

"Clearing the Pathway to Belonging"

Sunday, September 28, 2025, 10:50 am

First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco



Order of Service
Sunday September 28, 2025
10:50 AM - 12:15 PM

Livestreamed at bit.ly/uusfmedia

New to UUSF? Complete Our Connections form at <https://bit.ly/uuconnections2024>

A Guide for Newcomers - What to Expect During Worship (read at <https://bit.ly/newcomersguide-uusf>)

Welcome to Worship!

UUSF no longer requires masks indoors on our premises,
following the lead of the San Francisco Department of Health. We do, however, strongly recommend people to
wear masks or do anything else that protects and respects their own health and comfort.

There is a designated mask-only area on the far right side of the Sanctuary.

Stay Engaged: Explore Our Busy Hand Activity Station

Did you know we have a busy hand activity station at the back of the sanctuary for all ages?

You can find fidget toys, coloring, and so much more.

Check it out if you need something to keep your hands busy during the service.

Please return items before you leave the sanctuary.

Prelude *L'shanah Tovah / Eli Eli*

Chanah Szenesh
Mark Levy

L'shanah tovah tikateyvu (2x) Tikateyvu, v'y'chateymun!

A very happy new year (2x) May you be written in the book for a very happy year!

Eli, Eli shelo yigamer l'olam

Hachol v'yaham / rishrush shel hamayim / b'rak hashamayim / t'filat haadam. (x2)

Oh Lord, my God, I pray that these things never end—

The sand and the sea, the rush of the waters, the crash of the heavens, the prayer of the heart.

Sounding of the Shofar

William Klingelhofer

Opening Words and Welcome

Rev. Vanessa Rush Southern, Senior Minister

Unison Chalice Lighting

Carmen Barsody, Worship Associate

We light this chalice for the light of truth,

the warmth of love,

and the fire of commitment.

We light this symbol of our faith

as we gather together.

*Hymn 368

Belong and Sing!

ROBESON

1. Faith 2. Light 3. Song 4: Voice

Greeting One Another

Time for All Ages “Tool Box or version of Jonah”

Mark Caswell, Ministerial Intern

*Unison Covenant

Carmen Barsody

Love is the spirit of this church, and service is its prayer.
This is our great covenant: to dwell together in peace,
to seek the truth in freedom, and to help one another.

*Doxology

TALLIS' CANON

Children/youth exit to classes during doxology.



From all that dwell be - low the skies; let songs of hope and
De to - dos ba - jo el gran sol; sur - ja, es - pe - ran - za

5
faith a - rise; Let peace, good - will on earth be sung through
fé, a - mor; ver - dad, y be - lle - za can - tan - do, de

8
ev - ery land, by ev - ery tongue.
ca - da tie - rra, ca - da voz. A - men.

Reflection

Carmen Barsody

Offering

This mornings offering supports the work of the **United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities** a progressive, ecumenical institution founded by the United Church of Christ (UCC) and rooted in the liberal Protestant tradition. Its mission is to prepare innovative and compassionate leaders who can equip churches, faith communities, and society to pursue justice and peace. To learn more go to <https://www.unitedseminary.edu/>. To make a donation on Vanco (bit.ly/uusfpayments), using the Donate Button on our website, or by scanning the QR code, please select the line for Special Sunday Offering. The designation is important to ensure your gift gets applied correctly. If you are sending a check, please mark in the memo today's date, **09-28-25**.



Offertory Music *999 Points of Light* Mark Levy

Chorus: Thirty days in the county jail / Hold my calls! Hold my mail!
Serving soup, that was my crime, / Now instead of serving soup, I'm serving time.

Meditation Rev. Vanessa Rush Southern

In Words

In Silence...

*During this time if you have lost someone close to you in the past year,
we invite you to stand or raise your hand in silent witness.*

In Music

Music *We Shall Not Be Ruled* Mark Levy

Sermon "Clearing the Pathway to Belonging" Mark Caswell

*Hymn 131 *Love Will Guide Us* OLYMPIA
([CLICK HERE OR TURN TO PAGE 6 TO VIEW HYMN](#))

Brief Invitations Liz Strand, Trustee
Thomas Brown, Speaking

*Benediction & Extinguishing of the Chalice

Postlude *Keep the Faith* Mark Levy

Keep the faith, don't lose heart. Stand up straight, do your part.
Stand together, hold the line. The dark will pass, the sun will shine

I can see the storm a comin', I can hear the voices rise.
Wheels are turnin', engines hummin,' the road ahead before our eyes.

