

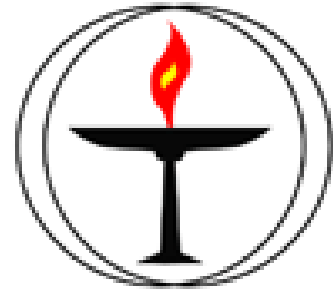


# Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula

740 E. Main Street, Santa Paula, CA 93060 (805) 525-4647

uucspoffice@gmail.com website: uucsp.org

## JANUARY 2021 SERVICES, SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM



### JANUARY THEME: Consolation/Desolation

*Consolation and desolation are conditions of the human experience. Desolation arises out of loss, grief, failure, fear, sadness, loneliness, and more that have the capacity to destroy us. Some of these may be impersonal, but consolation is always personal. It comes as a profound gift from another: compassion, a willingness to listen without judgement, a kind word, a hug, and other acts of kindness and care.*

### January 3 Burning Bowl

**Jerry Gray, John Nichols**

The Burning Bowl is an annual end-of-year ceremony we perform each January. We will learn what John has been thinking of late, and will talk about the meaning of ritual and the history of the Burning Bowl ceremony. We will then collectively perform the ritual. It is a cleansing and healing ceremony to get the New Year started off right.

**First Sunday Plate to House Farm Workers** <https://housefarmworkers.org/>

### January 10 I Really Don't Know What to Say...

**Nicholas "Nic" Filzen, Ruth Ricards**

A friend or family member has lost somebody close. Now what? Sometimes feeling helpless and not knowing what to say is the best you can do. Even without the right words, presence and attention can provide powerful consolation.

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**Tuesday, January 12 at 7:00 PM Gathering**

**Rev. Maddie, Eduardo Del Signore**

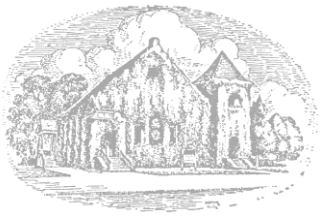
A New Year of Gatherings for Sound, Silence and Word begins. We welcome back Eduardo Del Signore from A Call to Peace with special guest, Atul Ranchod.

~~~~~  
**January 17 What Would MLK Do?**

**Rev. Maddie, Ken Stock**

As we come MLK weekend before the scheduled Inauguration of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, after four years of divisiveness in our country, what do we think Martin Luther King Jr. might say at this time?

~~~~~  
The mission of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula is to practice inclusiveness, seek justice and foster spirituality.



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**January 24 Consolation and Desolation Rev. Maddie, MaryBeth East**  
It is not clear if life is joy punctuated by tragedy, or tragedy punctuated by joy, but both come to us in the course of our lives. This past year has certainly contained both. How do we maintain balance between these two poles of existence? An exploration of our January Touchstones theme.

**January 31 Beloveds Rev. Maddie, Karen Harris**  
On this day of our Annual Meeting to do the work and vision of our congregation, Rev. Maddie revisits our Mission to “Practice Inclusivity, Seek Justice and Foster Spirituality” through the lens of the UUA’s report from the Commission on Institutional Change, Widening the Circle of Concern. What does the COIC report say to us and challenge us to be.  
**UUs From Our Past with Leslie Nichols**

### HOW WE GATHER

As we stay Safe at Home, we continue to work to stay connected through Zoom and Facebook as well as our Phone Tree. The church building remains closed to all but staff. Sunday morning services begin on Zoom and Facebook Live at 10:30 AM and coffee hour breakout follows on Zoom. Please email Joys and Concerns to Rev. Maddie at minister@uucsp.org who will read them, or you can put them in the CHAT function on Zoom during the service. Please mail your donation to the church at UUCSP, 740 E Main Street, Santa Paula, CA 93060 or you can set up online pay with your bank. If neither of those works for you, use the link on the homepage of our website: www.uucsp.org. Gathering is supported by a Free Will Offering. Donations can be given the same way as Sunday mornings.

