

### Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula

740 E. Main Street Santa Paula, CA 93060 (805) 525-4647 uucspoffice@gmail.com Website: uucsp.org

#### DECEMBER 2017 SERVICES, SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM



Theme: Hope

#### December 3 Angels in Our Lives

Rev. Anne Hines, Mary Nelson

"Angels we have heard on high," we sing – or hear sung – during this holiday season. But of course, we Unitarian Universalists don't believe in angels, do we? Or perhaps we just don't recognize them. What might an angel look like? What might it have to say to us?

First Sunday Plate to CASP

#### December 10 Hope

Rev. Maddie, CJ Starling

Barbara Kingsolver writes, "The very least you can do in your life is figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope." Rev. Maddie sometimes says she is in the hope business. How do traditions like the St. Lucia procession bring hope? Where is hope to be found in this season and all others? How can we live inside hope when hope seems hard to find?

#### \*Tuesday, December 12 at 7 PM Gathering

Rev. Maddie

A weeknight Gathering with Sound, Silence and Word with Rev. Maddie, guest poet Atul Ranchod and musicians Geno Palilla, piano and Christine Snipes Mazur, violin. Classical music by Lauridsen, Schubert, Yon and more.

#### December 17 Who Can Retell?

Rev. Maddie, Allan Noel

"The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:4) In this month of December, we look for our light in the darkness. We think of all the stories of the season, from the Maccabees whom we remember in the telling of the tales of Hanukkah, to the search for light at the Winter Solstice, to the light of the Christmas story. We will consider these stories interwoven in our lives. Our choir sings.

#### \*Thursday, December 21 Winter Solstice Ritual

Rev. Maddie

Deep in the dark of the longest night- A Celebration of the Darkness and the Light with songs and stories.

#### December 24 at 5:00 PM Christmas Eve

Rev. Maddie and readers

We gather on Christmas Eve for a traditional Christmas Eve service of readings, Carols, and special music. We will end with the traditional candlelit *Silent Night*.

NOTE: NO SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE.

#### December 31 No Justice, No Peace!

Michael Eselun, Patricia English

We are used to hearing this chant of protest -- as a demand for justice. Pursuit of justice is a core UU Principle, and yet we've also heard since childhood that "no one said life is fair." When such injustice hits closer to home—like say, a diagnosis of cancer, how do we find peace when there seems to be no justice? UCLA oncology chaplain, Michael Eselun, will explore this territory.

CASP food offering

# Message from the Minister

The season is upon us and once more the bells and whistles of consumerism are rampant in the land, along with the light of hope and the waiting for something new to be born into our lives, as of old. Our theme this month is "Hope." I recently read a piece on the compulsive consumerism that has come to dominate modern life, according to a study done by UNICEF UK, but certainly could have been done in our country as well. One mother reported that she thought her three-year-old son would be bullied if he didn't have the latest games system at home. The study comments that parents are putting long hours into work and giving their children consumer goods as compensation. Apparently, the children interviewed in the study said they would prefer more time with their parents. Sue Palmer, author of *Toxic Childhood* says, "We are probably the most secular society in the world, we do not have the counterbalance of religion." Although this was written about the United Kingdom, we are quite familiar with its theme and the acquisition of more stuff. This season, I pray that we encourage the giving and receiving of the gifts of love and hope, rather than more stuff. I am hoping that we can give of our time and companionship to our families, our friends, our congregation and those less fortunate in our community. I hope we can consider the varied traditions that have been brought from around the world to this country, and the rich tapestry or patchwork they can weave in during these end of year holidays, bringing meaning to our lives that might last, rather than the latest gadget that loses its interest or batteries that burn out.

There are many traditions to choose from during the month, from Gathering on December 12<sup>th</sup>, thoughts on Hanukkah on December 17<sup>th</sup>, A Winter Solstice Singing Ritual on December 21<sup>st</sup> and our candlelit Christmas Eve. Read this newsletter for many suggestions. Or perhaps it is quiet that you seek, and you may wish to join me on December 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM for Meditation. Whatever traditions you and your family celebrate, I wish you the joyous birth of new meaning in your life and a measure of peace and goodwill.



