

# UniKern

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Kern County

## **“THE HEART KNOWETH”** by Rev. Summer Albayati

“We have a great deal more kindness than is ever spoken. The whole human family is bathed by an element of love like a fine ether. How many persons we meet in houses, whom we scarcely speak to, whom yet we honor and who honor us. How many we see in the street or sit with us in church, whom though silently, we warmly rejoice to be with! Read the language of these wandering eye-beams. The heart knoweth.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson

These days I ask myself, what is love? Perhaps you are wondering the same thing too. These past months have demonstrated to us that some people in our country have forgotten how to truly love one another. Searching for love in the eyes of another, searching for love in the silences just may lead us to remembering how to love.

I think of Emerson's imagery as a metaphor for creating the beloved community. To be with another honoring one another is affirming our first Unitarian Universalist principle: the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

Now, more than ever, we are called to honor the stranger, honor our family, honor our community, honor our nation by promoting this idea that we all desire love. We all want love. But only those who search for it will find it.

One way we can do this is to take the next few months and look for love in every moment. When speaking to a child, see the love. When sitting alone in a restaurant, feel the love of everyone surrounding you. While singing a song, playing an instrument, dancing your heart out, recognize that this is a moment of love made real in your vocal chords, your fingers, your body. Remembering that love is ever present in our lives just may be the only way we can continue the work of healing our broken world. Search and find love in every moment. Open your heart to the love within and you just might be able to affirm the same as Emerson: The heart knoweth.

## **THE PRESIDENT'S PULSE**

Your Board of Trustees has been grappling with some great questions lately ... Who are we? Who can we be? Where are we going? How shall we get there? These questions have been prompted by our ongoing quest to serve you in the ways you have articulated: Secure a full time minister, reach out to our community through social justice actions,

enrich our congregational life with small group ministry, have meaningful worship services, have ongoing religious education for everyone. In short, be a vital Unitarian Universalist congregation. In this month's Pulse, I hope to fill you in on recent work and upcoming projects around our Fellowship.

Our Worship committee is to be commended for the outstanding worship services they continue to plan and carry out for us on the weeks that Rev. Summer is not in the pulpit. The upcoming services continue this outstanding experience. Members to thank on the Worship Committee are Bandi Groven, Irene Heath, Catalina Mendiola, Julie Means, Heather Ponek and Larry Taylor. I would like to give a special thanks to Brandi Groven for taking on the important task of Music Coordinator. She is taking seriously this charge as a ministry. Each week you will find music coordinated with the onthly theme and the sermon for the week. She also is seeking out talent to showcase from the congregation and is working to have choir participate more regularly.

Religious education for all our members is important and Ball and Laura Stevenson continue to provide meaningful, engaging experiences for our children. In addition we are working to make a viable youth presence. In January a great time was had by nine of our youth with ping-pong games, pizza and laughter. Linda Haggerty and Elizabeth and Jeremy Jackson made it possible. We look forward to ore great activities in the coming months for our youth.

Following the Sunday services when Rev. Summer is in the pulpit we will be conducting adult religious education centered around our strategic planning to move forward. Those Sundays will be arch 5<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, April 30<sup>th</sup> and May 7<sup>th</sup>. We will consider our Fellowship's history and the branding / logo / commitments needed to continue our growth. Other areas we will explore include the financial aspects of securing a full time minister and what our whole ministry including care and support of our current membership entails. On May 21<sup>st</sup>, at our annual meeting we will be asked to consider and vote on a bold plan. Please join in this exciting time of growth and change and contribute your ideas, your energy and your vision.

Recently we learned that one of our newer members, Mary Jacobs, will be leaving us for the Portland area to remain with her family. We are sorry to lose Mary and she will be missed. In her goodbye sharing she articulated the very special nature of this congregation and why it is so vital that we continue as a beacon for liberal, loving people in Bakersfield. We are unique and as we move forward one of the ways to keep that special caring in our forefront is through participation in Covenant Groups.

Covenant Groups create a special bond between its members through active listening and sharing about spiritual themes. Training for Covenant Group leaders will be held Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 to 3:30 at the Fellowship. Covenant Groups will begin by the end of February. There will be sign-ups for the groups on the bulletin board at the Fellowship. The groups will meet for eight sessions over four months. The topics will coincide with our monthly themes and groups will determine their own meeting times and place.

Moving forward with and securing a full time minister also requires some financial

adjustments. Your Finance ommittee (John Means, Don Renfro, Red LeCain, Richard Mlicdem, Jay Fisher, Larry Taylor) is planning sme exciting ways to secure additional funding through grants, special outside speakers and movie nights. We are working to build a strong financial base and reach out to our community and the larger UU community. The annual pledge drive will kick off on the weekend of March 4th-5<sup>th</sup>. Stay tuned!