Keep the faith...etc.

We are one for peace and justice. We are one for human rights.
We are one in the name of freedom. We will keep aflame those lights.

Keep the faith... etc

Speak your truth, speak you mind. Leave your doubts far behind.
Be the person you can be, and we'll stand in unity.

Keep the faith... (2X)

*Please rise in body or spirit.



PARTICIPANTS

Worship Leaders

Mark Caswell, Ministerial Intern
Rev. Vanessa Rush Southern, Senior Minister
Carmen Barsody, Worship Associate
Liz Strand, Trustee

Sunday Support

Shulee Ong; Eric Shackelford; Alicia Cover; Eli Boshears, Camera Operators
Jonathan Silk, Communications Director
Kelvin Jones; Matias Pineda Salazar; Francisco Castellanos, Sextons
Athena Papadakos, Flowers
Linda Messner, Head Usher

Musicians

Mark Levy, guitarist and vocalist
Mark Sumner, Music Director
William Klingelhoffer, shofar

About

Since 1982, **Mark Levy** has been performing for Unitarian congregations across the country. He currently sings and produces shows for Florence Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (FUUF) in Oregon, keeping current with original and time-tested songs to enlighten and inspire our communities. "Mark is inspiring. I don't often hear someone with such a good voice and clear sense of direction." Pete Seeger

United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities

United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities is a progressive, ecumenical institution founded by the United Church of Christ (UCC) and rooted in the liberal Protestant tradition. Its mission is to prepare innovative and compassionate leaders who can equip churches, faith communities, and society to pursue justice and peace. The seminary aims to be recognized as a progressive Christian institution that engages respectfully with its multifaith world, fostering a beloved community both within its walls and in the broader society. Learn more at <https://www.unitedseminary.edu/>

Offertory Update

On Sept. 21 we took the offering for **San Francisco Suicide Prevention**, and we raised a total of \$477.00.

$\text{♩} = 60$

1. Love will guide us, peace has tried us, hope in-
 2. If you can - not sing like an - gels, if you
 3. Love will guide us, peace has tried us, hope in-

side us will lead the way on the
 can - not speak be - fore thou - sands, you can
 side us will lead the way on the

road from greed to giv - ing. Love will
 give from deep with - in you. You can
 road from greed to giv - ing. Love will

guide us through the hard night.
 change the world with your love.
 guide us through the hard night.

TODAY!

Prospects for the Continuation of Life on Earth, and of the Human Species - Sunday Forum, September 28 at 9:30 am in the TSK Room and on Zoom. A light breakfast will be available beginning at 9:00 am.

The treatise on evolutionary science seeks to enhance the understanding of evolution by integrating current research and technology's influence, while also examining the potential constraints of technological progress in relation to Fermi's Paradox. Authored by Paul Larudee, who has a rich background in social and political activism, particularly concerning Palestine and Syria, he has held roles as a project supervisor, lecturer, and university faculty member. More info and links to Zoom can be found at <https://www.uusf.org/forum>.



A Social Hour Send Off - Sunday, September 28, 12:15 pm, Courtyard

Please join us at social hour to greet Thomas Brown and wish him well on his travel back to visit and be with his family.

Suzie S. Thorn Memorial Service - Sunday, September 28, 1:00 pm, Sanctuary/Livestream

The Suzie S. Thorn Family Foundation will host a service honoring Suzie Thorn's memory today at 1 pm in the Sanctuary and Livestream. To view this service on our YouTube channel, go to <https://t.ly/20250928suzie-thorn>.



Join the UU Vote/Reclaim Our Vote Initiative for Voter Support

In the final weeks leading up to the November Virginia elections, we will distribute postcards and address lists on September 28th and October 5th, aiming to have them mailed by mid-October. We encourage volunteers to assist with this effort, as grassroots leaders from Reclaim Our Vote strive to reach over 900,000 registered voters of color in Virginia.

