



Living with Integrity, Nurturing Wonder, Inspiring Action

Kaleidoscope

June 2021

The Monthly Newsletter of the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara

www.ussb.org

Sundays in June The theme for June is *Play*.

Sunday, June 6

Rev. Julia Hamilton

“Gathering Beauty”

After a winter of trauma, let us commit to creating a summer of healing: a summer of beauty, of slow re-connection, of playful re-engagement. Healing cannot happen in isolation! This is our annual Flower Communion, when we celebrate the beautiful gifts that each of us bring to this community. You can participate by visiting the Sanctuary in-person with your flower on Saturday and then joining us online on Sunday.

* USSB Annual Meeting following the service!

Sunday, June 13

Rev. Julia Hamilton

“How We Roll: The Spiritual Lessons of Dungeons & Dragons”

Many people (including your minister!) have found fun, friendship, and deep life lessons embedded in cooperative, story-based games called “RPGs” – role-playing games. No longer just for nerds, these games are having a moment in the sun. Why? How do games like “Dungeons & Dragons” help us be better humans?

Sunday, June 20

Rev. Julia Hamilton

“Invincible Summer”

“In the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer.”

—Albert Camus

As Unitarian Universalists, we often talk of the divine spark within each of us, the bright mystery of our living. Have you been feeling down? Disconnected? This Summer Solstice, let us reconnect with the persistent sunshine within.

Sunday, June 27

“General Assembly Service”

This week, UUs from around the nation will gather for our annual General Assembly, held virtually, which ends with an uplifting and inspiring service on Sunday morning. Join thousands of Unitarian Universalists from hundreds of congregations, led by the dynamic worship team from the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis.

Join Our Sunday Services Online

For instructions on how to find us on Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube, please turn to the last page.

Flower Communion & Annual Meeting



On Saturday, June 5 from 2:00 to 5:00 PM, stop by the courtyard and bring a flower for us to add to the altar for our annual Flower Communion service. People will also be welcome to visit the sanctuary to enjoy some restorative quiet.

On Sunday, June 6 at 10:00 AM, come to the Flower Communion service on Zoom and stay for the Annual Meeting, which will begin at 11:30.

The Annual Meeting is a business meeting for members to vote on important ballot measures including our annual budget for the coming fiscal year and nominees for the nominating committee and board of trustees. It is also a time to celebrate our shared accomplishments over the past year, look ahead to next year, and be together (albeit virtually!) in community.

If you are a member, an electronic ballot was sent to your email, so keep an eye on your inbox. If you did not receive or cannot vote electronically, please contact the office ASAP for a paper ballot. You may also vote during the meeting.

In preparation for the meeting, more information on the ballot measures and proposed budget can be found at www.ussb.org/annual-meeting-2021.

The Membership Ministry Team Needs You!

If you are looking for a way to help out at USSB while meeting some great people and having a good time, look no further! As we figure out what it means to be a congregation that is both online and in-person, we are looking for people who want to help keep USSB the welcoming, inclusive and vibrant community we love! Whether it's greeting people on Sunday morning, helping plan a summer picnic, or imagining what online community means for us in the coming year, we need some new folks to join our team. This is an especially great group to join if you are newer to USSB. No prior volunteer experience needed! Sound fun? Email **Laraine Gray** and **Sally Hamilton** at membership@ussb.org to find out more.

Virtual UUA General Assembly, June 23–27

Circle 'Round for Justice, Healing, Courage

If you are planning to take advantage of attending General Assembly as a member of USSB, your board of trustees would like to hear from you. Contact **Kathleen Boehm** at kathleenmboehm@gmail.com; (805) 687-6218 to confirm. Please take a look at the UUA website at www.uua.org to learn about the opportunities to participate in the scope of our Unitarian Universalist presence in the world.

In the words of **Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray**, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association:

“. . . [General Assembly] is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists from across our Association. It is where we engage the governance and business of our Association, explore the theological foundations of our faith, learn together, worship as a larger community, and discern the ways we are called more deeply by our mission and principles. This remains true even when we cannot gather in-person. This year we have exciting and interactive programming, invigorating worship, and transformative business on the agenda. And in case you missed it, I am thrilled to announce that the 2021 Ware Lecture will feature Stacey Abrams and Desmond Meade! I can't wait!"

Registration and more information are at <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration>.

