



# FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH *of San José*

## **Director of Faith Formation Job Description 2020**

**The First Unitarian Church of San José seeks a passionate, creative, collaborative  
Director of Faith Formation!**

**Hours:** 28 hours per week (Sundays included)

**Start Date:** (negotiable)

**Salary:** Fair Compensation per UUA guidelines, commensurate with experience

**Application Deadline:** Open until position is filled, start date no later than June 1, 2020

**Status:** Exempt

**Benefits:** Eligible

### **Who Are We at the First Unitarian Church of San José?**

- The First Unitarian Church of San José (FUCSJ) is a warm, healthy, vibrant congregation that has gathered in the heart of downtown San José for over 150 years.
- We draw strength from our roots—including our long history of active engagement in the city's and county's most pressing justice issues—but we are not mired in tradition. We know that resilience, flexibility, and broken-openheartedness are essential in facing the challenges of these times.
- We are just now completing a lively two-year interim process in which the congregation, its leaders, and staff have studied Whole-Church Faith Formation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We are ready to “experi-learn” (to learn from experimenting) with new ways of doing and being church.
- Our Mission is to Make Love Visible in all that we say and do. We apply this mission to everything—from our relationships with each other to the accountable partnerships we build in the community; from the multigenerational events we plan to—yes!—even the way we run our board and committee meetings. Building multicultural, antiracist, antioppressive beloved community lies at the heart of our mission and vision.
- We have a hunger for faith formation across the lifespan. From our long-time elders to the cadre of young adults, new families, and active parents who have recently joined our community, we love to learn and to apply what we've learned in order to help create a better world.
- Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones has served as FUCSJ's Senior Minister since 2005. Her love and enthusiasm for her call to this beautiful community remains strong, and she looks forward to a lively, creative partnership with our new Director of Faith Formation. This winter-spring she is

leading a whole-church book study of “Mistakes and Miracles: Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism,” which she and Karin Lin co-authored (published by Skinner House, 2019).

- With 220 members and many friends, FUCSJ is a midsize congregation that acts much bigger than it is. We recognize the stresses of living and working in San José, which is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest city in the United States and one of the most ethnically and financially diverse. Alongside our multifaith partners, we have an important role to play in building a community where everyone can create life-giving connections and all are valued for their inherent beauty and worth.
- Our children and youth programs include Sunday morning classes following the opening of worship and a Story (or activity) for All Ages. On Sunday mornings, we may have anywhere from 4 to 24 children in attendance.
- We are active participants in OWL and Coming of Age programs, which our former Associate Minister for Religious Education helped initiate for the Bay Area during his 24 years of service. Almost all of our middle schoolers attend the regional MUUGS retreats, and these middle schoolers will soon be reviving our Senior Youth Program.
- We have been a Welcoming Congregation (WC) for years and will soon complete the renewal of our WC status. This past fall, we led a sizable group in the Transforming Hearts Collective’s “Transgender Inclusion in Congregations” class, and we are now promoting the videos among the whole congregation.
- Our decades-long Small Group Ministries program engages over 100 members and friends in monthly or twice-monthly gatherings and has transformed the culture of our congregation. We know how to listen deeply, and we welcome spiritual depth.

### **What Have We Accomplished in This Interim Period—and What Is Our Vision?**

Following the 24-year service of Associate Minister for Religious Education Rev. Geoff Rimositis, the First Unitarian Church of San José intentionally chose to move into a two-year interim period of revisioning with Interim Director of Religious Education Susie Idzik.

During this interim period:

- The Senior Minister and Interim DRE have taken classes on 21<sup>st</sup>-century faith formation with Kim Sweeney and others.
- The Interim DRE led an all-leaders retreat exploring 21<sup>st</sup>-century church and Whole-Church Faith Formation.
- In monthly Soup, Bread, and Conversations following worship, the congregation:
  - explored what Unitarian Universalism means to them individually,
  - reviewed and celebrated the history of religious education programming at FUCSJ,
  - began an exploration of what we mean by “21<sup>st</sup>-century church” and “Whole-Church Faith Formation,”
  - looked at how family life and the role of congregations for families and individuals have changed over the past 60, 30, 10 years,
  - envisioned what a Whole-Church Faith Formation program would look like at FUCSJ, and
  - discerned what qualities would be essential in the next Director of Faith Formation.
- As a result, the congregation created the following vision of what the Whole-Church Faith Formation program will look like at FUCSJ in five years:

FUCSJ is a community of people who are diverse (in age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, education level, ability level) and who come together to support each other, receive spiritual sustenance, experience connectivity, and learn how to live out the principles of Unitarian Universalism throughout our lives. The vitality at FUCSJ is palpable, and that energy helps to guide people in both living their lives and taking action in the broader world. High engagement in multigenerational discussion, activities, and social-justice actions binds FUCSJ into one sacred interconnected family. A regular schedule of classes meets the needs of all ages across a wide variety of interests, including life skills and world religions. Our offerings are accessible to all and have a variety of formats. Our welcome and messaging are clear, and new friends easily navigate their way into engagement with the congregation. A balance of staff and volunteers handle the work of creating and sustaining our missional program.

