



# CVUUF News

## Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

*A Welcoming Community to all persons regardless of their race, nationality, or sexual orientation.*

## Upcoming Sunday Services

### In This Issue

Hines Sight	2
President's Message	3
RE News	4
Outreach Director	5
Calendar	8

This newsletter is published online monthly by members of the Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. Download your copy at [www.cvuuf.org](http://www.cvuuf.org).

Deadline for articles or photos is the next to last Sunday of each month at 6pm. Submissions are to be directed to: [newsletter@cvuuf.org](mailto:newsletter@cvuuf.org) and may be edited at the sole discretion of the editor, Liza Diniakos.

Other ways to

## SHARE

information:

**News & Notes** (Sunday handouts/weekly email)

Email: [newsandnotes@cvuuf.org](mailto:newsandnotes@cvuuf.org)

### Online Calendar:

Under the "CVUUF" pulldown at the top, follow instructions for "Request Event": <http://cvuuf.org/webcal/month.php>

### Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/CVUUF](http://www.facebook.com/CVUUF)



**July 5 — PostHuman — Lora Barnett** — What is a human being? Are we products of biology, culture, circumstance or are we imago-dei reflections of the divine? History demonstrates that the project of defining our humanity has often had disastrous results, so perhaps we should abandon the whole thing. What is possible for us if we imagine becoming post-human?

Lora Barnett, candidate for Ministry with the UUA and full time seminary student at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, has been a longtime advocate for women and girls and has served several non-profit organizations in leadership roles to that end. When she is not studying, she loves to write and spend time with her family at the beach. She and her family are members of the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara.

**July 12 — Amazing Faith — Rev. Anne Felton Hines** — After the anguish of the murders at Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston, SC, how do we find the faith and hope necessary to continue the work to heal what Jon Stewart called "the gaping racial wound that will not heal?"

**July 19 — Building A New Way — Rev. Anne Felton Hines** — Over a dozen members of this Congregation attended General Assembly in Portland, OR last month -- attending workshops and worship, voting on important resolutions, hearing inspiring speakers, witnessing for the Earth, and so much more. Please join some of us as we share a few of the highlights that most touched our hearts.

**July 26 — Seeking Meaning in Order: Organizing as a Spiritual Practice — Debbie Rodriguez** — Virtually anything can guide us on our spiritual path, even organizing our world in a meaningful way. It is not so much about color-coded file folders as it is about shaping our thinking and our lives to allow clarity to surface. Debbie will share on growing up in a household with an obsessive-compulsive parent and how that ignited her lifelong interest in organizing. No matter where your life currently is on the spectrum from "highly-organized" to "a-complete-mess," join us as we examine our lives through the lens of order and see what possibilities we may unearth.

Debbie Rodriguez, a trained speaker for worship from the UU Church of Long Beach where she has been an active member since 2002 and served many areas of church life., has spent six years in Bolivia with the Peace Corps. She is an accountant, writer, and manages her family's art business.

**CVUUF Sundays on CD:** Recordings of most Sunday services are available on audio CD. They may be purchased for a \$3 donation, made at time of order. All proceeds go to the Library Fund. Order yours at the Library bookcase in Social Hall and do remember to pick up the CDs you've ordered! Sunday recordings can also be heard at [www.cvuuf.org/worship/audiosermons](http://www.cvuuf.org/worship/audiosermons). Some can even be downloaded to your iPod.



## Hines Sight

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...." These opening words to Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* have been running through my mind a lot recently, except in reverse order.

The week of June 15th surely came to feel like "the worst of times" when, on the 17th, a hate-filled young white man allegedly opened fire on nine African Americans -- all members of the historic Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC, killing them all. (There were actually twelve of them who had welcomed him into the Bible Study, but two of them survived by pretending to be dead, and one of them he purposely spared in order that the story of his deed could be shared.)

We immediately witnessed a nation stunned in anguish; how could something like this be happening in 2015?! But as Jon Stewart pointed out that evening during his show, there continues to be in this country a "gaping racial wound that will not heal," yet which we pretty much refuse to accept.