**Join Zoom Meeting: PLEASE MUTE YOUR MICROPHONE**

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/7312177775>

Meeting ID: 731 217 7775 Password: uucsp93060

To phone:+1 253 215 8782 Phone password: 529593



The mission of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula is to practice inclusiveness, seek justice and foster spirituality.

# Message from the Minister

Happy New Year one and all! Here we head into another new year, I think most of us are more than ready to trade in 2020 for whatever 2021 will hold for us. Of course, at this time one year ago, we had no idea what was coming down the pike other than our knowing that life is always about change and finding ways to renew hope, at least in my business! As we look ahead to the coming months, I hope and pray for health, sanity and vision for us all, our communities and our world.

For me, poetry and lyrics often say things better than I can in prose. You may note that I often quote the late Irish teacher and poet, John O'Donahue. He says this in a poem written for end of the year...when of course we are looking to the beginning of the New Year:

The particular mind of the ocean  
Filling the coastline's longing  
With such brief harvest  
Of elegant, harvesting waves  
Is like the mind of time  
Opening us shapes of days.

As we start this New Year, we are especially aware of how the shapes of our days have changed as we continue to deal with a global pandemic, even as we hope for the vaccines that are just being shipped across the country as I write this. These moments of waiting for it to be safe to gather, go to restaurants and museums, sing together, travel and all those things we took for granted just one year ago put next to the "mind of time" are but a blip on the screen. But that does not lessen our experience of them.

As I begin this year when I rotate off my service on the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the UUA (that group which credentials our ministers, among other things) and look toward the first part of my Sabbatical after serving you six years, I reflect on what I might learn from such a time and how I can restore myself after these years of intensive work, especially this past busy one of ministering in a pandemic. My plan had been to spend time in Europe to see the Sifantus family and revisit the Iona Abbey in Scotland. But it does not seem safe to do that, so I am likely going to Plan B to see my friends and family on the East Coast and do some research with my historian friends in Maine about Universalism in the 1800s which sent our founders here to Santa Paula from Caribou. The Sabbatical Planning Committee has already had three meetings and you will be hearing more as the date I depart draws closer which is the day after Easter, April 5.

Reflecting brings to my mind words from another poem, the familiar one by Mary Oliver, which ends with:

Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?

As you begin this next year, may you find time to reflect on "what you plan to do with your one wild and precious life" and may we find ways to reflect on our precious life together. May you find ways to restore yourself and notice the harvest of waves in the shape of your days.

Happy New Year. On the path of our faith,  
Reverend Maddie



# Messages from the Board of Trustees

The Annual Meeting of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula will be held on Zoom, on January 31, 2021 after the Sunday Service at 12:30 p.m. Election of two new Board Trustees, as well as Marjorie Newlin Learning Capital Fund, Building Preservation Fund, and Cash Reserve Fund trustees, two Committee on Congregational Life members, and next year's Nominating Committee team will occur. In addition to these activities, the Bylaws Task Force worked to update our Bylaws and we will vote on their proposals. We will also vote to adopt our 2021 operating budget, which this year will additionally require a congregational vote to accept the inclusion of a small amount of principal from the Capital Fund to be included in the Fund's pledge to our operating revenue.

During the Zoom (can we call it zUUm, at least for this day?) Annual Meeting – and we will reiterate this at the time – folks will be muted, except for the designated speaker. There is just no way to hear more than one person at a time. Of course, we are not literally silencing anyone! Our technology team will be watching for questions, nominations, raised hands and such, and there is the chat feature on Zoom.

If you are one who normally blocks their camera during services (and I am one such member), we will need you to be visible during the meeting so that we know who is in attendance. Our bylaws require a quorum be present at any meeting of the congregation, and we will be using screen view to verify that everyone is who they seem to be! Thank you for your cooperation.

