



# First Unitarian Universalist Church of Stockton

Communitarian

August 2022

Greetings to everyone at First UU Stockton!

It is an honor and a pleasure to be your incoming Minister! I am excited to meet and get to know all of you!

A little bit about me: I was born in the Boston area (which you would never guess listening to me talk) and grew up in Oklahoma, but I consider my hometown to be San Antonio, Texas. I graduated from University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio with a bachelor's degree in Spanish and International Studies, and a Master of Divinity from Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, with a concentration in Sexual and Gender Justice. I also served as a Chaplain at Baylor All Saints Medical Center in Fort Worth, and recently completed serving as the Intern Minister for First Unitarian Church of Albuquerque. I am passionate about all aspects of UU ministry, but a few that are close to my heart are LGBTQIA+ ministry, immigrant justice, anti-racism/anti-oppression work, and youth and young adult ministry.

Outside of ministry, my spouse Gabriel and I have been married for seven years and are the proud parents of a 12-year-old calico named Juliette. I love cooking and baking, music, movies crossword puzzles, trivia, competition reality TV shows (my guilty pleasure), and absolutely everything having to do with unicorns (yes, unicorns!).

I cannot wait to arrive in California and to spend time hearing your stories and your passions—especially what you love about First UU Stockton and what you imagine for the future. I look forward to the journey that we will be taking and the things that we will accomplish together along the way.

-Matt Pargeter-Villarreal (please just call me Rev. Matt!)



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## Unitarian Universalist Association Principles and Purposes

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in Society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

### Upcoming Sermons/Services:

08/07	Poetry Sunday	Cindy Milford and Ari Cohn	
08/14	How to Bridge the Divide That is Threatening Our Democracy	Rosemary Atkinson	Guest Speaker: Alexis Easton and Sandra de Alcuza
08/21	TBD		
08/28	Music Sunday		

### **New Date and Time for Meditation Group!**

The monthly Meditation Group is changing dates to the second Thursday at 1 pm. Our next meeting is August 11 at 1 pm. This group meets on Zoom.

The group is based on the practices taught by the Buddha for living a happy life. It includes mindfulness meditation and life practices that lead to skillful actions. We have a meditation, brief check-in and talk and discussion about Buddhist practices.

The group is facilitated by Sara Milnes, who has been practicing for 22 years and has done more than 15 months of silent retreat and taken several advanced courses in Buddhist meditation, thought and practices. If you would like to come, please email Sara at [sara.milnes@icloud.com](mailto:sara.milnes@icloud.com) for the Zoom link.

## Social Justice News

Summer is whizzing by for your Social Justice Committee We had busy monthly "Eco Saturday" parking lot events in June and July where we collected a total of \$113 in recyclables and 95 pounds of food for the Emergency Food Bank. We also hosted our monthly Waterwise Garden work morning at the same time. Join us again on **Saturday, August 20th from 9:30 - 11:30 am** for recycling and gardening! We'll also be collecting **school supplies** to be donated to Madison School..

On Sunday, June 19th we collected a shared offering of \$219 to support the Ukranian emergency relief, through the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) (<https://www.uusc.org/>). Thank you for your support! We'll be continuing the shared offering in September with donations to the Red Cross for wildfire relief efforts.

We'll be hosting Family Promise families for a week again in August in collaboration with the Cathedral of the Annunciation congregation. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Gloria Smith ([gsmith.stockton@gmail.com](mailto:gsmith.stockton@gmail.com)).

Please join us for our bimonthly Social Justice Committee planning meeting on August 25th at 7:00 pm by Zoom. Contact Jeri Bigbee ([jeribigbee@gmail.com](mailto:jeribigbee@gmail.com)) for more information

Mark your calendars ... On **September 17th from 8:30 - noon** will again be hosting a local **Coastal Clean-up** site in collaboration with the Sierra Club Delta-Sierra Group. Please contact Dick Abood ([rabood@pacific.edu](mailto:rabood@pacific.edu)) for details.

Keep up the good work and stay cool!

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RE: Hello Stockton UU families!

I hope you've all had a pleasant Summer 2022! For any of you who don't know, or haven't heard, I (Mikayla) have taken over the roll as DRE as of April of this year. I am joined by Jessica George, who is my Assistant DRE.

As we approach the Autumn season, we hope to see families & youth begin to return to a few of our lay-led services during the month of August. Our first resuming service will be this coming Sunday, the 7th. Cindy Milford and Ari Cohn will be hosting and the theme is poetry!

Jessica and myself will be available on Sundays for childcare beginning at 10am. We are currently looking for people to sign up to volunteer for childcare on an as-needed basis. Please let one of us know if you're interested and we will gladly take steps necessary to make that happen!