June Personal Blessings

In appreciation for:

Kay Stern, for her service as part of the Alliance for Living & Dying Well

from John Manson



Personal Blessings are a unique way to honor an individual or a special event, while at the same time providing financial support to our cherished community at USSB.

To give a Personal Blessing, use our online form at www.ussb.org/personalblessing.



Kids, Teens & Families

Friday, June 4 at 7:30 PM

Teen and Emerging Adult Movie Night!

We will watch "Rent" under the stars with the portable projector. This event is for ages 13-24. A joint event with Live Oak UU.

Saturday June 5 from 2:30 to 3:30 PM

Family Ingathering

Parents and kids spend time in the sanctuary while they drop off flowers for the flower communion.

Sunday June 14

Maker Space Kickoff!

We will have snow cones and build launchers for eco-friendly water balloons.

All events will take place outdoors in Jefferson Courtyard. For more information, email christina@ussb.org.

June Outreach Offering Foodbank of Santa Barbara County

This June, our Outreach Offering will support the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County, a local non-profit that has effectively mobilized to support the most vulnerable during the COVID19 pandemic.

The Foodbank's mission is to end hunger and transform the health of Santa Barbara County through good nutrition and increased food security. During the

"Moving the community from hunger into health."

COVID-19 crisis, the Foodbank has had a huge strategic responsibility to provide food and services to 300+ nonprofits across the county. It has provided emergency food to the thousands who are and will continue to be laid off from work, at a time when unemployment and food stamp offices are overwhelmed and struggling to be responsive.

Drumming Group Begins June 3

The USSB drum circle is a relaxing place to come and learn music in community. We will learn note values, rhythms varying in complexity, and group performance dynamics. Our circle is for everyone, regardless of experience or prior knowledge, to explore creativity in music together. We've got instruments to use or bring your own.



The group meets weekly outdoors in Parish Courtyard with instructor **Tim MacDonald** on the first and third Thursdays of every month. Anyone may attend, from children to adults, and there's no fee to participate.

Join us from 6:00 to 7:00 PM in the Courtyard! If you have questions, contact **John Altman**.

In 2020, the Foodbank served 177,000 community members facing food insecurity. (For scale, 37,000 individuals were served in the aftermath of the Thomas Fire & debris flow, and 51,000 people during the government shutdown in 2019.) In addition, 41% of those served by Foodbank programs are children.



Financial donations and volunteers are urgently needed to help the Foodbank address this tremendous and unanticipated demand.

For more information about the Food Bank of Santa Barbara County, including how to volunteer, please visit their website: www.foodbanksbc.org

Border Angels Partnership

“We Will Get There, Heaven Knows How We Will Get There, We Know We Will!”

What we are learning about partnership from the humanitarian border caravan effort.

With the echoes of our Sunday, May 23 worship service in our ears, hearts, minds, and hands, the Justice & Equity Team continues to reflect upon what we are learning about being in partnership and solidarity with those suffering under extreme conditions.

Some background: Members of our Justice & Equity Team participated in the Interfaith Sanctuary Alliance (ISA) “All Call” meeting on April 29. The next day, members reported to the rest of our team about the conditions at the US-Mexico border, and the emerging plans for a caravan of supplies to aid refugees languishing in camps on the Mexico side. Their update on the ongoing extortion, violence, and adversity that asylum seekers face, both at home and on their journeys north, revealed yet again that many will risk even life itself to get to the border. While trying to survive in the brutal conditions in these refugee camps, immigrants lack food and basic necessities and are vulnerable to gang violence, abuse, and trauma.

The next right action was apparent.

The ISA responded to a call for assistance from Border Angels, a nonprofit in San Diego and Tijuana that advocates for and provides material support to migrants arriving and being held at the border. As part of our congregation’s partnership with ISA, we teamed up with Drivers Listos and faith communities around Santa Bar-

bara. Donations, from food to socks to diapers, were collected, sorted, packed, and loaded into four personal vehicles on Tuesday, May 25. Despite some understandable early trepidation, all the goods were successfully delivered on Wednesday, May 26, and everyone in the convoy returned safely back stateside. As you can read in the account by Deb Karoff and Anna DiStefano (see page 5), there are tremendous needs at the camps, and our immigrant neighbors gratefully received our donations.

This was a complex project, and we are still learning about all the moving parts. Several groups were responsible for planning. SB ACT collected monetary donations. Committed volunteers from USSB and other congregations did a great job of collecting needed items. Others did an incredible job of organizing the drivers, working magic with the Mexican consulate, and coordinating with Border Angels.

