at noon in the Summit library on the second Sunday of each month. All members and friends interested in taking action on enhancing justice, freedom and the environment are invited to join us. If you would like to learn more, contact [summitsjia@gmail.com](mailto:summitsjia@gmail.com). Everyone welcome!

The SJIA committee meets on the second Sunday of the month;  
Our next meeting will be October 12 at 12 Noon  
in the Library and on zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/98852027774>

As a Welcoming Congregation, all members, parents, friends, and allies of the LGBTQ+ community are welcome at Summit. We build and sustain relationships with local LGBTQ groups and organizations. For information please reach out to [bkindbstrong@gmail.com](mailto:bkindbstrong@gmail.com)



## AFFINITY GROUPS

### POETRY WORKSHOP

Led by Margo Mariana

Come play with words! Discover the poet within.

Please feel free to bring a short piece you have written to share with the group to get some feed-back support.

We meet in the Summit Library the first Monday of each month.



Please call Margo Mariana at (619) 312-0903 if you have questions and/or to register.

Next meeting is Monday,  
October 5  
10:00 a.m.—12pm

### BRIDGE CLUB

Come join Summit's friendly and casual Bridge Group

We play Bridge in the Salon on Tuesdays from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Questions? please contact:

Pam Williams at

[2400highview@gmail.com](mailto:2400highview@gmail.com)



### WOW—WOMEN OF WISDOM EVENING WOMEN'S GROUP

Longing for a meeting that suits your needs? All are welcome - come share your wisdom and hang out with other amazing women!

Meet with us the 3rd Monday of every month, at 7:00 PM, at different houses.

Call Stacey Sasaki for more information,  
619-850-7553.  
See you there!

### DAYTIME WOMEN'S GROUP

The Summit Daytime Women's Group meets the last Friday of the month from 1-2:30pm.

Contact Shari at 619-840-3612 or Marianne at 541-510-8263 for more info.



### THE SUMMIT TUESDAY NIGHT MEN'S GROUP

Is now hosting open house meetings on the last Tuesday of each month. Any and all men in the Summit community are invited. This month the OPEN HOUSE meeting is Tuesday, October 28 from 6:30 to 8pm in the library at Summit.

We are a supportive circle of men who share and listen to each other. We invite you to visit with us.

Interested men may contact Mark Weedman for details: [markatpsectrum@hotmail.com](mailto:markatpsectrum@hotmail.com) or (619) 334-5300.

### MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP #2

Summit's Second Men's Fellowship and Support Group meets on the 1st & 3rd Wed, from 7-8:30 pm. We invite you to join us if you wish. We are an "open" meeting in the sense that any man who wants to can participate if he so wishes.

Our group is going to start meeting in person, in the Library. If you prefer, you may continue to join us online, too. You can use any Apple or PC/Android device (desktop computer, laptop, iPad or other tablet, smart phone) to access our meeting, but it must have a microphone and a camera. To get the link, please email Denny at [denny.braun@usfamily.net](mailto:denny.braun@usfamily.net).





# Auction Corner News

## Magical Fairy Garden

The 2025 Summit Auction will be November 8th  
Mark your Calendar!

Calling all fairies, pixies, and gnomes to reach out to your favorite business to donate to this year's event. Printed donation forms are available on the Greeting Room table.

Business Donations form online [HERE](#)  
Personal Donations form online [HERE](#)

Donations are due by October 19th!

Summit Auction  
2025 OR



The  
Magical Fairy Garden



We have some great camps coming up this Fall!

For our creative spirits: We have Art Camp 4 Grownups and Music in the Mountains.

Looking for a welcoming family camp? We have Camp Transcend, Pride Family Camp and our annual Thanksgiving Celebration!

Maybe volunteering brings you joy...if so, please join us for our Fall Volunteer Work Weekend!

**Scholarships are available!** Have you or a family you know been affected by the fires in LA? Did you know that Camp de Benneville Pines has scholarship funds available to those who lost their homes or jobs due to the fires? Camp is here to support you!

We aim to make the possibility of Youth and Family camps open to all who feel the need to spend time at camp, regardless of your financial circumstances. Please reach out to us so that we can help get you to camp!

Go to [www.uucamp.org](http://www.uucamp.org)  
for more info and a complete events list.



**Our Contact Information**  
Camp de Benneville Pines  
PO Box 82  
Angelus Oaks, CA 92305-0082  
(909) 794-2928 Voice Messages Only  
<http://www.uucamp.org>

# Denominational News

YOU → Summit UU Fellowship → SD Cluster →

Pacific SW Service Area → Pacific Western Region → Unitarian Universalist Association

Love animals? Did you know there's a UU organization dedicated to honoring and protecting them? The **UU Animal Ministry (UUAM)** helps UUs live our values of compassion, justice, and respect for all beings. Stay connected through our [newsletter](#), [social media](#), or at [UUAM.org](http://UUAM.org) to learn about events, programs, and advocacy. From our annual Celebration & Blessing of the Animals to forming local chapters, you'll find inspiring ways to act with love for animals. Join us in building a more compassionate world!



Want to bring more awareness of animal issues into our congregation? [Starting a UU Animal Ministry \(UUAM\) chapter](#) is a great way to do it. Each local chapter chooses the topics that matter most to them, from food justice to spiritual connection. UUAM provides resources, monthly leader gatherings, and even grant opportunities to help chapters grow. Interested in starting one here? Email [info@uuam.org](mailto:info@uuam.org) to learn more.

**Save The Date** for the Pacific Southwest Assembly, April 24-26, 2026, at the Rancho Palos Verdes, Unitarian Universalist (UU) campus. The Pacific UU Church is located South of Los Angeles and West of Long Beach and is central for those traveling in most directions. In the spirit of the former district assembly, we invite UUs and affiliated people to join in our **Blue Sapphire** reflection – 65 years of UU history – with a look ahead as we strive for Justice.

## 2026 Pacific Southwest Assembly

April 24 - 26, 2026

Pacific UU Church  
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA



“Blue Sapphire Anniversary”

Help to celebrate the 65th anniversary of the merger of the Universalists and Unitarians in the US and the creation of Camp de Benneville Pines. Reflect upon 65 years (Blue Sapphire) of UU successes and struggles, the good and the ugly, while we keep our eyes wide open in the pursuit of justice for all. Let's learn from history and blend our voices with our ever-current arc toward Justice. The assembly is a unique creation of workshops, music, and keynote speakers, and we invite you to provide event planners with your ideas and suggestions for workshops and activities.

For more information and to provide your ideas, contact Dale Botts: [dale.botts2@gmail.com](mailto:dale.botts2@gmail.com), 714.686.2791 (he/him)

*The* **Gathering**

♥ Fortifying Ourselves for the Long Road Ahead ♥

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION

Second Monday of Every Month  
8pm ET / 5pm PT

♥ SIDE WITH LOVE



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

#### OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday & Thursday — 9 am to 5 pm  
*Please call before coming in to make sure  
someone will be in the office*

#### MINISTER

**Rev. KC Marie Pandell**  
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SummitMinister@gmail.com  
[Calendly Schedule](#)

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**October, 2025**

#### About SUUF Publications

Please send submissions for the monthly SCENE AT SUMMIT NEWSLETTER  
via e-mail on or soon after the 20th, to  
[summitUUF@gmail.com](mailto:summitUUF@gmail.com)

Please send submissions for the eNews, the weekly  
announcements, to [SUUFVolunteer@yahoo.com](mailto:SUUFVolunteer@yahoo.com) by Tuesday noon.  
Check the eNews and website for additional news throughout the  
month.

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