

# DIALOGUE

*Inspired by our UU principles, we are a vibrant, intentionally diverse congregation that models and promotes both locally and globally: love, spiritual growth, service, right relations, and sustainable living.*



**UUFSD Family Camp at deBenneville**  
(see pages 8-10 for Camp deBenneville update)

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Irving Himelblau, Editor

# A Word Rev. Heather

## "New Beginnings"



**Rev. Heather Megill**

What an exciting time this is! I'm beyond humbled and grateful to begin this new journey with you as your Minister. During this time when the world feels unstable and threatening, I am honored to be able to steward the sanctuary that is UUFSD. Tending to a community in which all people belong is an ever increasing necessity. I will strive to maintain the sanctity of the freedoms of self-expression, religious exploration, and self-guided spirituality our fellowship offers while fostering opportunities to grow together through social justice efforts and rest in the comfort of community. I will do my best to honor and hold dear the preciousness of this spiritual home as well as all the effort and time that has been put into making it what it is today, while providing vision and support for its blossoming future.

This fall my focus will be on hiring and training new staff, including a new Administrator and a new Director of Religious Exploration and Fellowship. The newly established team will move into the renovated Administration Building and begin the important work of transitioning us toward the sustainable systems needed to support our growing community. The Leadership Council, with the help of the Transition Team, will focus on programs and committees, facilitating support and creating new opportunities for involvement and participation. I will be in the pulpit once a month until November to help nurture these transitions, then my time in the pulpit will increase through the winter months.

I look forward to getting to know each of you better and in deeper, more meaningful ways. I will begin attending committee meetings as my schedule permits to better learn about the important work and programs that sustain us. I will hold regular office hours Monday through Thursday in which I am available for appointments in person. There are also opportunities for weekday evening appointments on Zoom if your work schedule doesn't allow for daytime meetings. Please feel free to schedule some time with me at [calendly.com/revheather-uufsd](https://calendly.com/revheather-uufsd).

I look forward to this year of new beginnings, shared moments, and continued fondness. Ever onward, ever upward. Together.

With love and hope,  
Rev. Heather

# News From the Board



**Board President  
Linda Giannelli Pratt**

I am happy to report that we have some answers.

It has been an interesting three months! Your current Board of Directors has been working diligently since July 1<sup>st</sup> to serve the needs of UUFSD. Our Board members are: Wenda Alvarez, Julia Darling, John Drewe, Larry Jones, Pam Parker, Linda Pratt (President), and Greg Trigeiro (Vice-President). Our secretary is Lisa Shaffer, and our treasurer is Susan Hahm, with assistance from Sarah Miller. As you well know, there have been many consequential questions to contend with recently. How do we move forward after Rev Ellie's departure? What are the financial and infrastructure considerations for the Phase II construction project? What are our priorities for this year?

First, after careful consideration, and in consultation with the congregation, UUFSD has offered a one-year contract to Reverend Heather. Judging from the standing ovation she received after the announcement was made, we are very happy about this decision. The parking lot and pathway to the amphitheater are torn up now, and everyone is eager for the completion of this project. Special thanks to Dreambuilders, and especially to Jon Luft and Chris Faller, for coordinating with the contractors, architect, and City officials. Thanks also goes to the Men's Groups, who are providing volunteers to monitor parking on Sunday. As a benefit, those of us who arrive later are increasing our cardiac workout by briskly walking from the LePort parking lot to our campus. The upgrade to the Administration Building is almost done, and Rev. Heather is eager to get settled and organized in the new office.

The Board just completed its Fall Retreat with Rev Heather and Rev Tania Marquez, who is our UUA liaison. What is evident to me is that UUFSD is still recovering from the significant adjustments that Covid restrictions demanded. As the Board considered our goals for the next 5-months, we recognized that rebuilding our social infrastructure was a priority. Some of the goals will require congregational support and commitment, including reinstating the Committee on Ministry and the Committee on Right Relations, and finalizing the work that the congregation began in 2024 to create an updated Mission and Vision statement. These will serve as the compass to guide our decisions and actions moving forward.

