



FirstWords

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INTRODUCING THE MINISTER OF MUSIC AND WORSHIP ARTS, REV. IAN RIDDELL

BY REV KATHLEEN OWENS, LEAD MINISTER



On August 1st, the Rev. Ian W. Riddell will join the ministerial staff as the Minister of Music and Worship Arts—a new position at First Church. Rev. Ian's presence will enliven our worship,

deepen the music and program life of the church, and help us reach out to new areas within the San Diego region.

Rev. Ian is looking forward to working closely with our existing musical staff. He writes, "[First Church] has a long history of excellent and meaningful music and I'm looking forward to working with the talented, committed and collaborative staffMusic and worship can transform lives, and not just on Sunday mornings. One of the main focuses of my ministry with you will be to envision ways in which worship and music can infuse all of what we do as a religious community."

Growing up in southeastern Ontario, Rev. Ian "lived my life in the church, with my parents in the United Church of Canada and then singing in the choir at the Anglican cathedral." He came into Unitarian Universalism in the early 1990's when he was hired to be the music director of a new congregation in Victoria, British Columbia. There he found a spiritual home and began to discern his calling into professional ministry.

Excited to be joining the ministerial team here, his responsibilities will include preaching, teaching, pastoral care, and offering ministerial support to the UU Men's Fellowship, especially to its leadership. His presence on the ministerial staff will allow Rev. Kathleen to focus more of her time on outreach to the military community and interfaith actions in the San Diego Region. Rev. Ian's partner, Mark Harrower, is also thrilled to be coming to San Diego. They've been in a committed relationship since 1990 and have "crafted a life together centered on love, absolute honesty, intellectual and emotional

companionship, and trust." Mark is a designer for a large software firm.

Rev. Ian served the UU congregation in Las Vegas for three years before coming to San Diego. Outside of the ministry, he enjoys the various patterns he finds in serial fiction, long-form television shows, comic books, and novels.

Spending time in nature is one of the ways Rev. Ian experiences rejuvenation. He finds "participation in the life of community and the personal practices of lectio divina, (a traditional Benedictine practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer), Taizé singing and movement," help him do the work of rebuilding the world "shaped by justice, kindness and humility . . . and calls him primarily to the work of congregational life—of participating and ministering with a community that has covenanted to walk together in the task of healing self and the world—to sing and listen and speak and act and teach against separation and for the flourishing of life."

It is with great anticipation we await Rev. Ian and Mark's arrival. And, it is with deep gratitude we thank all those whose dreams, dedication, and sharing of time, talents, and treasures have made this new position possible. It is because of them we enter a new time in the life of First Church—a time for a new ministerial focus to further build our beloved community, nurture our spirits with music and worship arts, and allow us to reach deeper into the wider community to act on our values to help heal the world.

Also in this issue:

- Daydreaming and Re-imagining: Rev Kathleen Owens [Pg 2](#)
- June's Sermon Messages [Pg 2](#)
- Moments [Pg 3](#)
- Online Social Media Explained! [Pg 4](#)
- The Generosity Offering Collection Bags [Pg 5](#)
- GA at First Church: Ware Lecturer, Dr. Cornel West [Pg 6](#)
- Moving On [Pg 7](#)