We are still taking precautions necessary to avoid COVID, which includes masking and sanitizing. There will be a board meeting later this month and we will address the re-opening of the cottage for use with the children and youth as soon as possible.

We will also be re-distributing our annual child safety and registration forms in the coming weeks for each child in our RE program.

Please don't hesitate to email, call, or text me if you have any questions!

**Mikayla Meyling**  
*Director of Religious Education*  
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## Month 1 Retirement 7/22 Bob Klein

Settling in after retiring and moving is a challenge! I am so thankful for the help of friends (former parishioners at 1<sup>st</sup> UU Church) in Stockton, CA. I still have too much stuff, and I couldn't have gotten it out of the Stockton house without the help of Dick Abood, Jeri Bigbee, Fred and Christy Dillemath, Clair Trujillo, Jan Vernor-Howard, my neighbor Mike, and others who helped sort, pack, and load my POD and my Penske Truck. Thanks also to Lela Nelson for arranging cleaning and removal of the stuff I couldn't get into the Truck. After using all the volunteer help I could get over the last two weeks or so in Stockton, and some paid help from the church bookkeeper's son, I gave up around 5 p.m. on Friday July 9<sup>th</sup> (I think that was the day, but memory fades so quickly now!) and loaded Samantha into the cab of the Penske and hit the road for Tucson. After a lot of miles and at least 3 rest stops, we made it to Tucson by about 10 a.m. the next morning. Upon arrival, I took a shower, fed Samantha, and fell into bed for several hours!

Beginning on Sunday the 10<sup>th</sup>, my son Aaron and eldest grandson Kai came up and unloaded the truck into the garage, returning almost a week later to unload the POD! My daughter Jessica came down to start unpacking and organizing on Monday, returning about a week later with 2<sup>nd</sup> eldest grandchild (also currently going by Kai!), helping put shelves back together and organizing the kitchen. (One of the best things I have ever done is teach my daughter to use tools!) In between my slow efforts to unpack the boxes and tubs stacked everywhere, I have gotten my AZ license and registration, changed insurance, changed addresses, shopped for food and essentials, registered to vote (too late for primary), joined the library (online), walked Samantha early and late, and accomplished a lot more than I really have had energy to do! Today (7/30), I met with a pool designer who gave me a lot of information, measured my yard, and told me putting in a pool is going to cost just about twice what I had feared!

I also want to reflect with appreciation for all the support I have had throughout my years of ministry with you all in Stockton. These last couple of years have been a different kind of challenge with Covid-19 and closures, masks, and safety limitations. Working with Christina, Jan, and Cindy as worship associates and church leaders has been wonderful even in challenging times! Working with Nichole, Mikayla, Ian, and Amy, and Debora on the staff side has also been great!

## Month 2 of Retirement 8/22

I haven't started writing the great American novel yet, and I haven't actually written anything for about a week. I've unloaded most of the Living Room books into the big book shelves (14 boxes, I think), though I have no idea where or when I will unbox the books from the office. Having so many old friends (and a few works as yet to be read) on the shelves has helped this to feel a little more like home. Living in the desert is still strange, but the sunsets this monsoon season have been among the most spectacular I have seen anywhere. Trying to walk Samantha early and late, though it is still pretty hot at sunset and in the morning, especially if I sleep beyond 8! Samantha, extrovert that she is, continues to meet and introduce me to neighbors, including dogs, people, and small lizards (geckos?). Most of our walks now include a visit to the neighborhood park, complete with grassy playing field shaded by some good sized trees (the only regular grass in the area), which seems to be watered early every morning (before our arrival). I have met my son for lunch a few times, which has been nice for me and hopefully gave him a bit of a break for his lunch hour!

I miss the good folks of Stockton, especially at 1<sup>st</sup> UU, but I have seen more of my kids (not yet all the grandkids) than I have seen for years. I miss the politics of California. Arizona may be the most red-necked place I have lived (and I have lived in Montana, Wyoming, rural Colorado, and Arkansas), but I especially take note of the egregious lies told about political opponents, as well as the amazing continuing support and allegiance to Trump. Hopefully at least some of the bluer choices will prevail in November, though the recent primary results were a bit disappointing. The neighbors I have met are friendly, but I have not dared to talk politics or religion with them!  
More later! (8/6)

Milestone:



**Jessie Springborn passed away on Tuesday afternoon.  
Services for Jessie are still being planned.  
I will let you know when we have more information.**



**Office Hours:** Monday and Thursday 9:30 am – 12:30 pm  
For appointments please call 209-466-7743

**The Mission of our church  
Is to nurture individual spiritual/ethical growth,  
to be inclusive of all people,  
and to be an active voice of conscience  
in the greater community.**

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