Communication is essential **among** the Board, the Minister, and the Congregation. We will continue to provide the Sunday morning announcements and will have a newsletter article once per month. We are also starting something new, called "Coffee with the Board." The dates will be announced in the newsletter. Bring your questions and your comments, and we will have a conversation. There is much more in store that we look forward to implementing with you. Look in the newsletter for updates, and if you have questions, you can send them to [President@UUFSD.org](mailto:President@UUFSD.org).

In Faith  
Linda Giannelli Pratt  
Board President

# Our Values In Action



## HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS

Our Social Justice Action Immigration Support Team will be collecting the following 5 items to support families impacted by fear of deportation and loss of income. Please bring to the patio: toilet paper, cooking oil, rice, beans, and laundry sheets. Any size is acceptable. Thank you for your generosity!)



This year the UU Brewhouse collected proceeds to donate to [Voices for Children](#), a non-profit that provides volunteer advocates for children in the foster care system. Through our small coffeehouse venture, we have raised **over \$700** for Voices for Children. Thank you to everyone who supported this worthwhile cause. We will choose a new social justice project to support starting in September. During the interim, the UU Brewhouse is still up and running the 4th Friday of every month from October on and proceeds will go toward supplies and ingredients.



## July 2025 Generosity Sunday

Open Oceans Global is a solutions-oriented non-profit focused on stemming the flow of plastic to the ocean. Its geographic approach views plastic on shorelines as the end of the supply chain, and it uses a reverse supply chain model to search upstream, identify and map the pathways and the best places to stop the plastics flow.

### Plastics on the beach

Seventy-five percent of ocean plastic is located on beaches and reaches those shorelines in three ways: (1) rivers, (2) local litter left on the beach, and (3) fishing gear or other maritime debris. OpenOceans uses research, data, and analysis to:

- Document and map global hotspots where significant amounts of plastic collect.
- Identify the best solutions.
- Seek out the best plastic experts and local leaders.

Thank you to members and friends who contributed, we raised \$860.00 for Open Oceans Global on Generosity Sunday.

## “SOCIAL JUSTICE FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR HOME,”

### Can you spare 10 minutes a week?

Every week the Social Justice Action Committee publishes a list of various justice actions that members and friends can take from the comfort of their homes. These are messages to Congressmen, Senators and Local and State officials on a variety of issues. We ask you to add your name to at least one, that resonates with you.

# Our Values in Action

## 2025 UUFSD Backpack Project

by Betsy Gilpin and Norma Showalter



The generosity of UUFSD is truly amazing. Altogether we collected 30 backpacks and enough school supplies to more than stuff them all. Rather than distribute the materials ourselves, we decided to partner with the Solana Beach Back to School Supply Drive. Stuffed backpacks will be made available to students from elementary school through college. Thank you one and all for your generosity in supporting this project. Organizers were overwhelmed with gratitude for what this donation will allow them to accomplish.

**NOTE:** UUFSD members and friends also help by donating food items for the families. Items needed are bulk dry beans and rice, cooking oil, laundry sheets and toilet paper. This is an ongoing UUFSD commitment and we welcome you're continued contributions.

### Response from Solana Beach Backpacks for Kids

I cannot even possibly begin to tell you how grateful I am to be able to distribute these backpacks to these kids who so deserve to have a fresh start this school year. These are the most perfectly stocked backpacks I've ever seen! I can't wait for these kids to start their school year with dignity, feeling just like their peers in terms of preparedness. Thank you, thank you thank you for your kindness, your generosity, and your justice.

Amy



## Groupi Meeting, Sunday, August 17



Following a sermon entitled Groupiness, Lisa Shaffer convened two meetings of UUFSD members interested in exploring how to hold up and strengthen awareness that people of many faith traditions share many of the same values, concerns and aspirations. We are less divided than what the mainstream media portrays. Americans who have a religious or spiritual practice, in general, are more likely to be active in their communities (their "group") and engaged in social issues. The UUFSD effort is looking at existing interfaith efforts where we are not yet participating, as well as considering ways to bring together people we already know, our friends and neighbors, who are not UUs to get to know them better. We need to build trust and connection in a safe space where we can talk about our lives, our hopes, and our fears.