UPCOMING HAPPENINGS

Are you interested in Small Group Ministry?

We are assessing interest in Small Group Ministry and considering forming groups this year. These groups consist of 8-10 people who meet bi-monthly to discuss relevant themes and topics. If you're interested, please click the link at <https://t.ly/2025SGM> to express your interest.

Forum & the Women's Rights Group present: Alicia Maldonado: Supporting Survivors of Sexual Assault - Sunday Forum, October 5 at 9:30 am in the TSK Room. A light breakfast will be available beginning at 9:00 am.

The workshop focuses on defining sexual violence and equipping participants with techniques to support survivors, including safety considerations and available resources. Alicia Maldonado, the Director of Community Initiatives at San Francisco Women Against Rape, leads these efforts, emphasizing a survivor-centered and anti-oppressive approach. With 13 years of experience, Alicia provides training on sexual violence prevention, bystander intervention, and healthy relationships to diverse communities in San Francisco. More info can be found at <https://www.uusf.org/forum>. This event will be inperson only.

New to this community? New to Unitarian Universalism? - Sunday, October 5, 12:30 pm, Fireside Room

Newcomers are welcome to join us after the service to meet some of our members and learn more about our congregation and Unitarian Universalism. It's a great chance to meet other folks in the community, ask any questions you might have, and find out how to get involved in our programs and ministries. Free childcare is available to attendees who need it. We look forward to meeting you!

Embrace Aging: Exclusive Screening of 'Grains of Sand' and Creative Workshop - Sunday, October 5, 12:30 pm, TSK

Join us on Sunday, October 5th, for an exclusive screening of the documentary 'Grains of Sand' followed by a Q&A with filmmaker Sarah Gross. The event begins at 12:30 pm with a light lunch, and the film starts at 1:00 pm. After the screening, participate in a collage workshop exploring friendship and creativity in aging, led by Sarah Gross and Suzanne Gibson. Space for the workshop is limited to 20 participants, so be sure to register at <https://t.ly/GrainsofSand>

Hansel & Gretel Reimagined: A Journey Through Memory and Childhood - Saturday, October 18, 7:00 pm, TSK Room

"Hansel vs. Gretel" will be performed on October 18th at 7pm in the TSK room, exploring the differing memories of the titular characters, now in their 80s, regarding their childhood trauma. The play raises questions about how our early experiences shape our identities and the complexities of embracing our past. Following the performance, a discussion will take place at the UU Forum, moderated by **Bruce Clements** and **Dr. Athena Papadakos**, focusing on the impact of childhood on our present lives. The event is part of the **SKWPS-Starr King Way Performance Series**, with a small donation requested and tickets available, email Mark Sumner at sngwtmc@gmail.com.

ADULT SPIRITUAL GROWTH PROGRAMING uusf.org/are

The Story of Horatio Stebbins: A 175th Anniversary Lecture - Monday, October 20, 7:00 pm-8:30 pm (On Zoom)

Rev. John Buehrens will lead a lecture on the life of Horatio Stebbins on October 20 from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm via Zoom. Stebbins served as a pastor for 36 years, making significant contributions to the community, including saving Mark Twain's life and helping establish universities. He overcame personal challenges and scandals, gaining respect from a diverse range of individuals. Interested participants can register at <https://uusf.org/are#story-of-stebbins>.

Soul Matters Spiritual Practices Small Group - Second Thursdays, Online - 6:30pm to 8pm

Join the Soul Matters Spiritual Practices Small Group online on the second Thursday of each month from 6:30pm to 8pm, facilitated by Rev. Laura Shennum. Participants will explore a new spiritual practice each month, engaging both individually and as a group, with registration required go to <https://t.ly/8TbGY> for Zoom access and practice materials.

Elder Wisdom Group - Second Wednesdays from 12pm to 2pm in the Fireside Room

Calling all our Senior Citizens! Join Rev. Laura on the second Wednesday of each month to engage in topics that are important to you. A light lunch will be provided. We will decide our focus areas in September and there is no need to register. For more information, contact Minister of Congregational Life Rev. Laura at lsennum@uusf.org.