Our phone tree captains should have contacted all members regarding, among other things, if you are able to receive the Annual Meeting packets via email. If you are not, and require a printed packet be mailed to you, it should arrive by post with plenty of time for you to familiarize yourself with it. Emailed packets should also arrive at least a week prior to the meeting. Please make sure that the church office has your current address(es)!

Those who submit reports for the Annual Meeting packets should all have been notified that the deadline is much earlier this year. Please send your report in Microsoft Word or plain text format to our Office Administrator Krystal by the first week of January.

We are asking those who give verbal reports at the meeting to not repeat what is in their printed reports, but to make any additional comments or answer any queries from the congregation. Thank you again, for your understanding.

These are unusual times, and we are all doing what we can to bring some clarity and sanity... and to conduct business!



# GATHERING\*



**\*DEFINITION OF GATHERING**

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

## JANUARY 12, 2021 at 7:00 PM

You are invited to our Gathering for sound, silence and word.

Led by Maddie Sifantus with Atul Ranchod

Special Guest, Eduardo Del Signore

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/7312177775>

Meeting ID: 731 217 7775

To phone: +1 253 215 8782 US (Seattle)

Password: uucsp93060

~or~

[www.facebook.com/uucsp](http://www.facebook.com/uucsp)

Free will offering to UUCSP, with Gathering in memo line  
740 E Main St, Santa Paula, CA 93060

# Spiritual Growth Center

## SPIRITUAL GROWTH CENTER



During this time of Social Distancing and our building being closed, we encourage you to find ways to continue your spiritual practices at home. Rev. Maddie leads Meditation on Wednesday evenings at 6 PM, livestreaming from our Facebook page. We are experimenting with socially distanced yoga in our rose garden with no access to the building. Be in touch with Lisa Hammond for more information. Our Spiritual Growth Center provides opportunities and programs to awaken and sustain love, compassion, service and personal transformation in line with the Mission of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula: Practice Inclusiveness, Seek Justice and Foster Spirituality. Our goal is to help individuals discover how spiritual practice, learning, and community service can transform their lives and move the world toward peace and justice. Our programs are guided by the set of Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism and the Six Sources they draw from. One of the Principles affirms our intention to accept one another and encourage each other's spiritual growth. Would you like to offer an activity on Zoom during this time.

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### MEDITATION PRACTICE GROUP

WEDNESDAYS AT 6 PM

Sit with Rev. Maddie or Jim Cole on Zoom or Facebook  
livestream

Join Zoom Meeting

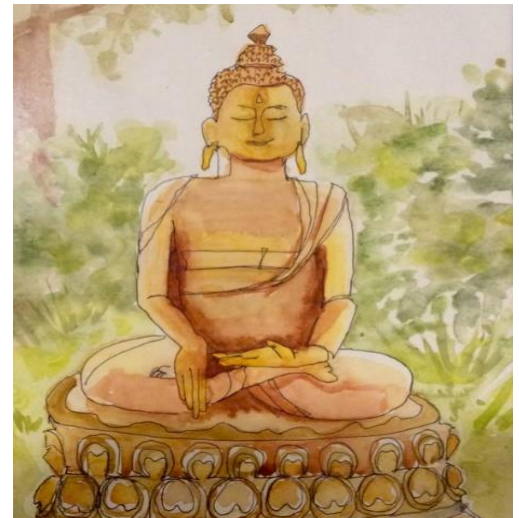
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Meeting ID: 731 217 7775 Passcode: uucsp93060

[www.facebook.com/uucsp](http://www.facebook.com/uucsp)

|            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| January 6  | Rev. Maddie |
| January 13 | Jim Cole    |
| January 20 | Rev. Maddie |
| January 27 | Jim Cole    |

*Leadership schedule subject to change*



*Image: Lynn Holbein*

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### SOARING HEARTS YOGA



Soaring Hearts Yoga invites you to join them in their shady outdoor space on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 AM. Bring your own mats and props. No access to the building. Please contact Lisa Hammond at 831-801-2276 or [soaringheartsyoga@gmail.com](mailto:soaringheartsyoga@gmail.com) for more information.

