



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: Beginnings

September 6

"What's in a Covenant?"

Rev. KC Marie Pandell

We talk a lot about what it means to be "non-doctrinal," which is to say: no standard set of rules across Unitarian Universalism. We are "values-based," but that doesn't mean we operate in a silo. When we lean into "covenant," what exactly does that mean, and how do covenants work as a spiritual practice?

September 13

"The Love in the Beginning"

Rev. KC Marie Pandell

Seldom do the lives we lead come without new beginnings; not just new births, new jobs, and new relationships, but the opportunity to begin again when we return to love. What might it mean to "begin again in Love," and how might it shape how we show up as Unitarian Universalists. Please join us for our annual Ingathering and Water Communion -- feel free to bring water to add to our communal vessel.



September 20

"The Hope in the Help"

Rev. KC Marie Pandell

Sometimes, with busy lives and a healthy dose of "pick yourself up by the bootstraps," it's easy to feel like we have to do everything alone, to "not be a burden" to others. But what else is a religious community for than if not for community and support? Join us for our second annual **Santee Lakes picnic**, for food, fun, and fellowship. Please note this service will begin at 11am, and will include sing-alongs and a short homily.

September 27

"Starting Forward with New Beginnings"

Maria Garcia-Lopez, Guest Speaker

For families affected by domestic violence, "new beginnings" can mean reclaiming safety, rebuilding trust, and fostering resilience. Organizations like Interfaith Shelter Network (ISN) and the El Nido transitional living program focus on empowering survivors and educating the community to help end domestic violence. It can be scary for survivors to leave a familiar but harmful situation, it's important to involve the survivor in decisions about their recovery and safety. Families who are informed, supportive, and connected to resources can help turn "new beginnings" into lasting, positive change and can have the ability to move forward in fostering hope and transformation.

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!



PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS

~ DEBBIE WINGARD, BOARD PRESIDENT ~

Dear Friends,

I came to Summit seeking a spiritual community that would accept my gay sons. I stay at Summit because of the people. This is where I find like-minded people who care for each other and the world at large, where I find spiritual growth, where my best friends are, and where I have lots of fun!

- > September 20th is our picnic at Santee Lakes. Sign up for the potluck. Come for the fun, food and music!
- > November 7th is our annual Auction. Not only our biggest fundraiser, but one of our biggest parties of the year! You can also bid on parties, game nights and meals to enjoy throughout the year.
- > Early December our Craft Fair will resume. Share your talents and/or purchase special handmade treasures just in time for the holidays.
- > Watch for additional hospitality events and musical concerts throughout the year!

Looking forward to a wonderful year with all of you.

Debbie

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Sunday, September 20 at 11am
SUUF Summer Community Picnic at Santee
Lakes

Saturday, October 17
Celebration of Life for John McQuaide

Saturday, October 10 at 10am
Soulful Second Saturday—topic TBD

Saturday, November 7
Summit Auction
See page 5

Calling all Crafters!

What is your medium? Yarn, clay, paint, fabric, stone and wire, wood, or...?



Would you be interested in helping to organize a **Summit Craft Fair** for the beginning of December? We used to have one, and haven't in years! Our previous Craft Fairs had 80% of earnings go to the crafter and 20% to Summit. If you would like to help organize this event and participate in it as a vendor, please let us know!

~ Elinor Weed (MeWeed97@gmail.com)
& Mary Carter-Vail (DRE@SummitUUF.org)



LIFESPAN FAITH FORMATION NEWS

MARY CARTER-VAIL, DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

Fall is here along with a new congregational Religious Exploration year. We begin with a new theme: Beginnings. This feels timely as we all gather for our Water Communion Service

and our Community Picnic at Santee Lakes. As with any beginning, it is a great time to think about how we want to connect and support each other.

Beginnings – We begin our year with the theme of Beginnings, an invitation to reflect on the many ways our faith calls us to embrace new possibilities, fresh starts, and unfolding journeys. Beginnings are a sacred part of life. Every new school year, church year, friendship, project, and commitment start with a first step. While beginnings can sometimes feel exciting, they can also feel uncertain. Our faith reminds us that we do not enter the uncertainty of these new seasons alone. We begin together, supported by a community that encourages us to grow, explore, and become more fully ourselves. There are a lot of opportunities to begin and to begin again with the Water Communion Service, Community Picnic and the start of a new RE year. Let's begin together.