The group has not yet decided on any specific initiatives. Some ideas include a social gathering with no agenda; a facilitated discussion with key questions; and eventually maybe a forum on values. It will probably be spring 2026 before an event can take place, given the demands on Rev. Heather's time and the many other activities planned for this Fall.

# Our Values in Action

## Fill a Belly: July, August, September

### Sharing Meals, Sharing Love: Fill A Belly



Every month (on the 4th Thursday) in Encinitas, our fellowship comes together around a simple but powerful idea: a shared meal can feed both the body and the soul. **Fill A Belly** is a grassroots program that provides hearty, home-cooked dinners for people in need—no questions asked, no strings attached.

It’s about more than food. The dinners are served family-style, fostering conversation and connection between volunteers, those preparing meals, and those receiving them. Many who join us tell us that the warmth of being welcomed and included means just as much as the plate in front of them.

Our Fellowship family has been proud to take part in this effort. Volunteers cook, serve, and sit side-by-side with guests, offering compassion and dignity. Whether it’s bringing a casserole, salad or dessert, or simply listening to someone’s story, each act of kindness helps build a stronger, more caring community.

If you feel called to help, there are many ways to join in—preparing meals, serving on site, or offering financial support to keep the program thriving. Together, we can ensure that no one in our community has to face hunger or loneliness alone.

I would also like to thank Cheryl Close for coordinating our July and August dinners.

Terry Goans, Fill A Belly Coordinator ([fillabelly@uufsd.org](mailto:fillabelly@uufsd.org))



# Our Values in Action

**Palestine-Israel Justice Group Movie and Discussion - Sunday, September 21**



Twenty six members and friends at UUFSD attended this film and discussion. The film concentrated on the continued colonization of sections of the West Bank, by Israel and the physical and psychological pain the Palestinian population experiences on a daily basis. A lively discussion followed.

This was another in the series of educational presentations in preparing the congregation to vote on the Apartheid Free Pledge.

The Palestine-Israel Justice Group (PIJG) will publish "PALESTINE-ISRAEL FACTS" in our newsletter, website, Facebook page and Order of Service. This "Facts" column will provide additional information in the PIJG's call for a congregational vote on the Apartheid Free Congregation Pledge, which will take place at the January Congregational Meeting. For information and to join in our effort contact Jason Folkman, PIJG Coordinator at [PalestineIsraelJustice@uufsd.org](mailto:PalestineIsraelJustice@uufsd.org)

**An Action of Immediate Witness Sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee**  
**Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of San Dieguito Apartheid Free Pledge**

**We Affirm our commitment to freedom, justice, and equality for the Palestinian people and all people;**  
**We Oppose all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination, and oppression; and**  
**We Declare ourselves and apartheid-free community, and to that end,**  
**We Pledge to join others in working to end all support to Israel's apartheid regime, settler colonialism, and military occupation.**

# Camp deBenneville Pines

**Volunteer Weekend with UUFSD Members  
Jon Host, Patricia Cofre-Stone, Jeff Severinghaus Marty Vogel.  
and many others**



**Building a new deck for the Maintenance Cabin**



**Rebuilding Tent Platforms**

# Camp deBenneville Pines

**Camp de Benneville Pines is sponsored by our affiliated Pacific Western Region Unitarian Universalist Congregations, and others.**

## **Volunteer Weekend with UUFSD Members**

**Jon Host, Patricia Cofre-Stone, Jeff Severinghaus Martyr Vogel. and many others**

Many UUFSD members have enjoyed the annual UUFSD Camp weekend in April or enjoyed other camp events throughout the year such as Adult Camp, Art Camp, and Music Camp to name a few. A common activity while at camp is a walk/hike to Jenks Lake soaking in the mountain air and a peaceful moment at the lake with a view Mount San Gorgonio to the South. However, the state of the lake is not good. Lake water level is at a historic low as result of wildfires and dry climate. A little history that will help explain.