# People and Doings

## **WON'T YOU BE OUR MEMBER**

Are you an *official member* of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula or thinking of becoming one? As we approach our Annual Meeting which will be January 31, 2021 on Zoom, it is a good time to think about what our congregation means to you. Becoming a member allows you to vote on the budget and all-important decisions we make.

Becoming a member of UUCSP is an individual decision, so some people in a family may be members while others are not. While only members can vote on church matters, both members and non-members alike are welcome to attend services and other church activities, volunteer, and contribute financially to our congregation. Like many other UU churches, we have dedicated friends who have been active in our congregation, perhaps for years, but have never signed the membership book. Is this your time?

If you fall into that “friend” (active non-member) category, you might want to consider becoming a member now. If you have never gotten around to signing the book, but want to become an official member, it’s easy—simply arrange to meet socially distanced with Rev. Maddie to talk about the meaning of membership and to sign the membership book. To vote at our upcoming Annual Meeting, please talk to Rev. Maddie about the path to membership by January 15. We look forward to deepening our connections with you.

The conditions for membership, according to our bylaws, are these: “This society shall welcome as members any person who is in sympathy with the purpose and program of this church, has signed the membership book subject to acceptance by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees or the members present at any legal meeting of the congregation. Membership is open to all persons 13 years of age or older without regard to race, color, gender, national origin, physical or mental challenges, sexual orientation, or gender identification. Members are expected to make an identifiable financial or service contribution.

## **NEWS FROM AMONG US JANUARY 2021**

- Our member Margaret Broughton passed away in December. Rev. Maddie officiated at a private Graveside Service in Camarillo on December 18. Our thoughts are with her family and all who loved her.
- We wish Peggy Poehler well as she moved just before Christmas to be near her family in Portland, Oregon. Her new address is c/o Heather Poehler, 937 SE 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Portland, OR 97214-2609. She has the same cell phone address: 805-421-9427.
- Our prayers are with our member Pat English who is now in Hospice Care. Kate has taken a leave of absence from work to help care for her and has moved her to be near more family help in Camarillo.
- Jan Shepherd is doing remarkably better and is walking with the aid of a cane and walker, able to go outside on her deck and is in good spirits!
- 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 15th of every month.

## **REV. MADDIE'S OFFICE HOURS**

During continuing Pandemic, Rev. Maddie is available by appointment on Zoom or on a telephone appointment. She is also available to meet with you socially distanced in the Memorial Garden at church, in your garden or in her courtyard at her home. Monday is Rev. Maddie's day off and Saturday is her study/sermon writing day. 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](mailto:msifantus@uuma.org) or [minister@uucsp.org](mailto:minister@uucsp.org).

# People and Doings



## **SIP AND CHECK-IN WITH REV. MADDIE**

**TUESDAYS JANUARY 12 AND 26**

**AT 4 PM ON ZOOM**

Grab your favorite beverage and join Rev. Maddie on Zoom.

We will light a chalice, have a reading,  
and check in with each other.

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/7312177775> Meeting ID: 731 217 7775 Password: uucsp93060



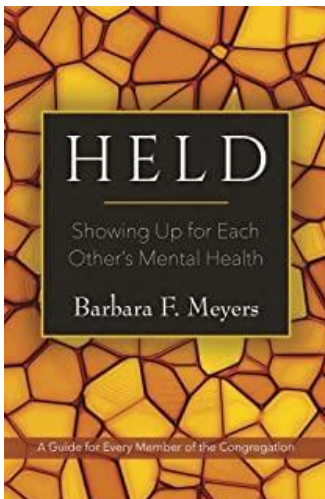
## **BECOMING A SAFER CONGREGATION**

Your Safe Congregation Team continues to meet to look at a number of our policies and the safety of our building and practices, including thoughts about our reentry once it will be safe to do so. We are informed by our insurance company, Church Mutual, and the Pacific Western Region of the UUA. We could use a new member of two in these important COVID-19 times when we need to keep apprised of the latest information. Can you bring your gifts to our community? The next meeting is January 13 at Noon on Zoom. Please let Rev. Maddie or Krystal know if you are interested. The Safe Congregation Team reports and is advisory to the Board.