And I was grateful to hear President Obama acknowledge in his response to the tragedy the role that gun violence played. "Once again, innocent people were killed in part because someone who wanted to inflict harm had no trouble getting their hands on a gun." He went on to say strongly that as a nation, we are going to have to reckon with the fact that this kind of mass violence simply doesn't happen in other advanced countries. This was a courageous statement for the President to make.

The following Sunday, at the end of our "Joys and Sorrows," we lifted up the names of the people murdered in "Mother Emanuel" that night, and held them in silent love. Then a prayer written by my colleague Rev. David Miller, which closed with the words: "Love must win. In the end, love must win."

The following morning I took off in my car for Portland, where I joined over a dozen members of CVUUF (and several thousands of other UUs!) for General Assembly (you will hear more about this during our worship service on July 19th); and this is where things became "the best of times."

On the first morning of G.A., I turned on the TV to catch some news and learned that the Supreme Court had upheld the Affordable Care Act! This was a great beginning to my day, knowing that hundreds of thousands of people could now rest assured that their newly-acquired health care insurance would not be snatched away from them. I was elated.

The next morning, just before heading over to the Convention Center for another G.A. plenary session, I again flipped on the TV, and discovered that SCOTUS had ruled in favor of same sex marriage; it was astonishing. I made my way to the Convention Center as fast as I could, and entered the plenary hall to see countless same-sex couples overflowing the stage and to hear all these UUs singing "We are Standing on the Side of Love." Sheer joy filled that Hall -- not only because of what this means for hundreds of same sex couples across the country who wish to marry, but also because of the pride we can feel as Unitarian Universalists that we were the very first faith tradition to begin the work of marriage equality.

Within the space of 10 days, it was "the worst of times and the best of times." Life is like that -- a constant blending of sorrow and joy, of laughter and tears. It is good to be together in such times.

Blessings to you all.

*Anne*

*Through July 3, Rev. Anne will be on vacation leave. If you have a pastoral emergency during that time, please contact the Pastoral Care Committee, Office administrator Jessica Lesko, or congregational president Willie Lubka.*

*Look for announcements in "News & Notes" regarding her weekly schedule; or e-mail ([minister@cvuuf.org](mailto:minister@cvuuf.org)). You can also leave a message on the Fellowship answering machine.*

# President's Message



As we enter July and the new fiscal year, I'm aware of and grateful for the many ways our connections with the larger Unitarian Universalist community enrich and strengthen us here in the Conejo Valley.

The theme of General Assembly in Portland, Oregon was "Building a New Way" – a great theme for us as well. More than a dozen people from our congregation attended. If you've ever been to a GA in past years, you'll remember the excitement of thousands of UUs pouring into the convention hall, old friends greeting each other, programs being studied, and instant discussions forming everywhere. That's how it was in Portland. Our members were able to choose from a myriad of opportunities for learning, growth, making connections, exploring special interests, music, worship, social justice work, spiritual moments, and personal transformation. Outstanding speakers brought inspiration, knowledge, and great ideas to take home with us.

A powerful sense in this large gathered body of UUs is that we are a force for good. During the very week of GA 2015 we saw progress for social justice, including the Supreme Court affirmation of marriage equality. There can be no question that the will of the people moved the Court in that direction, and no question that the Unitarian Universalists worked for decades to achieve that victory. Our faithful witness turned millions of people to the light, causing state after state to affirm the freedom of all persons to marry the one they love. Our continuing witness is powerful and vital.

At the Ware Lecture, Dr. Cornell West, challenged us to confront four fundamental questions posed to all people of conscience by the great writer W.E.B. DuBois: "How shall integrity face oppression? What does honesty do in the face of deception? What does decency do in the face of insult? How does virtue meet brute force?" A video of West's electrifying talk can be viewed online at <http://www.uua.org/multiculturalism/ga/ware-west> along with many other GA sessions. I encourage anyone who wasn't able to attend GA in Portland to spend some time pursuing the online videos. Next year's General Assembly will be June 22-26, 2016 in Columbus, Ohio. I hope to see you there.

Also during GA, our Ministerial Search Committee members Sloane Powers and David Barker attended a session led by Rev. Keith Kron, Director of the UUA Transitions Office, with search committee members from other congregations. The Transition Office will be a tremendous resource to our search committee. You can learn about the ministerial search process by going to [uua.org](http://uua.org) and search "transitions."