On the path of our faith, Reverend Maddie

# Message from the RE Coordinator



#### Kids' Place

"Grown-ups never understand anything by themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them"

— Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, The Little Prince

#### Famous UUs in History



Elizabeth Blackwell was a social activist and Episcopalian/Unitarian who lived from 1821 until 1910. Her family emigrated from England to America when she was 11, and the entire family was involved in social justice work as part of their liberal religious practice.

While the family was involved in in the abolition movement (including Elizabeth), she decided to attend medical school, an unheard-of thing for a young lady to do in the mid-19th century. After finding a medical school willing to let her attend, she graduated from Geneva Medical School in New York in 1849, and she was the first woman in the modern age to do so at this or any other medical school. She practiced medicine and wrote medical books aimed at women's health and parenting throughout her career. As a pioneer in the field of healthcare for women, she broke barriers and open the field to the many women who have since become doctors.

#### **Upcoming RE Youth Classes**

"It is a happy talent to know how to play."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

During this holiday season, we will be discussing the different traditions practiced by a variety of religious traditions. As always, the children will be creating wonderful works of art and playing in the Rainbow Room. ~ Erik Halseth

## Message from Board of Trustees

In October, several Board members and Reverend Maddie, attended a meeting with other UU church board members in Goleta on how boards function. One of the exercises was to come up with questions that are pertinent to our church community. As we bring 2017 to a close and settle deeper into the dark of winter, we present these questions to ponder. The first question is related to our mission statement which reads: *The mission of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula is to practice inclusiveness, seek justice and foster spirituality.* What would it look like if our mission was woven into the culture of our congregation? What would change and what would remain? Another question: What would a community ministry look like if the whole church was involved? What do you envision that work to be? Good questions to end this year and think of our future in 2018.

Wishing you all a very merry Christmas and happy holiday season.

In peace and gratitude, MaryBeth East

# Spiritual Growth Center

# **GATHERING**

#### \*\*DEFINITION OF GATHERING

an assembly or meeting, especially a social or festive one or one held for a specific purpose.



# **DECEMBER 12, 2017 at 7:00 PM**

You are invited to our Gathering for sound, silence and word as the sun goes down.

Led by Maddie Sifantus with poems by Atul Ranchod and others
with musicians Geno Palilla, piano and Christine Snipes Mazur, violin.

Selections of the season by Lauridsen, Schubert, Yon and more
Free will offering for the musicians.
Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula, 740 E Main Street, Santa Paula

Our December Gathering with Sound, Silence and Spoken Word will be on Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. This is a reflective time in our busy week to hear some beautiful music, share some silence and hear spoken word on a theme, which this month is **Hope**. The music will be provided by classical music performers, Geno Palilla on piano, Christine Snipes Mazur on violin and Maddie Sifantus, soprano and include music of the season by Franz Schubert, Pietro Yon, Morten Lauridsen and more. Geno is a resident of Ventura, frequent performer at Gathering and a past performer in the Santa Paula Concert Series. He studied several years under the late Peter Yazbeck, until going off to study piano performance at Cal State University Northridge, under the Piano Chair, Francoise Regnat. Christine is an Ojai resident and plays in a number of orchestras and ensembles. Maddie Sifantus, in addition to being the minister of the Universalist Unitarian Church, is a professional singer with a long career in the Northeast before her move to Santa Paula. Free, but with a free will offering to compensate Geno and Christine.

Original poetry will be spoken by poet Atul Ranchod, known to many in Santa Paula as one of the owners of the Santa Paula Inn. He has just published his first book of poetry, "Top of the Water", which is available on Amazon.

