



UNITARIAN
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CHURCH
of Santa Monica

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LA Times Columnist Sandy Banks Speaks Out on Struggling Foster Care System

UU Santa Monica Presents Annual Pipes Lecture, Saturday October 25

Santa Monica, CA (October 7, 2014)—Where the lives of children hang in the balance, *Los Angeles Times* columnist Sandy Banks continues to shine a light on the big-picture forces that break families apart and the individuals and organizations that help children thrive.

The [Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Santa Monica](#) (UU Santa Monica) is proud to help propel this dialogue on foster care, presenting the 2014 Ernest D. Pipes, Jr. Distinguished Lecture by Ms. Banks. “Foster Care: Behind the Headlines, The Pain and Promise of Broken Families – How We can Help Them Heal” will explore both the socioeconomic pressures that lead families to tragic separations, and the community-based solutions that can turn the failing system around.

“I think it’s important to expand the discussion around the issue of foster care, so we can understand how the system works – or doesn’t work – and why children are stuck in the shadows, fending for themselves,” Banks said. “There are ways that each of us can help support those vulnerable children, and I’m pleased that UUSM is viewing this through a social justice lens and taking the lead in shining a spotlight on their needs.”

The presentation is FREE and open to the public on Saturday, October 25 at 7:30 p.m. The lecture includes a brief question and answer session, followed by a speaker’s reception with light refreshments.

Location: Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Santa Monica, 1260 18th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90404 ([map](#)). Free parking will be available in the parking structure on 16th Street just south of Arizona Avenue. Handicap parking is available behind the UU Santa Monica campus.

Los Angeles Times columnist Sandy Banks explores the human issues that shape our collective consciousness. Throughout her impressive 35-year journalism career, her coverage of education, religion, criminal justice and race relations has been honored by the National Council of Jewish Women, the Muslim Women's League and the California Teachers' Association. She was on the Pulitzer Prize-winning team reporting on the 1992 Los Angeles riots, and in 2014 the Los Angeles Society of Professional Journalists named her its Distinguished Print Journalist of the Year. A native of Cleveland, Ms. Banks moved to Los Angeles with her husband in 1979. She was widowed in 1993, and raised three daughters (now 29, 25 and 23) as a single mother in Northridge.

The Ernest D. Pipes, Jr. Distinguished Lecture Series was founded by UU Santa Monica members who wanted to honor the service of the Rev. Ernest D. "Ernie" Pipes, Jr. when he retired after 35 years. The Annual Pipes Lectures invite the larger community into conversations about issues related to Rev. Pipes' vast exploration of social, civil, philosophical, religious and worldly concerns. Over the years, 22 distinguished speakers have covered a variety of topics, including corporate greed, civil liberties, health care and boundless compassion. The lecture series endowment remains vital, as does the Rev. Pipes, now Reverend Emeritus at UU Santa Monica. He will be attending the 23rd lecture this month.

About UU Santa Monica

The Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Santa Monica was founded in 1927 and is affiliated with the national Unitarian Universalist Association. The UU Santa Monica community embraces many beliefs and many backgrounds. UUs celebrate unity in diversity, affirming the supreme worth of all persons, held together through love and a spark of divinity that resides in us all. The community is also a Welcoming Congregation, welcoming all persons and families regardless of sexual orientation.

With one of the largest UU Religious Education programs in Southern California, UU Santa Monica supports both youth and adults in their search for understanding, insight and inspiration. The church is an active center for social justice, peace and sustainability. For a full calendar of events visit www.uusm.org or connect with the community on [Facebook @UUSantaMonica](https://www.facebook.com/UUSantaMonica).

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