Annie Barker, our Membership Director, attended a full-day workshop held by the Unitarian Universalist Association of Membership Professionals where she met membership development leaders from many congregations and brought home ideas and best practices we can deploy in our growth efforts.

I'm also pleased to report that our Office Administrator, Jessica Lesko, has joined the Association of Unitarian Universalist Administrators, and that our music Director, Greg Whitmore, who is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network, will be attending the UUMN's upcoming conference in on Boston. Visit the UUA website to read more on Membership Professionals, Administrators, & the UUMN.

The Conejo Valley UU Fellowship represents a force for equality, defense against hatred and discrimination, and progress toward health and happiness for all our families. I encourage everyone to benefit as much as possible from our connections with the larger UU movement, by reading the UU World magazine, participating in UU organizations, keeping in contact with UUism online, visiting other congregations when travelling, and attending events like General Assembly.

See you on Sunday,

**Willie,** [president@cvuuf.org](mailto:president@cvuuf.org)



# Summer News From Religious Education

Hello and Happy Summer!

In case we haven't met yet, I am Samantha Dickerson, and I have been given the great opportunity to be the RE Summer Coordinator.

Since May 2003, I have been working in Childspace watching our little ones grow into fantastic youth and young adults. Besides spending my Sundays at CVUUF, I have spent the past 15 years working with children with special needs, both in the classroom and home. I truly love working with children, and am excited about this summer's new adventure.

## Summer Theme—**LOVE SURROUNDS US**

YRUU will continue with its programming at 11am with the Smiths as leaders.

7th & 8th grades will meet at 9:15am with Dana Ryon and movies!

Grades K-6 theme will be "Love Surrounds Us". This program focuses on our Principles and what they mean to us, our families, and our community.

With so much change happening in our congregation, I feel it's important to remember who we are and why we have chosen to be a part of this wonderful community. Change can be scary, but remembering the root of our beliefs can help stepping into the unknown be less daunting.

These discussions and activities will remain fun and light, because, well, it is summer! It will all culminate in a great **Day of Fun on Labor Day Sunday, September 6th** the last Sunday before Ingathering.

If you have any questions regarding the Summer Religious Education program, or you want to identify the baby in my arms, I can be reached by email at [samsquarepants79@aol.com](mailto:samsquarepants79@aol.com), or feel free to leave a message for me at the church office. I can't wait to spend time with our children. This summer is going to be a blast!

*Sam*



## **MICOP Back to School Donations**

Please bring new backpacks and school supplies for elementary and middle school age children of the Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Program. Drop off **through August 9** at the Religious Education office upstairs in Fellowship Hall. Contact Maria Ornelas for more information.

What a  
great  
way to  
send  
Justine  
off!!



picture  
courtesy of  
Don Parker



# News From Our Outreach Director



We are just back from a dynamic week at the UUA's annual General Assembly. I am so proud of the work we do as individuals, in our congregations and through the association. The recurring themes of the assembly will be heard in our congregation.

Here are some of the things to look for in the next few months...

Plans are underway for an **Economic Justice Retreat** for the fall with the UU Justice Ministry, neighboring congregations and local community partners. Keep your eyes peeled for information to come.

At GA, a **Statement of Conscience was adopted on Reproductive Justice** (see page 7). It is so much more than most of us think... as was quoted in a workshop – “people come for the choice and stay for the justice”. We are exploring already the actions and opportunities we will take to make the greatest impact. There will be great & small steps to take, let me know if you want to join us with this important work.

As always, we are urged to stand for those who need our help, challenge oppression and stand tall to be the change with the following activities:

We are beginning our **back-to-school backpack drive** for **MICOP** and the Mixteco youth. Please help these kids start their school year successfully by bringing a backpack and school supplies to the Fellowship. This collection, under the leadership of Maria Ornelas, will continue through August.

Due to Independence Day, this month's meeting of our **Climate Action Team/CCL group** will meet on Sunday, July 12 at 12:15PM in the Board Room.

**Feeding Hands** will take place on Tuesday, July 7. Please join us.

**Community Forum** is taking a breather in July. I know many of you have a great idea or know of a film that you want to present, please let me hear from you.