In the realm of Social Justice much is also happening. The KWESI (Kern Welcoming and Extending Solidarity to Immigrants) group is hosting events for local clergy to learn about the detention visitation program of KWESI and our vision for creating a safe haven for recently released asylum seekers. A tour of the Mesa Verde Detention Center is also being lanned. The KWESI meetings will be on Friday, Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup> from 7:00 to 8:30 and Sunday, Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 to 2:30. Please join us. In addition much work is being done to achieve greater transparency and solidarity with our local police. Lt. Joe Mullins recently shared with our congregation the work of the Bakersfield Safe Streets program. Nancy Renfro and Wilma Goodloe are the ones to seek out for more information and to find out how you can help.

Communication in any group is always an ongoing challenge. We hope you find this new version of the UniKern, our website, UUFKC.org, our weekly announcements, the YouTube page, our bulletin board and our PowerPoint messages on Sunday to be beneficial. Please thank the people behind the scenes for their excellent and ongoing work. They are: Nancy Renfro, Jane Myneni, Devin Albayati, Kathleen Faulkner, Mark Hodson, achin Myneni and Nick Nicita. Also, please ask them if there is a way you can be helpful. It gets lonely being a committee of one!!!

We will be looking forward to more involvement by all of us and the Nominating Committee (chair Andy Kendall, Sabrina James, Red LeCain and Rich Malicdem) will be contacting you to serve. We will be needing board members and committee members. There are so many ways to be involved: worship, religious education, buildings and grounds, finance, social justice, communications, member care and membership. As you can tell from this letter to you, many people are involved in more than one activity so jump in and get involved if you haven't already. If you have, pick something new for next year!!!

With love,

Elaine LeCain

## **CURRENT UUFKC BOARD OF TRUSTEES CONTACT INFORMATION**

President	Elaine LeCain	661-319-8565	elecain@hotmail.com
Vice President	Catalina Mendiola	323-377-4537	cmmendiola@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Anna Laven	310-592-8557	bananna46@hotmail.com
Trustee	Heather Ponck	661-203-4662	heatherpurple@gail.com

Trustee	Kelly Blikre	225-244-5614	
Trustee	John Means	661-369-6656	jmeans@outlook.com
Trustee	Kathleen Faulkner	661-342-9274	kat@faulknerlaw.com
Trustee	Jamie Jacks	661-665-0940	jamiejacks@yahoo.com
Trustee	Lois Watson	661-872-0634	Lwatson707@sbcglobal.net
Minister	Rev. Summer Albayati	714-267-0881	summeralbayati@gmail.com

### UUFKC Upcoming Events

#### **February Theme: LOVE**

February 3	7:00 – 8:30	UUFKC	Social Justice	Meeting with local clergy
February 4	10:00 – 11:30	WB*	Worship Committee	Monthly Meeting
February 4	2:00 – 4:00	Starbuck's by Trader Joe's	Coffee Chats	Rev. Summer
February 5	10:00 – 11:15	UUFKC	Worship Service	Rev. Summer Albayati
			New Member Recognition	
February 5	12:00 – 1:00	UUFKC	UUFKC Board	Monthly Meeting
February 5	1:30 – 3:00	UUFKC	Small Group Ministry	Covenant Leader Training
February 9	10:30 – 1:00	The Bistro	Women's Group	Seasoned Souls
February 12	10:00 – 11:15	UUFKC	Worship Service	Valentine's Day LGBTQ
February 19	10:00 – 11:15	UUFKC	Worship Service	Sister Marie Frances
February 26	10:00 – 11:15	UUFKC	Worship Service	Rev. Summer Albayati
			Adult Religious Education	
February 26	2:00 – 3:30	UUFKC	Social Justice	Meeting with local clergy
Week of Feb. 26	TBA		Small Group Ministry	Covenant Group Begins

#### **March Theme: BROKENNESS**

March 4/5	TBA	UUFKC	Finance Committee	Pledge Drive Begins
March 5	10:00 – 11:15	UUFKC	Worship Service	Rev. Summer Albayati
			Adult Religious Education	
March 9	10:30 – 1:00	The Bistro	Women's Group	Seasoned Souls
March 12	10:00 – 11:15	UUFKC	Worship Service	Terri McGhee
March 19	10:00 – 11:15	UUFKC	Worship Service	World Water Day
Week of March 19	TBA		Small Group Ministry	Covenant Group Begins

March 26 10:00 – 11:15 UUFKC Worship Service Rev. Summer Albayati C  
Adult Religious Education

Every Tuesday and Thursday 8:00 – 9:30 (\* WB) Westchester Bowl Men's Group

Please consult the Website for additional events.