With great joy, vibrancy, connectedness, and mutual awareness, we are a community that supports each other, and this support fills our emotional and energy cups enough that we are able to turn outward and further FUCSJ's mission of Making Love Visible in the community at large.

### **What Are the Details About the Position of Director of Faith Formation for FUCSJ?**

**Hours:** 28 hours per week (Sundays included)

**Start Date:** (negotiable)

**Salary:** Fair Compensation per UUA guidelines, commensurate with experience.

**Application Deadline:** Open until position is filled, start date no later than June 1, 2020.

**Status:** Exempt

**Benefits:** Eligible

**Directly Supervises:** Paid Sunday teachers, childcare staff, volunteers in classrooms

#### **Areas of Responsibility**

- Program design and implementation for Whole-Church Faith Formation
- Partners with the Senior Minister in developing and implementing programs
- Communication, relationship building, and facilitation necessary for implementing a robust program
- Introduction of programs and activities that engage the imagination, develop spiritual and ethical resources, deepen knowledge of the world's religious landscape, and connect participants to an embodied understanding of our Unitarian Universalist faith and of FUCSJ's Mission
- Volunteer inspiration and recruitment
- Instructional oversight
- Administration of current and experimental programs

#### **Desired Skills and Qualities (not in order of importance)**

Our ideal Director of Faith Formation:

- Knows the latest UU Whole-Church Faith Formation philosophy, trends, and curricula
- Brings a vision for faith development for ALL ages
- Can discern where the gaps are in the congregation's faith formation and can work creatively with the congregation to fill those gaps
- Works with habits of the heart:
  - adaptability and entrepreneurship,

- a willingness to take risks and feel uncomfortable,
- patience, perseverance, courage, and humility, and
- a palpable aliveness and love
- Has excellent administrative and communication skills, including prioritization skills
- Brings a multicultural, antiracist, antioppressive lens to congregational work
- Collaborates effectively with a wide variety of stakeholders, interest groups, and personality types
- Knows how to create and maintain a welcoming space
- Supports the development of lay leaders in creating sustainable programs
- Is a credential Religious Educator through the UUA RE training or has equivalent experience
- Has working knowledge of UU education cornerstones such as OWL (Our Whole Lives Lifespan Sexuality Education) and Coming of Age programs a strong UU identity

## Application Questions

The following questions invite you to share stories from your experience that give us a sense of your approach to this work, as well as your primary strengths and areas for growth. We look forward to beginning to get to know you through this process.

1. Do you consider yourself a Unitarian Universalist (UU)? If so, when and how did you become one? What role, if any, have UU religious education or lifespan faith development programs played in your spiritual journey? If you don't consider yourself a UU, please tell us what you know about Unitarian Universalism and why you feel called to support UU faith formation?
2. Please describe your experience working with or participating in multicultural, multigenerational organizations. What training and experience around antiracism and antioppression work will you bring to this position?
3. Please describe your experience in implementing programs while attending to various stakeholders and audiences. What is your process for discerning, developing, and implementing a program that would attend to the community, across the lifespan?
4. Please describe your understanding of Whole-Church Faith Formation and the role that a congregation plays in the lives of individuals and families today. How do you understand the reality (and the possibilities!) of congregational life now?

## How Do You Apply?

Do all these descriptions inspire and excite you? Do you feel a call to serve FUCSJ in this role? Please send a letter of interest ASAP to the Director of Faith Formation Hiring Team at [fucsijobs@gmail.com](mailto:fucsijobs@gmail.com). **Email with a résumé, responses to questions, and three references.**

Members of groups that have been/are marginalized are especially encouraged to apply.

For more information about this congregation, please see our outdated yet soon-to-be-updated website: <http://sanjoseuu.org> And please do visit our active Facebook page under "First Unitarian Church of San José."

We look forward to hearing from you!