If you have any questions, please find me on Sunday or email me at [outreachdirector@cvuuf.org](mailto:outreachdirector@cvuuf.org).



## Looking for Speakers

On August 30th, we will be doing a Sunday service once again featuring CVUUF members discussing one of their deeply held beliefs.

Each speaker will write up and deliver a 5-minute statement (approx. 350-500 words) of a positive belief he/she holds. For more information, visit [www.thisibelieve.org](http://www.thisibelieve.org) as well as thesetips:

**Tell your story:** Be specific. Consider moments when your belief was formed, tested, or changed. **Name your belief:** If you can't name it in a sentence or two, consider focusing on one core belief. **Be positive:** Say what you do believe, not what you don't believe. Avoid statements of religious dogma, preaching, or editorializing.

There will be two services and the same 4-5 speakers will present at both services. I'll be coordinating the service and will start calling folks if we don't get enough speakers by the end of July. These have always thought-provoking and inspiring in the past. Thank you, JoAnn Van Reenan.

# QUICK REPORT



**2015** (adopted) **Actions of Immediate Witness** profess convictions grounded in Unitarian Universalism; and are the basis for public statements on the matter. Congregations are urged to act on adopted AIWs. [-more-](#)

**Support Black Lives Matter Movement**  
**Act for a Livable Climate**  
**End Immigrant Child & Family Detention Now**

## 2015 STATEMENT OF CONSCIENCE

### Reproductive Justice

The 2015 Statement of Conscience began at GA 2012 as a CSAI (Congregational Study/Action Issue). CSAIs invite congregations and districts to take a topic of concern and engage it, reflect on it, learn about it, respond to it, comment on it, take action—each in their own way. A CSAI is NOT a statement—it is a question. At the end of the two-year study period, congregational findings are drafted by the UUA's Commission on Social Witness (CSW) into a Statement of Conscience. The 2015 Statement of Conscience on Reproductive Justice received its final work and was adopted by participants at the 2015 GA. [-more-](#)

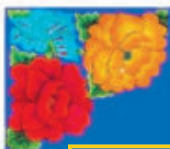


The UU-UNO serves on the following committees of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the UN (CONGO):

NGO Human Rights Committee, (UU-UNO Director, Bruce Knotts is co-chair)  
Committee on Sustainable Development  
NGO UNICEF Committee  
NGO Committee on Desarmament, Peace, and Security, (UU-UNO Director, Bruce Knotts is chair)



General Assembly 2015, UU-UNO Luncheon



# WELCOME TO NIGHT IN OAXACA

August 15, 2015, 5 to 9pm  
Oxnard Performing Arts & Convention Center  
(805) 535-8861



## OAXACAN MOLE DINNER

Savor the famous mouthwatering dish of Oaxaca prepared from a local Mixtec family recipe.



## OAXACAN TASTING TABLE

Experience traditional treats including memela corn cakes, flor de calabaza zucchini flower quesadillas, and don't miss chapulines: fried grasshoppers!

## ARTISAN MARKETPLACE

Browse and purchase homemade jewelry, bags and clothing from local vendors.



## TEQUIO YOUTH SCHOLARSHIPS

Congratulate our young indigenous leaders as they receive college scholarships.

## OAXACAN MUSICIANS AND DANCERS

Enjoy the beauty of this rich culture, performed by Oxnard residents.







