



MEMBERSHIP

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF SAN DIEGO

Church Membership



**Rev. Dr. Arvid Straube,
Lead Minister**

Rev. Dr. Arvid Straube, lead minister for First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego says, "I have a passion for Unitarian Universalism. I know that it can save people--from shallowness, loneliness and meaninglessness.

Our communities heal people. I have seen it happen hundreds of times. There is no greater privilege, for minister or lay person, than to be involved in seeking wholeness for ourselves and using our gifts to bring that wholeness to others."

"I believe our UU faith has a saving message for this world that is in such need...coming together for worship and community, stirring our minds and opening our hearts for more love, for more of life, to be partners with each other and to include more in that partnership as we together bring about the beloved community - this, for me is the work of the church, the work of our faith. "



**Rev. Kathleen Owens,
Associate Minister**

ARE YOU READY?

"There is no higher religion than human service. To work for the common good is the greatest creed."

- Albert Schweitzer

Becoming a member of First Church is a process rather than an event. It begins by attending worship services at this church and getting to know the nature of the community, the theology and the background of Unitarian Universalism.

Membership is sacred and deeply personal, and members are asked to participate in church life as *fully as possible*. As a Unitarian Universalist and member of this church, you will be expected to be an active participant in carrying out our shared mission of creating compassionate justice in our society and on our planet.

To become a church member, our church constitution requires you to sign a *Bond of Union* and make a *pledge of financial support*. There are three steps to the process of becoming a member. You are helped and encouraged through the membership process by our Director of Community Life, Suzette Southfox and our Membership Chair, Susan Riegel Harding.

You can read more about the meaning, responsibilities and privileges of membership inside.

Meaning of Membership

To join this Church is to become involved in seeking wholeness for yourself and to use your gifts to bring that wholeness to others.

To join this Church is to agree to become an active part of a living liberal religious community.

To join this Church is to pledge to enter and remain in a continuing, generous dialogue concerning the ways of truth and love.

To join this Church is to share in decision making and to pledge to support this church and its work with your gifts of energy and money.

To join this Church is to make a public statement that you believe in the power and possibility of a truly liberal religious world.



Responsibilities of Membership

Members Participate. Through worship, spiritual development, and activities that further the mission of this Church, members develop a shared core of common experiences.

Members Learn and Grow. Through a developing sense of personal spirituality, members take part in a diverse religious education program and live the principles of Unitarian Universalism.

Members Engage in Right Relationship. Our Church mission and aspiration challenge us to affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person and to seek to work with one another in cooperation and respect.

Members Share Ministry. Everyone has unique gifts of experience, ability, and vision. Our Church offers a variety of opportunities for involvement and service. Deep friendships are often forged when we work together.

Members Take Financial Responsibility. This community grows from a place of generosity. Members make an annual financial pledge to support the work and growth of this church.

OUR COVENANT OF GOOD RELATIONS

We members, friends, staff, and ministers of First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego covenant to treat ourselves and one another with respect. We vow to live our values, to learn, and to serve in ways that are fulfilling and responsible.

We respect and honor ourselves and others when we:

- listen, speak, and act with integrity and compassion;
- communicate openly without anonymous criticism; and
- express gratitude and appreciation.

We value ourselves and others when we:

- invite and welcome into our church the diverse populations and cultures of the wider community;
- enjoy each other with playfulness and good humor;
- act with awareness of ecological issues.

We learn when we:

- educate ourselves about church structure and governance, and the responsibilities of ministers, staff, and volunteers;
- appreciate our own limitations as well as those of others; and
- practice the established process of resolving differences.

We serve when we:

- contribute our financial resources, time, and skills according to our ability, whenever possible;
- model Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values;
- strive to reflect more accurately the demographics of the wider community in our Church.

Privileges of Membership

- **A vote in all congregational meetings (60 days after becoming a member and having made a contribution of record)**
- **Eligibility for congregational offices**
- **Subscription to the weekly church bulletin The Window, the monthly First Words and Home Connections in addition to other church publications**
- **Subscription to the monthly magazine The UU World**
- **Priority standing in the “wait list” for the renowned UU Cooperative Preschool**
- **Weddings, memorial services, and other rites, conducted on site by one of our ministers without fee (after membership of at least two years)**
- **Use of the worship hall without fee for immediate family weddings or memorial services (after membership of at least two years)**
- **Services of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) headquartered in Boston**
- **Services of the Pacific Southwest District of the UUA**
- **Invitations to and information on inspiring conferences, retreats, summer institutes, leadership training, and other events offered by the UUA and UUA affiliates**



To become a church member, our church constitution requires you to sign a *Bond of Union* and make a *pledge of financial support*. Our church is self sustaining and all members contribute time, talent and treasure by attending services, volunteering and becoming engaged in the many ongoing activities this campus offers. While the amount of your pledge is a personal decision, it is hoped that new members will either chose to pledge 5% of their income or give serious consideration to a plan to reach the 5% level in 5 years. If your financial situation makes any contribution impossible, you may make a confidential request for a waiver from one of the ministers.

More information on pledging is given during the monthly “Becoming a Member Orientation” as well as the individual “Get to Know You” meeting during the membership process.

Once an individual determines that this is the right church home for him or her, the steps to membership are threefold:

THE FIRST STEP is to complete and turn in a membership form. This form (which is included in this handout) is also available in the church office, on the Sunday patio (at the Welcome Table) or by contacting Suzette at suzette@firstuusandiego.org. You can also get this form by attending the Becoming a Member Orientation – which is the first Sunday of every month following each worship service at our Hillcrest location.

THE SECOND STEP is to meet the Director of Community Life (Suzette) or the Membership Chair (Susan) so that we can get to know you, answer your questions and explain the privileges and responsibilities of membership. This half hour conversation can be arranged to fit your schedule, and can be in Hillcrest or the South Bay.

THE THIRD STEP is in the form of two half hour meetings held back to back on the same day. The first meeting is with a lay leader who is also a generosity volunteer. He or she will help you complete your pledge form (if this has not yet been submitted) and other paperwork. After all the paperwork is completed, there is a private pastoral meeting with one of our ministers in which the “Bond of Union” is signed. This takes place at our Hillcrest location.



Our comfortable worship space