## **A BIT OF HUMOR**

Church humor is the best. Read on for sentences from actual church bulletins.

"The fasting and prayer conference includes meals."

"The sermon this morning: "Jesus Walks on Water." The sermon tonight: "Searching for Jesus"

"Don't let worry kill you off – let the church help."

"Next Thursday there will be try-outs for the choir. They need all the help they can get."

"Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days."

"Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door."

And this last one just about sums them all up:

"The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new campaign slogan last Sunday: 'I Upped My Pledge – Up Yours'"

## **GUEST AT YOUR TABLE**

Thanks to your generosity, on January 12<sup>th</sup> I put your checks, totaling \$1,035.00, in the mail to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

If you missed the collection on January 8<sup>th</sup> and would still like to donate to the UUSC please mail your donation directly to them. If you took home one of the GAYT envelopes you can use for mailing. If you took home a GAYT box, please cut out the form and mail it along with your check to:

Guest at Your Table

UUSC

POBox 808

Newark, NJ 07101-0808

If you don't have an envelope or a box but would like to send a donation please send it to the above address and add a note indicating that you are donating because of the Guest at Your Table fundraising drive at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Kern County. Please make out your checks to UUSC and put GAYT on the memo line.

Again thank you for your generous support of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's programs to Defy Hate.

In Fellowship,  
Pat Berthold

## **CHALICE LIGHTERS**

Are you a Chalice Lighter? Did you know that our Activities Building and children's play yard was furnished in part through a Pacific Southwest District (PSWD) Chalice Lighters Grant? Folks all over the district donated \$20 or more apiece to help fund our grant. By participating in the Chalice Lighters program, you can help another congregation in need.

### **What is Chalice Lighters?**

The Chalice Lighters Program of the Pacific Southwest District exists to help fund the growth of the member congregations of this District.

The program is designed to make grants to applicant congregations for:

- Facility improvements, such as buying land, building, rebuilding, furnishing or enlarging facilities
- One-time professional leadership expenses, such as the costs of hiring a Minister, Religious Educator, or Music Director

These are improvements which would significantly strengthen the scope of a congregation's ministry.

### **Mission:**

To support and encourage the excellence and growth of Unitarian Universalism in the Pacific Southwest District by providing resources to new and existing congregations through the distribution of Chalice Lighter grant funds.

### **How Can You Help?**

The funds for these grants come from UUs like you—subscribers who pledge to pay \$20 or more, three times per year.

Sign up to be a Chalice Lighter today! Go to <http://www.pswduua.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/CL-Flyer-July-2016.pdf>

## **WORSHIP SERVICE COMMITTEE**

The Worship Service Committee serves to fill our Sundays with meaningful and uplifting services. We welcome and encourage your participation in this effort. If you have ideas for a Sunday service, please come forward. We welcome your ideas, your input and your sermons!! See any member of our committee: Julie Means, Larry Taylor, Catalina Mendiola, Heather Ponek, Irene Heath, Laura Stevenson or Rev. Summer Albayati.

Thank you  
Julie Means

## BOARD MINUTES

Sunday, December 4, 2016  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Kern County  
MINUTES Board Agenda

Board members present Elaine LeCain, Catalina Mendiola, Heather Ponek, Rev. Summer, Anna Laven, John Means, Lois Watson, Kathleen Faulkner.

Absent: Kelly Blikre & Jamie Jacks

Guest: Sara Wallace, Tim Chang and Joanne Fernsworth

Elaine called meeting to order 12:02 pm

New Mission Statement: *The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Kern County is a welcoming, diverse, spiritual community where love inspires us to work for a peaceful, sustainable and socially just world.*

Moving forward with our Mission Statement: Elaine asked us to reflect on our past accomplishments.

Transgender alignment purchasing of the material, bracelets. Library made by hundreds of books. Faith in the valley convention, Sikh support turnout. Halloween Carnival, Coffee Chats, Worship Committee strong worships. We have an appraisal. Nancy Renfro starting Unikern. UTube video on our u-tube channel, link UUFKC. What have we accomplished since July? Where are we going? Who are we and how are we connected to the congregation...Portfolios, looking toward next year. Pieces to consider:

1. Strategic Planning: January 7, 2017 10:00 am – 2:00 pm LeCain's House and will include a Board Meeting. Rev. Summer concrete goals for the next three years plan our land usage have goals to connect. The board discussed after Elaine asked the question should we have the board meeting January 7 or the next day? We decided to have the board retreat and then have the board meeting on the same day; and open it up to visitors.