Minister's Book Group - *Imagination: A Manifesto* by Ruha Benjamin - Wednesday, October 29, 6:30-8:00 pm (Zoom)

Ruha Benjamin, a Professor at Princeton University and founder of the Ida B. Wells Just Data Lab, explores the social implications of science and technology. Her latest book challenges readers to envision a world free from prisons and inequality, urging them to embrace the power of dreaming as a precursor to critical thinking. More info and to register: <https://uusf.org/are#mbg>

WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

If you're new, please familiarize yourself with the guidance and support available on Sundays below. If you have any questions, an usher, greeter, or member of staff will be happy to help.

COVID-19: UUSF no longer requires masks indoors on our premises, following the lead of the San Francisco Department of Health. We do, however, encourage people to wear masks or do anything else that protects and respects their own health and comfort. There is a designated mask-only area on the far right side of the Sanctuary. If you feel unwell, please stay home and enjoy the service at home via livestream. (bit.ly/uusfmedia)

BUSY HANDS: Explore our Busy Hands activity station located at the back of the sanctuary. You will find things like fidget toys and coloring for all ages to help you keep your hands busy during service. Please return items before leaving the sanctuary.

CHILDREN/YOUTH: All ages are welcome in the Sanctuary for service. Children/youth and their parents/guardians are invited to sit together in the first few rows of pews. Most Sundays, we also offer a variety of age-specific programming; turn to the back of the Order of Service for today's offerings.

PETS: If you came with your pet, there is a pet-friendly section on the furthest section on the left toward the front of the sanctuary. To read our new dog policy (as of July 2025), visit <https://bit.ly/uudogpolicy>.

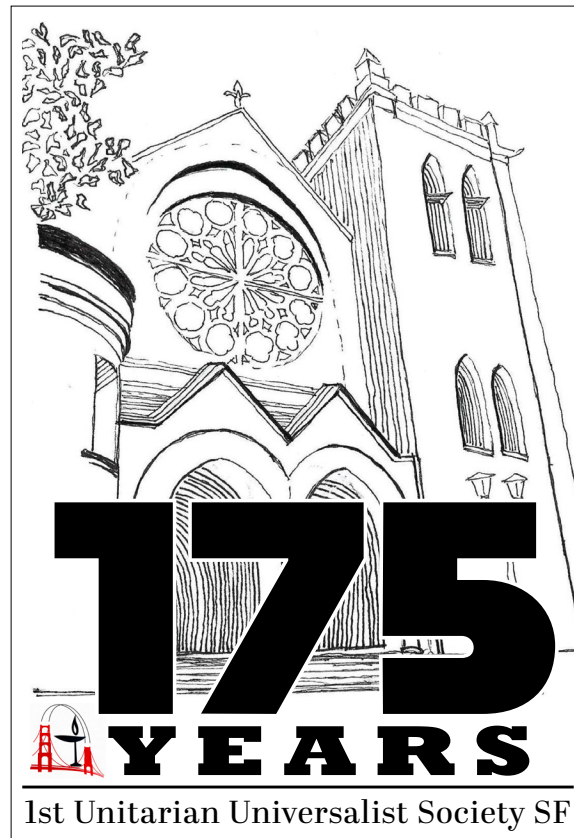
HEARING ASSISTANCE DEVICE: We can provide hearing assistance devices for the service. These are with the ushers in the back of the sanctuary, who will help you get oriented and comfortable with one.

CANDLES: In Unitarian Universalism we light candles to recognize sacred time, honor loved ones, mark important life events, and more. If you have something on your mind for which you'd like to light a candle, you are invited to come forward and light one silently during service.

SOCIAL HOUR: Everyone is welcome and invited to join us at social hour after service. This is normally in the courtyard (when weather permits) or in our Thomas Starr King room at the end of the hallway outside of the sanctuary. Help yourself to beverages and snacks!

NEW TO UUSF? Complete a Connections form to receive our newsletter, which includes a link to the Order of Service and Sunday Livestream. If you're at UUSF in person, you can find a yellow connections card at the welcome table in the gallery outside the sanctuary or in a pew in front of you. You can also fill it out online at <https://bit.ly/uuconnections2024>.