## **CARING COMMITTEE CONSIDERS MENTAL HEALTH**

Lay ministers play a vital role in our congregation, extending the reach of our professional minister. Often those with mental health issues are overlooked by congregations. This year the Caring Committee is considering Reverend Barbara Meyers new book during its regular meetings along with our normal discussions. The Caring Committee's next meeting is scheduled for the third Thursday, January 21 at 3 PM on Zoom. Should you wish to join this group which cares for our members and friends and deepens our connections, please be in touch with Rev. Maddie or Karen Harris, chair.



## **PHONE TREE**

We created a phone tree in March as the Safe at Home period began. This is used to help check on our folks or to get information out rapidly by telephone. If you do not think you are on the Tree and want to be, please let Rev. Maddie or Krystal Johnson know at [uucspoffice@gmail.com](mailto:uucspoffice@gmail.com).



PHONE TREE



# People and Doings

## **2021 FIRST QUARTER SUNDAY OFFERINGS TO BENEFIT**

### **HOUSE FARM WORKERS**

JANUARY 3    FEBRUARY 7    MARCH 7

Our 2021 First Quarter Sunday offerings will be given to House Farm Workers, a citizens' advocacy group who strives to improve housing conditions for those essential workers who plant, cultivate, and harvest the wealth of crops here in the Santa Clara River Valley. Our funds will be combined with other benefactors to maximize benefits. The January collection will begin AFTER the holidays, on January 10 followed by February 7, and March 7.



### **SOCIAL CONCERNS ACTION COMMITTEE**

SCAC will meet on zoom Wednesday, January 20, 4:00 PM.

IMPORTANT NOTE: THIS IS A PERMANENT DATE CHANGE! We will meet from this month forward ON THE THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH, at 4:00pm.

We will be planning for the coming year.



### **MARY A. LIVERMORE SOCIETY**

The Mary A. Livermore Society will meet on Zoom Thursday, January 28 at 11:30 AM



### **CHOIR AND RISE UP SINGING**

#### **WANTED! SINGERS WILLING TO SING SOLO DURING THIS TIME OF COVID**

As you know, Rev. Maddie leads the hymn singing on the Sundays when she is leading the service. We would love to have a singer who would be willing to sing from the Sanctuary on those Sundays when she is not in attendance. Please let Rev. Maddie know if you are interested and she can tell you about the COVID protocols. While we cannot gather at this time, you are encouraged to find ways to sing or listen to music until the choir can gather and the days when we can open the doors to Rise Up Singers. At this point the reality is that it may be as far off as Spring 2021 or even later. Meanwhile, keep listening to music online, drag out your old records, CDs or tapes, keep singing in your house or your front steps, and supporting your favorite musicians and singers as you can.



THE UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN  
CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA

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Santa Paula, CA 93060

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[www.facebook.com/uucsp](https://www.facebook.com/uucsp)



**FEBRUARY newsletter deadline JANUARY 15**



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**Sunday Worship Services at 10:30 am**

Rev. Maddie Sifantus, Minister, Choir Director

Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford, Affiliate Minister

Krystal Johnson, Office Administrator

Vincent Sorisio, Church Musician

Albie Alamillo, Custodian

**Board of Trustees:**

John Nichols, President,

Karen Harris, Vice-President

Jerry Gray, Secretary,

Pat English, Treasurer

Jyl Atmore, Member at Large

**Tech Support Team:**

Evan Holt   Monika Murillo

Michael Gonzalez   Mitch Stone

*Wishing you a very joyful New Year despite these difficult times. We hope that the new year brings you much happiness and prosperity, and that in time the world will be a safe place again. Take care of yourselves and see you on Zoom!*

*Dated Material*  
*Time Value*

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