Mary is learning Spiritual Direction – Two years ago, I did a weekend intensive at Meadville Lombard Seminary in Chicago with Rev. KC and Elinor Weed. At this program, I learned about the Spiritual Direction program at Meadville Light. After two years of discernment and many conversations with Rev. KC, and the support of the Summit Board, I enrolled and was accepted into the 2-year program. We meet one zoom every other week for classes, so I will not be commuting to Chicago. Our first two gatherings were in August. Each of us created our own Spiritual Autobiography. This is something that I recommend as it shows the meandering path that each of our spiritual journeys take. If interested, this is an invitation to try it yourself.

Free Little Library is Thriving - Our little library is getting some local attention, as we are on the Little

Free Library App. We have noticed that our neighbors are using the library to find new books and to donate them. This was our initial vision for the Little Library so it's very exciting to see it being used this way. Bring book donations to RE so our children can add in the bookplates and enjoy filling the library. Thanks again to all who have supported this fun project!

Join us for All Ages Faith Formation Religious Exploration 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. Contact Mary at summitdre@gmail.com to explore ways you can be part of Faith Formation at Summit.

Our September Theme is Beginnings

We will be gathering in the Sanctuary at 10 am on Sundays for Religious Exploration. 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.

September 6 – End of Summer Family Celebration

– We have had a fun Summer of Wonder together. This week we are going to bring back some of the most popular activities from summer including Unicorn Toothpaste and Fluffy Slime making. This Sunday we are inviting our families to join us after the service as we cut open the watermelon that we grew in the garden and share some of the fun activities we did over the summer.

September 13 – Water Communion Service – This full fellowship service is a time of celebration as we share water and the communion of fellowship together. Bring some water from home or a place that has meaning to you. Mary will have a water play area set up for all ages to gently play with during the service.

Continued on next page

September 20 – Summit Community Picnic at Santee Lakes, 11 am – We will all be gathering on the point at Santee Lakes for our annual picnic! Bring some food to share, games to play and blankets or chairs to sit on as we gather under the oaks. There will be no formal religious exploration classes today as we are all in community together. Join in for lots of fun, including a piñata at the end of the picnic. We start at 11 am.

to bring a new friend to RE as we are beginning again.

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 DRE@summituuf.org.

September 27 – Beginning with Promises: Connecting With Each Other Through Covenant - This being our first Sunday of the new RE year, we are going to play with Covenant in a different way. We will be building covenant with blocks and making friendship bracelets. This is a great Sunday

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.

Soulful Second Saturdays at Summit

This month on Sunday, September 20 at the Summit Picnic

In September, Soulful Second Saturday will be at the Summit Picnic on the third Sunday of the month. This month it will be Beginning Creativity. All are welcome to join in as we begin to explore creativity as a spiritual practice. There are no material fees or need to sign up as it will be available for all at the picnic. We will be back to our regular Second Saturday time in October as we explore the theme of Courage together. Watch this space for details as we get closer to October.

Do you have an idea or suggestion for Soulful Second Saturday? Email Mary at DRE@SummitUUF.org with your suggestions as we continue to explore the spiritual practice of creativity together.

Earth Centered Spirituality Group

Our Earth Centered Spirituality Group will be back to our regular 4th Sunday gathering on September 27. We will meet at Summit in the sanctuary at 12 noon.

For September we will be talking about the spiritual practice of harvest and gratitude as we celebrate the season. Whether you garden or not, bring a harvest item to place on the altar.

We can also think about how we want to be in community for Samhain or Halloween on the 4th Sunday in October, 10/25. Save the dates and join us.

Questions? Email Mary at dre@summituuf.org.





SUMMIT'S MUSIC PROGRAM

JERRICA STONE, MUSIC DIRECTOR



The Summit Choir is back for a new season!

We rehearse on Wednesdays from 6-7:30pm. No experience necessary, all are welcome to join!

Please contact Jerrica (music@summituuf.org) with any questions or for more information.