SAVE THE DATE: Our first Gathering of the New Year will be on Tuesday, January 9 at 7:00 PM and feature Iranian musician Sahba Sizdahkham who plays Santor and percussion. You can see more about him at <a href="http://www.sahbasizdahkhani.com/">http://www.sahbasizdahkhani.com/</a>

# Spiritual Growth Center



#### MEDITATION PRACTICE GROUP UU CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA PARISH HALL

WEDNESDAYS AT 6:00 PM

DECEMBER 13 JANUARY 3, 17, and 31 FEBRUARY 7 and 21

For information call Rev. Maddie Sifantus, 805-525-4620. Free Will Offering.

#### **SOARING HEARTS YOGA**

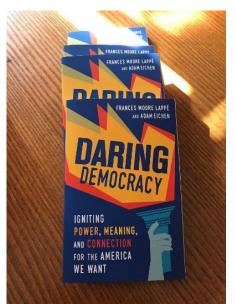


Members and friends of the congregation are invited to attend yoga in our Parish Hall on Tuesday's and Thursday's from 9:30 am – 10:30 am. with Yoga instructor, Lisa Hammond. Class fee is \$6 - \$8 per session. Lisa keeps an email list to which you can be added after attending your first session. She has been leading yoga for us for about two years and several of our members and Rev. Maddie attend. Lisa Hammond can be reached at soaringheartsyoga@gmail.com.

\* PLEASE NOTE there will be NO yoga on Tuesday, December 26.

#### T'AI CHI CHIH

T'AI CHI CHIH On Friday mornings we continue to offer T'ai Chi Chih, - Joy thru Movement, with Instructor Pete Gregory. Often called a moving meditation, the movements are accessible to anybody, regardless of age weight or physical ability. No special clothing or equipment needed. Come and learn how to play with the Chi. For more information or to sign up, email Pete at psgreg24@gmail.com. Learn more at www.taichichih.org. \*-PLEASE NOTE there will be NO T'aiChiChih on Friday, December 8.



#### All Church Read 2017-18

#### DARING DEMOCRACY

**DATE CHANGE!** Due to some schedule conflicts, our All Church Read will now be Sunday, February 25th after Coffee Hour (or about 12:15 PM) in Rev. Maddie's Office. The book we will be discussing is "Daring Democracy: Igniting Power, Meaning, and Connection for the America We Want. The authors are Frances Moore Lappe and Adam Eichen. "In this moment of extreme threat, we come to see that the opposite of evil is no longer goodness. It is courage. Goodness without action isn't good enough." Start reading now in preparation for our discussion! Four copies are in circulation and can be located on top of the bookcase in the Parish Hall or you can order from Amazon or your favorite bookseller.



#### **HOLIDAY SCHEDULE 2017**

Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula 740 East Main Street, Santa Paula www.uucsp.org

#### Sunday, December 3 at 10:30 AM

Rev. Anne Hines with Mary Nelson

~ First Sunday in Advent

First Sunday Plate to CASP

#### Sunday, December 10 at 10:30 AM

"Hope"