2. Working Congregation: 12:20 pm

A. Spiritual Community: Worship Committee: December 17<sup>th</sup> 2 pm. On committee: Larry Taylor, Julie Means, Heather Ponek, Laura Stevenson, Irene Heath and Rev. Summer, Catalina Mendiola and Kathleen Faulkner

B. Supporting: Treasurer's Report Anna

New report is on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. We are losing \$3-400/month. It costs \$1,100 to trim bushes. Anna will sent statement on where they stand for pledges. July 1 to June 30 is our fiscal year. Anna talked about resuming the pay pal, she needs help and to date it is still unfinished business. Pay pal takes a cut we are NOT a 501C3 so not tax exempt. We need someone to research. Tim Chang will ask his son Conard to help Anna set up for Pay Pal.

Finance Committee: Has not meant John said he needs a chair, Rich, Jay Fischer and Larry Taylor are on committee.

Auction: Give Anna and Julie all bills.

Carnival: Has not meant Catalina reported and will email the committee on possible meeting dates.

Pledge Drive/ Board Training. Nominating Committee Adult Religious Education, Membership, Finance

D. Communication: Weekly announcements/UniKern

Telephone and answering machine in the past board passed around phone. Elaine asked board to think on this. Ideas were e-voice

E. Buildings and Grounds

F. Small Group Ministry: Elaine will work on.

3. Outreach: A. Social Justice: Correction in the minutes B. Branding/Logo Committee

T-Shirts: Kathleen has not meant but thought on it individually. Julio. Anna said the Fellowship purchased "Standing on the side of Love" logo C. Suggestion Box: Catalina put the suggestion box, it was suggested to have a closed box.

D. Kern County Public Health built little Library, (written by Catalina).

**Nov. 13, 2016 Minutes approved with correction IV Outreach a. Submitted, Heather**

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Kern County  
Minutes of the Board Meeting January 7, 2017  
Location: President, Elaine LeCain home at Pine Lakes

Members present:

1. Elaine LeCain
2. Lois Watson
3. Summer Albayati
4. Kathleen Faulkner
5. Jamie Jacks
6. Catalina Mendiola
7. Kelly Blikre

The meeting was called to order at 10:45 a.m. by President Elaine LaCain. The members read the mission statement in unison.

A discussion was held concerning the next steps for the board and the planning of our next strategic planning meeting scheduling thereof.

Ideas for the planning meeting for discussion:

Seeking themes and interests of the congregation;

Planning backward from a goal "date";

Long range goals to build the congregation;

Fund raising money more methodically;

Call centers on Saturdays to communicate with people. A script prepared for callers.

Training needed to do follow up with potential members.

Greeters to welcome people and have a member table for people to sign up.

Finding a membership coordinator. Ann Silver suggested as potential person for this job. It was thought that a system or procedure should be put in place.

February is the deadline for swearing in new members. A special meeting for new members?

Treasury Report and Budget were reviewed and discussed. Reserved money is again depleted for short amount of income not covering expenses. Income of \$175.00 for rental of land will not be increased as of this time. Question as to whether the land is owned with mineral rights in the 5 acres.

Report on Auction Fundraiser. Made more money than last year but exact amount not available at the time of the meeting.

Fundraising ideas discussed for the future. Movie nights? The Carnival idea was scrapped.

Pledge Drive begins next month. Our financial year is July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30.

Rethinking the tasks of board members. Board members are encouraged to come to the Strategic planning meeting on Monday January 16<sup>th</sup> ( Martin Luther King Day) 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m with some concrete ideas. Lunch will be pot luck.

The president of the board announced that Nancy Renfro would reactivate the Uni-Kern Newsletter to be published bi-monthly (every two months). The dead line will be on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January. Written contributions by members such as reflections, history of the fellowship, poetry etc. are welcomed. It is encouraged that submissions stay on the current theme.

The problem with the telephone answering machine needs to be resolved. No one is taking the messages presently.

Nominations for the next two year terms for the board will be under consideration soon.

Concerning Building and Grounds will need to be budgeted for carpet cleaning, tree trimming, etc. Jamie moved and it was seconded by Lois that we budget an amount not to exceed \$1500 to hire tree trimmer. Also, Kelly volunteered to put the new lock on the shed.

Small Group Ministry Training is scheduled for January 16, 2017.

A membership count totaled 52 was determined. We owe the UUA \$60.00 a member or \$3,120



as our dues and will be added to the budget.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted on Tuesday, January 10, 2017

Kathleen Faulkner

Board Member

**EDITOR'S NOTE**

Here we are communicating in writing!!! It is a happy day to complete this first edition of the UniKern for several years. I am happy to be doing this job for our beloved community. Your input is both welcome and necessary to make this effort a success. Thanks for your patience while I worked my way through this first time. It will get easier and better with time and practice.

Yours in Fellowship

Nancy Renfro