Auction Corner News

The 2026 Summit Auction will be on November 7!

Mark your calendars

Stay tuned for this year's theme.... —

We are now collecting donations for the auction—

Business Donations form [HERE](#)

Printed forms are available on the Greeting Room table

Stamp donations needed for letters and thank you notes!



Interested in joining a Covenant Group? Let us know!

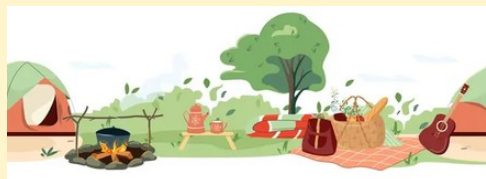
Covenant groups are small groups that meet monthly for meaningful topic discussions and offer opportunities for growth, caring and connection within our fellowship.

Summit has several existing groups that are open to new members, and new groups can be formed based on interest and availability to begin meeting in September.

Covenant group interest forms can be filled out in the Summit office, or contact Loralisa Rocca, who is coordinating covenant group signups at 619-307-1684 (call or text) or Lgainsborough@yahoo.com

The 2nd Annual Summit Community Picnic is on Sunday, September 20th at 11am at Santee Lakes!

This is a potluck event, so think about what food you want to bring and what you can do to help! If you haven't filled out a paper or online survey (sent to your email) please do so as soon as you can.



Let's all come together and make it a fun day for everyone!

WELCOMING & MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Welcoming and Membership Happenings

I hope this finds everyone doing well. As the Fellowship gears up for another year, it might be a good time for people who would like to become more involved in life at the Fellowship to start thinking about where they might want to do at Summit. The activities that happen here are because of its volunteers and an extra hand can always be used. There are a lot of areas for you to choose to help with. They include the many activities that the Social Justice in Action committee are involved with, helping in Religious Exploration with Mary and the kids, as well as with the Music committee and its concert program. Perhaps singing in the choir under the excellent leadership of Jerrica Stone is something you would like to try. The Welcoming and Membership Committee is always looking for help at the visitors' table on Sunday mornings. This is a great way to get to know members as well as our regular and new visitors. Helping in the Salon, either setting up before the service or cleaning up as our social time there is winding down, is always appreciated.

You can also see what the weekly eNews, the monthly Scene, and the Fellowship's website have to offer with ways to become involved in the life of Summit. The Fellowship website includes a section about upcoming events as well as links for different ways to become involved under sections labeled "Connect" and "Serve" on the home page. I am confident that you will find a way to become more involved at Summit that interests you.

I hope you are finding ways to stay cool with this hot and humid weather we've been having this summer. I look forward to seeing you at Summit!

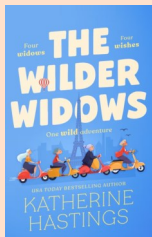
~ Jim Weed, Welcoming & Membership Committee Chair

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.

This month, on September 1, we will be discussing The Giver of Stars by Jojo Moyes.



Next month, on October 6, we will be reading The Wilder Widows by Katharine Hastings.

Everyone is welcome, to either to participate or listen. Please contact Cheryl S. with questions.



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 Group meets on the first Sunday of the month at noon.



SUMMIT UU FELLOWSHIP PRAYER CIRCLE

Organized by Seraphina

We meet in the Sanctuary on the 1st Thursday of the month from 1pm to 2:30pm.

All are welcome!

✧ SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ACTION ✧



Get Out the Vote!

The Social Justice in Action Committee invites you to our September meeting, where you can pick up a packet of 20 to 30 "Get out the Vote" postcards to write and mail by September 30. Some \$.65 postcard stamps will be available.

Many hands make light work.

Thank you in advance!

Social Justice in Action Committee Book Study

The Social Justice in Action Committee invites all of Summit to join us in reading **One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This** by Omar El Akkad. It is a 2025 non-fiction book by Canadian author Omar El Akkad that won the 2025 National Book Award. Although its title refers to the Gaza genocide, El Akkad's book also includes wide-ranging critique of Western imperialism and hypocrisy. The book was received positively by most reviewers.

SJIA's goal is to increase our knowledge and understanding of the factors that have led to situations such as has occurred in Palestine and Israel, and how we, as Westerners, have influenced and subsequently responded to these horrific conditions. Why are we silent? When do we speak out?