### **The Legend of Cap Jenks**

Captain Lorin Shaw Jenks ("Cap Jenks") thought this area looked like a good place for a trout pond. In the 1870's, he built an earthen and log dam and diverted water from the South Fork of the Santa Ana River. The diversion ditch is 1.5 miles long. Legend says Jenks dug it by himself. Jenks stocked it with fish and harvested them for sale in San Bernardino, a day's wagon trip down the mountain. The business ended in the early 1890's, when the state outlawed the sale of trout from mountain streams and lakes. Jenks settled in a cabin near Barton Flats and told tall stories to visitors until his death in 1900.

### **The Mountains Hold the Water**

The South Fork flows out of the San Gorgonio Wilderness approximately 3 miles from the lake. Starting at 9,100 feet at South Fork Meadows, it flows approximately 10 miles to meet the Santa Ana River at 5,000 feet. Melting snow and rain provide the water.

### **A Lake of Many Uses**

Jenks' Lake wasn't such a bad idea after all. People started coming to the mountains in large numbers in the 1920's. The opportunity to swim, fish or picnic near a mountain lake is a rare one in Southern California. Thousands of children from nearby summer camps use the lake for boating.

**Jenks' Lake is struggling. Water level is low and not recovering. Volunteers needed to rebuild the 1.5 mile long diversion ditch which is needed to feed the lake with fresh water year round.**



Jenks' Lake



Jeff Severinghaus and Chris Faller at 8,000 ft elevation clearing out the diversion ditch



# Camp deBenneville Pines

## *Generosity Sunday for deBenneville*

Overall camp attendance and especially youth attendance at summer camps and family camps has been at historic lows since the Covid Pandemic. An ongoing focus for camp leadership is increasing involvement of families and youth in our congregations and then engaging them in activities such as attending camps many events. Increasing involvement of families and youth in our congregations and then engaging them in activities such as attending camps many events is an ongoing focus for camp leadership. To support this effort UUFSD has, for the past several years, implemented a fee structure for our April congregation weekend that offers attendance for children under 12 free and a discounted fee for teens. Our goal is to keep camp affordable for all. Our fee structure has been successful with 18 youth attending, highest number since before Covid. All Generosity Sunday donations will go UUFSD's fund

## *Music in the Mountains – Friday to Sunday, November 7-9, 2025*

Join us to experience the traditions of acoustic music in a weekend filled with music and singing of blues, folk, country, gospel, and classic rock. Set at 6,800 feet above sea level in the San Bernardino Mountains, this crisp fall weekend is the perfect place to sing, play and meet other musicians from all over Southern California. All types and levels of acoustic musical instruments are welcome. There are workshops for instrument players and singers and those who wish may perform in the Saturday Night Concert. For folks who do not play an instrument, there are opportunities to sing along or just listen to the many talented musicians. There is also plenty of time for relaxing in the lodge by the warm fireplace and spending time outside in the crisp autumn air.

## *Volunteer Work Weekend* *Friday to Sunday, November 21-23, 2025*

We're so excited to announce an upcoming opportunity to volunteer over a **WEEKEND**. It's a great time to give back to camp with a little hard work and good fun while enjoying fall in the mountains.

**The camp needs able bodies and helping hands to get camp ready for winter!** We need about 30 volunteers to do important work of fire clearance, which is the primary task this weekend, by raking and splitting wood. Winterizing camp by storing pool and amphitheater furniture and organizing the maintenance shop's tools, nuts, and bolts. We also will be deep cleaning the interior of several cabins.

### **It's amazing how much we can accomplish together!**

We have room for 30 energetic and generous, individuals, age 11 and older, who are willing to spend a little "sweat equity" at Camp. You'll leave knowing your efforts are appreciated by the staff and will ensure that future campers have a safe and wonderful experience at Camp.