# July 2015



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1</b> 9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 6pm» OA Meeting 7:30pm» Meditation Group	<b>2</b> 9:45am» Jonquil Group	<b>3</b> 9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> 9:15am» Worship Service 11am» Worship Service 12:15pm» Membership Committee Meeting 2pm» Gaming Afternoon 5pm» Newcomer AA Meeting	<b>6</b> 6:30pm» Finance Committee 7:15pm» Opal Covenant Group	<b>7</b> 6pm» Feeding Hands	<b>8</b> 9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 6pm» OA Meeting 7:30pm» Meditation Group	<b>9</b> 7pm» Sapphire group	<b>10</b> 9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours	<b>11</b> 2:30pm» Emerald Covenant group 7pm» Movie Group
<b>12</b> 8:30am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 9:15am» Worship Service 11am» Worship Service 12:15pm» Dharma Workshop 12:15pm» Citizens Climate Lobby/ Climate Action Team meeting 5pm» Newcomer AA Meeting	<b>13</b> 7pm» Women's Evening Group 7:30pm» Drop-in Book Club	<b>14</b> 9:45am» Gardenia Group 7pm» CVUUF Board meeting	<b>15</b> 9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 6pm» OA Meeting 7pm» Transitions Group 7:30pm» Meditation Group	<b>16</b> 9:45am» Jonquil Group	<b>17</b> 9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> 9:15am» Worship Service 11am» Worship Service 5pm» Movie Group 3 5pm» Newcomer AA Meeting 6pm» NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 7pm» Music Ministry Meeting	<b>22</b> 9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 6pm» OA Meeting 7:30pm» Meditation Group	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 7:30pm» Movie Group 1	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 8:30am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 9:15am» Worship Service 11am» Worship Service 12:15pm» Dharma Workshop 5pm» Newcomer AA Meeting	<b>27</b> 7pm» Women's Group	<b>28</b> 9:45am» Gardenia Group	<b>29</b> 9am» CVUUF Office Administrator hours 6pm» OA Meeting 7:30pm» Meditation Group	<b>30</b> 7pm» Sapphire group		



# Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

## COVENANT OF GOOD RELATIONS

In order to assist us in fulfilling our mission to nurture spiritually courageous people who transform the world through justice and compassion, we the members and friends of the Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship enter into this Covenant of Good Relations.

We, the members and friends of this congregation, value:

- Opening our hearts and minds to those who have traveled journeys unlike ours and whose strengths and challenges may be different from ours.
- A welcoming space for all to speak their truth respectfully.
- The importance of deep listening and respect for each other.
- Relationships with others of all ages, and the gifts that each generation brings to our community.
- The democratic process, through which we give voice to concerns and offer our time and energy to arrive at solutions.

In the wider community, we honor our responsibilities for upholding spiritual ideals, engaging in civil discourse with those of other religious traditions, and promoting our UU values.

In my interactions with others in this congregation, I will:

- Speak honestly and directly to the person(s) with whom I have a concern, using thoughtful, compassionate language.
- Forgive the errors and shortcomings of myself and others as we contribute to our shared ministry and express gratitude for the many gifts we bring.
- Assume good intentions in those with whom I disagree and examine my own part in the disagreement.
- Listen deeply to, and actively seek resolution with those concerned before engaging the Conflict Resolution Committee, Committee on Ministry, the Council or the Board of Trustees in conflict mediation.
- Expect divergent beliefs and opinions and persist in respectful dialogue—especially in times of uncertainty—remaining open to new understandings while doing my part to sustain this Covenant.
- Respect the minister and staff's professionalism, time and privacy.
- Assume responsibility for understanding the church structure and governance model.
- Assume responsibility for keeping informed of church business.

Through this Covenant of Good Relations, it is our intention to foster healthy and productive relations within our church community as we work together to achieve our mission.



## Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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### Staff

Rev. Anne Felton-Hines, Consulting Minister, [minister@cvuuf.org](mailto:minister@cvuuf.org)  
Samantha Dickerson, Summer 2015 Coordinator of Religious Education  
Greg Whitmore, Choir Director, [choirdirector@cvuuf.org](mailto:choirdirector@cvuuf.org)  
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Eliseo Zavala, Custodian

Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford, Minister Emerita

### Board of Trustees 2015-2016

Willie Lubka, Board President, [president@cvuuf.org](mailto:president@cvuuf.org)  
Gaye Allan, Vice President  
Kathleen Holland, Secretary  
Terry Hinricher, Treasurer  
Leah Halseth, Trustee At Large  
Don Vernardos, Trustee At Large  
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#### additional UU resource links:

[Unitarian Universalist Association \(UUA\)](#)

The UUA serves 1,000+ congregations in the US and the world.

[Pacific Southwest District \(PSWD\)](#)

PSWD serves 50 Pacific Southwest congregations in California, Arizona and Nevada.

*Sunday Service is held at 9:15 & 11:00 am, with Coffee Hour following each service. Children's Religious Education is held during the 9:15am service. Childcare is provided and YRUU (our high school RE program) meets during the 11:00am service.*

*Visitors are always welcome!*