Save the date! On **September 10th at 6:00 p.m.** we will be discussing chapters 1 and 2. Our plan is to have a hybrid on-line and in-person meeting; more details to follow. We encourage you to pick up a copy of the book and read along with us.



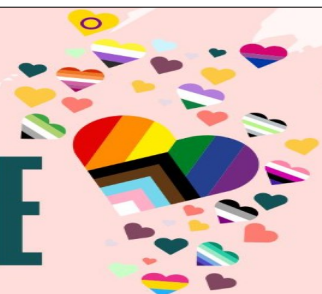
The SJIA committee meets on the second Sunday of the month;
Our next meeting will be September 13 at 12 Noon
in the Library and on zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/98852027774>

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 SocialJustice@summitUUF.org.
Everyone welcome!

~ Karin, Aline & Jenny
Co-chairs

Summit is a Welcoming Congregation and celebrates our LGBTQ+ family and community. For information about PFLAG meetings and support in East County, please email eastcountysdc@pflag.com.

LEADING WITH LOVE



∞ AFFINITY GROUPS ∞

EARTH-CENTERED SPIRITUALITY GROUP

This group meets on the **Fourth Sunday** of the month at noon in the Sanctuary.

For information, contact
Mary Carter-Vail
at DRE@summituuf.org

All are welcome!



SEASONED SENIORS

A Group for those who are 79 and up!

We meet the **2nd and 4th Mondays**, from
10:30am - 12:00 p.m. in the Summit Library.



For those that can't come in person, you may join by Zoom. If you have questions about our group or want to join on-line with a link, contact Pam W.

DAYTIME WOMEN'S GROUP

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

Contact Shari R. or Marianne Z. at
SUUFwomensdaygroup@yahoo.com



THE SUMMIT TUESDAY NIGHT MEN'S GROUP

We are 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, September 29 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 W. for more information.



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 feedback support.

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

Please call Margo M. if you have questions and/or to register.



**Next meeting is Monday,
September 7
10:00 a.m.—12pm**

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 or text Stacey S. for more information,
See you there!

MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP #2

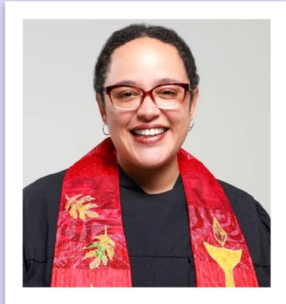
Summit's Second Men's Fellowship and Support Group meets on the 1st & 3rd Wed, from 7-8:30 pm. We invite you to join us if you wish. We are an "open" meeting in the sense that any man who wants to can participate if he so wishes.

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 B..

Denominational News

YOU → Summit UU Fellowship → SD Cluster →

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



UUA President Rev. Dr. Sofía Betancourt shares gratitude and care for all Unitarian Universalists as we move into this new

congregational year, as well as details about some exciting new programs now available from your UUA.

Ingathering 2026 Greetings



Harvest Moon, September 26, 2026

Our beloved Full Moon Gatherings have returned, and we hope to welcome you to our next gathering on September 27th at 5pm!

We will meet on the Sunday evening closest to each full moon. Info and registration [HERE](#).



The UU Origins of Civil Disobedience
On the 180th anniversary of Henry David Thoreau's arrest, we explore the theological roots of civil disobedience found in Unitarian Universalist history.

[Civil Disobedience](#)



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

Rev@summituuf.org

[Calendly Schedule](#)

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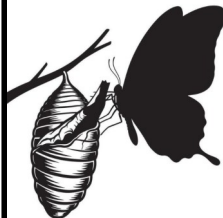
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September, 2026

About SUUF Publications

Please send submissions for the monthly SCENE AT SUMMIT NEWSLETTER
via e-mail on or soon after the 20th, to
admin@summituuf.org

Please send submissions for the eNews, the weekly
announcements, to **SUUFVolunteer@yahoo.com** by Tuesday noon.
Check the eNews and website for additional news throughout the
month.

If you have any questions, call the office, 619-562-0833,
or e-mail us at **admin@summituuf.org**