

FIRST UNITARIAN  
CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY  
**BROOKLYN**  
A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

## Transforming Lives

**Marty Bernstein**

(Member since February 21, 1988)



In November of 1987, a 6-foot-tall secular Jewish guy with a strong Brooklyn accent despite not living in Brooklyn until he was 16, came to First U Brooklyn with his diminutive Brooklyn born Italian-American wife, Pat, who was raised in a traditional Catholic family. They brought their two kids, 8-year-old Elizabeth and 6-year-old Justin. Why were we drawn to this congregation? Because we wanted to be part of a community that reflected our values, concern for social justice, and especially, be a place where our family's mixed background would be appreciated and valued. We knew that Unitarian Universalism was mostly rooted in a Judeo-Christian tradition but had become so much more than that. We really liked it. In fact, we grew to quickly love this place and its community. By February 1988, we had become members.

Many years later we are still here. Our children are grown and married. Although they are not currently involved with UUism, they value their experiences here. I happily believe that their humanistic values were partially formed by their First U experience.

I have held many leadership roles. The one that I really love is what I consider my personal ministry, welcoming new members of our community. My Welcome & Fellowship ministry has allowed me to use my love of humanity in a place where I can make a difference in peoples' lives and know that they have come to a religious community that provides them with love and understanding. When you see me at the Welcome Table, I am enjoying myself and providing what I consider to be a very important service.

I really appreciate our wonderful staff. Rev. Ana is awesome. So are Adam, and Garnett. Our current interns are wonderful, as is Meagan. Lastly, I have mention to Chris Johnson, who maintains our buildings and physical plant. He holds everything together.

I am here because this religious community made me realize that I was able to blend my concern for social justice and equity with a spiritual need that I didn't even know I needed when I got here. First Unitarian has changed my life. Working together, we can change the world.

January 21, 2018