Rev. Maddie Sifantus with CJ Starling ~Second Sunday in Advent

#### Sunday, December 17 at 10:30 AM

"Who Can Retell?"
Rev. Maddie Sifantus with
~Third Sunday in Advent

Choir: Happy Hanukkah My Friend, A Midnight Clear

#### Wednesday, December 13 at 6:00 PM

Meditation Practice Group in Parish Hall

#### Friday, December 15 at 7:00 PM

Holiday Rise Up Singing Parish Hall

#### Thursday, December 21 at 7:00 PM

Winter Solstice Ritual

Mulled cider and cookies following

#### Christmas Eve, December 24 at 5:00 PM

Christmas Eve: Lessons and Carols Special Music

Rev. Maddie Sifantus with Worship Associates

#### Sunday, December 31 at 10:30 AM

Michael Eselun and Pat English
CASP Offering of non-perishable food

#### Wednesday, January 3 at 6:00 PM

Meditation Practice Group in Parish Hall

#### Sunday, January 7 at 10:30 AM

"Burning Bowl" Jerry Gray and John Nichols First Sunday Plate

#### OFFICE HOURS AND PASTORAL COVERAGE

Rev. Maddie is usually available in the office by appointment or pot luck drop in from Tuesday through Friday. Please note that she will be out of town to serve on the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the UUA from November 27, returning on December 6. While she is gone, pastoral coverage is being provided by our Affiliate Minister, Betty Stapleford. Should an emergency arise during that time, please leave a message on the church office phone, 805-525-4647, and Krystal will contact Rev. Betty. Should it be between our Administrator's days in the office, please call congregation president MaryBeth East at 805-341-8809. Monday is Rev. Maddie's day off and Saturday is her study/sermon writing day. Some days she is working from home but can get to the office in five minutes, if something comes up. The best way to plan a time to meet with her is to call and leave a message on her private line at the church, 805-525-4620, call her on her cell phone, 508-733-8860 or email her at msifantus@uuma.org. She is happy to meet you in her office, at your home or place of work, or at a local restaurant for a cup of tea or coffee (she will buy her own!). The minister's office is in the back of the church, near the rest rooms. If the front or back doors are locked, call her, and she will come let you in through the back gate off the alley.

#### FIRST SUNDAY PLATE OFFERING and LAST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH

For the 4th Quarter of 2017, our First Sunday Plate and Last Sunday of each month food collection will be the same recipient, CASP: Community Assistance Santa Paula. CASP, a non-profit organization, provides a Food Pantry to serve the disadvantaged of Santa Paula. Being a community charity, CASP's Food Pantry program is largely dependent on the generosity of its citizens.

- The First Sunday Plate offering for October, November and December will be a monetary donation.
- The Last Sunday of these months we collect canned goods, rice and beans and other non-perishable food.

#### **GUEST AT YOUR TABLE BOXES**

Each year we participate in the annual Guest at Your Table intergenerational program of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) which raises support for and awareness about the work to advance human rights. This year's program theme is Small Change is Big Change, recognizing that each of us can make big changes in our community and the world. Each day families and individuals can put change in the boxes imagining a guest visiting their table. Checks may also be written to the UUSC. The boxes were passed out during the service on November 19 and will be collected on January 14. Extra boxes and donation envelopes are on the table in the Parish Hall.

#### NEWS FROM AMONG US DECEMBER 2017

- Many people have a difficult time around the holidays for many different reasons. If you are one of them, please know that Rev. Maddie is available to meet with you.
- We like to wish our friends and members happy birthday when it is their birthday month. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the Parish Hall or you could let our administrator Krystal Johnson know so that we can add you to the list. Now that we are having Zodiac Zundays once month at coffee hour, it is one more reason to join the fun.
- Many of us supported the recent fundraiser for One Step a la Vez, "Pie for Breakfast." Congratulations to Kate English and her staff and volunteers for a wonderful event and important ministry in the community.
- We were thrilled to see Margaret Broughton at our last Santa Paula Concert Series Concert. If you have any News from Among Us you would like to share with our community, please let Rev. Maddie know by the newsletter deadline which is the 21<sup>st</sup> of every month.

#### **CHOIR**

All are welcome to join our choir, including our young singers who are able to read music. Rehearsals will be directed by Rev. Maddie and accompanied by Vincent Sorisio. All choir rehearsals will cover the music for that Sunday and will include learning music for future monthly Sunday mornings. Solstice Singers rehearsals will be on 2 Saturday mornings. Individual rehearsals with Rev. Maddie can be arranged as time allows. Please be in touch with Rev. Maddie with any questions. All invited to sing!

December 9 10:00 AM Solstice Singers Rehearsal

• December 14 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal

December 16 10:00 AM Solstice Singers Rehearsal

• December 17 9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal for 10:30 AM Service Who Can Retell?