A GUIDE FOR NEWCOMERS: What to Expect During Worship (read at <https://bit.ly/newcomersguideuusf>)



Join us for a festive luncheon and inspiring services as we honor 175 years of spirit, song, and solidarity!

Luncheon Details

Date: Sunday, October 26, 2025

Time: 12:30 PM

Location: King Rooms

Enjoy lively entertainment, delicious food, refreshing libations, and a live auction!

RSVP Required!

Individual invitations to the luncheon have been mailed. Please respond soon.

To RSVP go to <https://www.uusf.org/175> or scan the QR Code

****Special Services Throughout October:****

- Rev. Dianne Miller on October 12
- Rev. John Buehrens on October 19
- Rev. Vanessa Southern on October 26



****Online Lecture:**** Join Rev. John Buehrens on October 20 for an engaging discussion on Horatio Stebbins, a key figure in our history.

Don't miss this opportunity to celebrate our rich heritage and the achievements that have shaped our community! <https://uusf.org/are#story-of-stebbins>

CELEBRATING



175 YEARS

UUSF's 175th Anniversary Silent Auction Is Just 2 Weeks Away

We are seeking quality wine donations for UUSF's 175th Anniversary Silent Auction, happening in just 2 weeks! Please consider donating a bottle of wine valued at \$20 or more to help create auction cases. Donations can be dropped off at the Auction Table on Sundays or at the front desk during the week, with a deadline of Sunday, October 12th.

For more information, contact **Thad Smith** at 630smith@gmail.com.

Additionally, we welcome donations of services, experiences, and more—visit UUSF.org/auction to contribute or check out the items already listed.

If you have questions or wish to discuss your donation, feel free to reach out to Cheryl at cdd.mft@gmail.com or 415-282-2200.

UUSF's 175th Anniversary Silent Auction Is Just 2 Weeks Away so now is the time to enter donations of services, experiences, parties, entertainment, trips, and treasures.

Just go to our auction website: UUSF.org/auction or scan the QR Code below.



Welcome to the First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco

1187 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109

415-776-4580 / info@uusf.org

OUR SOCIETY'S VISION

We, The First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco, delight in our authentic, inclusive congregation that reaches across generations, ethnicities, and differences. We take care of one another, building spiritual community, knowing that we are stronger and accomplish more together. Guided by our responsibility to future generations, we take leadership in shaping a compassionate, sustainable world. Inspired by our courageous heritage and compelled by conscience, we hold one another accountable to work for racial, environmental, and economic justice and the dignity and rights of all.

OUR SOCIETY'S MISSION

As a vibrant, joyous, caring, inclusive community of diverse people, we create a nurturing space for spiritual growth and learning. Based on our shared values, we work together courageously and publicly for human rights, economic justice, and environmental salvation.

CONGREGATIONAL COVENANT (under construction)

In an effort to make the world a better place, we support each other's journey to seek truth with openness, curiosity and respect for different perspectives and paths.

As love is our spirit, we commit to respect, accept, listen to and support each other.

We hold ourselves and each other accountable by continually assessing our individual and community actions toward living into our covenant. This will include speaking up when someone's actions are not aligned.

We commit to be in community with openness and loving kindness, acknowledging our own biases and differing perspectives.

We welcome the newcomer, we commit to building trust with each other, we celebrate differences and make space for repair when harm occurs.

UUSF MEDIA

View our videos <http://www.youtube.com/c/UUSFMedia>

Check out our Podcasts <https://www.uusf.org/worship-archives>

Go to our website at <https://www.uusf.org/>

Watch Previous and Upcoming Services:
<https://bit.ly/UUSFServices>



Scan the QR code ← to
visit our UUSF Media
YouTube channel and
view upcoming and
previously recorded
services.

Today's Sunday School Plans
<https://bit.ly/UUSFServices>

This Sunday (Sept 28):

- Preschool/Nursery will be in Classroom A from 10:45am to 12:15pm.
- Grades K-12 will start in the Sanctuary at 11am, exit during the Doxology, and then do a service project in the Art Room until 12:15pm.