# Happenings

## Twenty-third Annual End-of-Summer Beach Bash



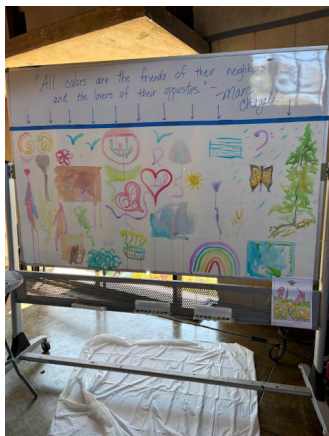
It was a gorgeous, sunny afternoon when about thirty folks gathered to swim, eat, and play at Moonlight Beach in Encinitas, CA. As usual Betsy Gilpin provided her own birthday cake. The RE committee organized the tables and sun shades, and the many other details. Susan Hahm brought delicious tacos with all the trimmings.

It was so warm that more folks than usual took a dip in the ocean. Our spot near the volleyball courts was perfect for loading and unloading. We had three picnic tables and lots of chairs in a circle. This traditional fellowship event is so relaxed and friendly. It's usually held on the third Sunday in August. Everyone is welcome.

## Casas de Luz Carnival, Saturday, September 27



Thanks to all who attended our Youth Home Build Fundraiser Carnival for Casas de Luz! It was a fun night full of silly antics and yummy comfort food. We made balloon animals, played games, learned Carnival trivia, ate popcorn, juggled, won prizes, and threw pies in each other's faces - all with the intent of raising money for the Youth Build in Mexico this October, where five of our UUFSD families will build a house for a needy family.

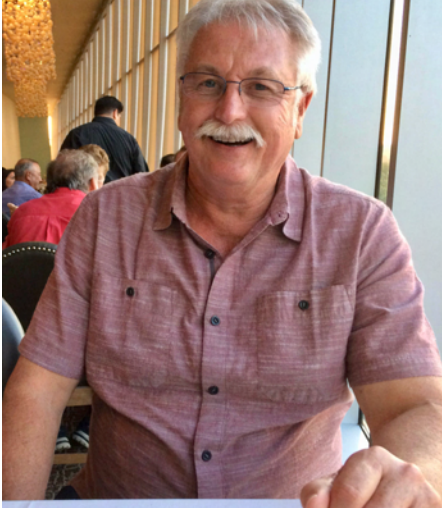


## Water Communion, September 2025

We gathered together for our annual Water Communion on September 7th. The water we pooled together we used to create a watercolor painting that reflected the different talents, passions, and personalities that contribute to our UUFSD community. Children and adults both contributed to the mural, beginning a year that brings new intentions, hopes, and opportunities for spiritual growth.

## Remembering Roger Parker

### A Member Of The Friday UUFSD Meditation Group



Roger Parker, age 74, passed away peacefully on August 14, 2025. He will be remembered as a true *mensch*—a man of quiet kindness, steady presence, and deep generosity of spirit. Never one to seek the spotlight, Roger lived by example. He showed his care not through words alone but through small acts of thoughtfulness—volunteering for tasks, offering a steady hand, and always warmly welcoming newcomers.

During his nearly three decades of membership in the Friday Buddhist Sangha, he often went into the office to help Tracey get the bulletins folded or any other task she required. Meditation was important to Roger and he traveled from Escondido to UUFSD each week for our time together. He also hosted a Sunday morning meditation in the beautiful garden at his home.

Those who knew him speak of his gentleness, his unfailing reliability, and quiet dignity. He was a man who did good not for recognition, but because it was in his nature to help and to support others. He is greatly missed.

He is survived by his wife, Julie, and by the many friends and community members whose lives he touched in lasting ways. A gathering in his honor will

## Gun Violence Prevention

### The 2025 Johns Hopkins National Survey of Gun Policy

**The majority of Americans support gun violence prevention policies, across political lines and among gun owners and non gun owners.**

The 2025 Johns Hopkins National Survey of Gun Policy found strong public support for life-saving policies, including:

- 77% support letting family members ask a court to temporarily remove guns from someone at risk of violence (71% of gun owners)
- 82% support stopping people under a temporary domestic violence protection order from having a gun (79% of gun owners)
- 74% support requiring safe storage of firearms (62% of gun owners)
- 72% support requiring a license to buy a gun (61% of gun owners)
- 72% support funding community violence intervention programs (67% of gun owners)