• Choir: Happy Hanukkah My Friend, A Midnight Clear

• December 21 7:00 PM Winter Solstice

• Choir: Simple solstice chants and arrangements

December 24 5:00 PM Christmas Eve Service

#### WINTER SOLSTICE SINGERS AND READERS NEEDED!

Rev. Maddie is once more producing a Winter Solstice Celebration for the community which will be held on Thursday, December 21 at 7:00 PM in the Sanctuary of the church. This year the celebration is a *Winter Solstice Singing Ritual, A Celebration of the Darkness and the Light* with Songs and Stories. There will be two rehearsals in December on Saturdays December 9 and 16 at 10 AM. More as needed. For more information and to receive music, call or leave a message for Rev. Maddie at her private line at 805-525-4620 or email her at msifantus@uuma.org.

#### THE MARY A'S

The Mary A. Livermore Society will meet at Judith Beay's home for a Christmas pot luck celebration the second Thursday, Dec. 14. Bring toiletries for women residents at the women's shelter. Please RSVP Judith so we know how many to plan for.

#### THE SOCIAL CONCERNS ACTION COMMITTEE NEWS AND EVENTS

- Our Dinner and a Movie will be on hiatus during December. See January's newsletter for news of our next scheduled documentary for January 26.
- In December, SCAC will meet Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, at 12:15 in Rev. Maddie's office.
- In January, we will begin meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, beginning January 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 in the Parish Hall.
- Save-The-Date Mind Expanding Group December 17, 6:30 Pm We will meet, eat snacks, watch and discuss Hasan Minhaj's recent comedy special, "Homecoming King". His insightful story of his family, growing up in America, high school homecoming dance and career should expand our minds.

#### CARING COMMITTEE

Do you want to learn how to be a better listener? This fall we have started a Lay Ministry Training to better serve our members and supplement the ministry of Rev. Maddie, our professional pastoral care provider. This training facilitated by Rev. Maddie takes place at the regular monthly meetings of the committee. Our next meeting is Thursday, January 18. THERE IS NO MEETING IN DECEMBER. Meetings are at 12:15 PM and last about an hour and a half. Let Rev. Maddie know if you are interested in joining with the Caring Committee members Barbara Beach, Karen Harris, Penny McManus, Delicia Niami, Sharon Kufeldt, and Jan Shepherd. We have room for a couple more members; let Rev. Maddie know if you are interested.

#### SALVATION ARMY ANGEL TREE

The Salvation Army Angel Tree is a holiday program designed to raise in-kind gifts to assist families who are in crisis because of medical issues, unemployment, homelessness, medical issues or other difficult circumstances and who otherwise wouldn't have the resources to celebrate Christmas. For the 2nd year, the Social Concerns Action Committee is hosting an Angel Tree for needy families in Santa Paula. Please take a look at the tags on the tree in the Parish Hall. If you would like to "adopt" that child and get the gifts on that tag or get one of the gifts listed, either is appreciated. These all go to benefit needy kids right here in Santa Paula. If you decide to participate in this year's Angel Tree you can take a tag that are on the bookshelf next to the tree to use as a tax donation receipt. All gifts must be under the tree by Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup> as these will be picked up on the 20th and distributed on the 22nd. If you have any questions, please contact Delicia at 323-829-6867.

#### **EVENTS ON THE CALENDARS**

We have become much busier here at UUCSP! The downside is that you can't assume the church will always be free. Please clear your event or meeting with Krystal to make sure there is nothing on the Google calendar and check that yours gets put on the dry erase calendar near the bulletin boards in the kitchen. Krystal will add it to the Google calendar and check with Rev. Maddie that there are no conflicts.



#### "Zodiac Zunday"

Once a month during coffee hour we will be honoring those who celebrate the astrological sign of that month. As

we know, astrology is a pseudo-science often linked to superstition. We are hoping for this to be a fun time to connect with others while enjoying some delicious food.



"ZODIAC ZUNDAY": On November 19 honoring Scorpios Thank you, Ruth, who does a wonderful job each month.

#### "ZODIAC ZUNDAY":

On December 10th we will be honoring

Sagittarius

(November 22 -December 21).

Sign Characteristics:

Philosophical, Motion, Experimentation,

Optimism, Uneasy with routine and stagnation.