Heartfelt gratitude to the many members of USSB and our broader Santa Barbara community who, on short notice, organized the volunteer effort, brought, sorted, inventoried, and labeled donated items in Parish Hall, and packed the cars. A special thank you is due to the drivers who made this caravan trip. Given the enormous need for assistance, the May 26 journey south may well be the first of many.

SUBMITTED BY NANCY EDMUNDSON, ELLEN BROIDY AND JOAN ARIEL FOR THE USSB JUSTICE & EQUITY TEAM



Left: Linda Beers (in red) and other volunteers sort donations in Parish Hall for drivers to transport to the El Chaparral encampment on the US-Mexico border.

Above right: Anna and Deb ready to go.

Right: Tents on top of one another at the encampment.

Anna and Deb's report

The drive went smoothly. We were one of three cars to make it to the border (a fourth car delivered their supplies directly to Border Angels in San Diego). In Chula Vista, we met up with Manuel, a photojournalist and volunteer with Border Angels, who would take us to the El Chaparral encampment.

We waited on the US side for 90 minutes while the Mexican officials processed our supplies. Molly Kellogg, a member of Trinity Episcopal and the Santa Barbara Drivers Listos coordinator, had done a lot of work with the consulate to lower our duty tax fees. Still, we had to pay a duty tax of \$200 on everything we had.

Once we got to Tijuana, we were met by a small group of refugees who were the organizers for supply deliveries and distribution. We drove our cars in one by one and met up with the rest of their group to unload our vehicles. We then parked our cars—Manuel brought someone to watch them for us—and we entered the encampment to help distribute supplies. This was the part that broke our hearts. The need is so great and so many people were clamoring for the food and diapers that were still left to distribute when we got there. As we worked, we smiled, and everyone was so gracious and appreciative, even in their personal desperation, which was palpable. The organizers did an admirable job of making sure that things were distributed based on need.

This encampment is not sanctioned by the Mexican government, and they had installed portable toilets only a couple of weeks ago. The population fluctuates between

2,000 to 2,500 and almost half are children. Tents are on top of each other and conditions seem inhumane. Seven countries are represented in this encampment, people are from South America, Cuba, Cameroon, and the Congo. The two young lead organizers, Irvin and Ella, are from Mexico City. Irvin told us that everyone in the camp was escaping from a traumatic life in their country of origin.

He said there is more hope than a few weeks ago, as about 250 people are now being processed daily and getting into the US. Not enough by any means, but better than none.

We waited three hours to get through the US border station and be allowed back into California, and the wait was hard and painful in a new way. Hundreds of vendors occupied a full lane of the highway selling everything under the sun: food, hats, jewelry, blankets, windshield wipers. Plenty of folks with children and the elderly begging for money. Once it was our turn we were practically waved through, and we decided to drive straight back to Santa Barbara. In the car we happened to hear a news story about El Chaparral ([link below](#)). We finally got home around 11:15 PM. We are glad we went. We learned a lot and are more prepared if we do this again.

IN SOLIDARITY, DEB KAROFF AND ANNA DiSTEFANO

News story about the El Chaparral encampment:

www.kpbs.org/news/2021/may/26/tijuana-migrant-encampment-asylum-seekers-us

For more information about Border Angels:

www.borderangels.org



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of Santa Barbara**

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Worship Services livestream on Zoom and Facebook on Sundays at 10:00 AM

The office is available by phone and email on Sunday mornings and from Monday to Thursday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Email ussb@ussb.org, or call (805) 965-4583.

Deadline for the July issue is Monday, June 21.
Email: Kaleidoscope@ussb.org

Sunday services livestream at 10:00 AM

Join us on Zoom or Facebook, or use your phone
to dial in and hear the service live.

To listen to the service on your phone, call 1-669-900-6833 and then enter the Sunday services meeting ID: 960 0363 8223#

You may call in starting five minutes before the service begins.

Zoom and Facebook links are sent out in the Friday email, in a special Sunday morning email, and are always available on our website, at www.ussb.org/worship/zoom.

Contact our office at ussb@ussb.org if you'd like to be added to our email list.

Can't be with us when we're live Sunday morning? We archive every service video on our YouTube channel and on our website at www.ussb.org/worship/archive.