**Imaginative** 

promised goals.

and A creative. Appreciates accumulation of knowledge and philosophy. Enjoys exploration and travel. Tends to be unabashedly honest. Hesitant to commitment, or finds it difficult to complete





#### **DOUBLE INDEMNITY**

Fred MacMurray, Barbara Stanwyck and Edward G. Robinson star in this 1944 Noir gem. Billy Wilder directed a screenplay cowritten with Raymond Chandler. A new HD restoration will be screened.

DECEMBER 8 2017

#### SANTA PAULA CINEMA SOCIETY

presents

DOUBLE INDEMNITY

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8 7:00 PM

UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA 740 EAST MAIN STREET



#### **WELCOME TABLE**

You may have noticed a small table in the Parish Hall with its new sign, thanks to John Nichols, "Welcome Table." On it are things of interest to our visitors including our business cards, Files with a welcome letter and brochures (which replaced our former welcome bags), back copies of our denominational magazine, the UU World and our newsletter. Please do not put other things on that table...and if you see someone you don't know looking at the materials, go welcome them!

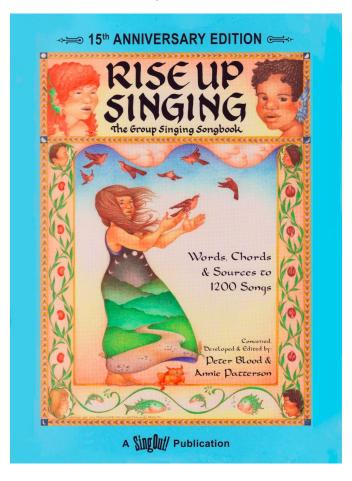


# JOIN US IN SINGING ~ ALL AGES UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA PARISH HALL 740 E MAIN STREET FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15 AT 7:00 PM

BRING RISE UP SINGING AND/OR RISE AGAIN BOOKS IF YOU HAVE THEM ALL INSTRUMENTS WELCOME! COMMUNITY SINGING!

FREE WILL OFFERING

LED BY MADDIE SIFANTUS, DONNA NELSON AND FRIENDS



# WINTER SOLSTICE!



# THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2016 at 7:00 PM UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA

Directed by Maddie Sifantus

740 E. Main Street

805-525-4647 ~ uucspoffice@gmail.com

FREE!

STAY AFTER TO SHARE WASSAIL!

# Calendar of Events



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 10:00 T'aiChiChih	2
3 1030am Worship 1stSunday Plate- CASP	4	5 930 Yoga 7PM Gathering	6	7 930 Yoga	8 NO T'aiChiChih 7pmClassic Movie Night	9 10am WinterSolstice Reh
10 1030amWorship Zodiac Zunday 1215pm SocialConcerns Mtg	11	Hanukkah 930 Yoga 7PM Gathering	6pm Meditation	14 930 Yoga 7PM Choir Reh	15 10:00 T'aiChiChih 7PM Rise Up Singing	16 10am WinterSolstice Reh
17 9:30am ChoirReh 1030amWorship	18	19 930 Yoga 6:30pm Board mtg	20	21 930 Yoga 7pmWinter Solstice	22 10:00 T'aiChiChih	23
24 5PMChristmas Eve Service No morning service 31 1030amWorship CASP	25 Christmas Day	26 Kwanzaa NO Yoga	27	28 930 Yoga 1130am MaryA's	29 10:00 T'aiChiChih	30

# THE UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA

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Rev. Maddie Sifantus, Minister, Choir Director Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford, Affiliate Minister Erik Halseth, Religious Education Coordinator Vincent Sorisio, Church Musician Albie Alamillo, Custodian Krystal Johnson, Office Administrator Board of Trustees: MaryBeth East John Nichols Patricia English Luisa Haskell Kate English

Sunday Worship Services at 10:30 am



January Newsletter deadline is December 21

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> 740 East Main Street Santa Paula, CA 93060

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