



# Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula

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

uucspoffice@gmail.com website: uucsp.org

## NOVEMBER 2020 SERVICES, SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM



### NOVEMBER THEME: Spirituality

*Spirituality involves a heightened sense of connection with the deepest part of oneself, with others, and with a transcendent reality, however that is understood. This relates to a desire for wholeness. It can be cultivated and deepened through a variety of spiritual practices. Spirituality has to do with the cultivation of the inner life that we might live with more authenticity, integrity, humility, and compassion.*

#### November 1 Day of the Dead/Samhain Rev. Maddie, Kate English

Our annual service that lifts up the many traditions of this time of the year: Dias de los Muertos, Day of the Dead, Samhain, All Saints Day and All Souls Day. See elsewhere in this newsletter how to send in photos of those gone from our lives this year and years past for a slide show, as well as objects that may be placed on our altar in the Sanctuary.

#### First Sunday Plate to Interface Children and Family Services

#### November 8 The Spirit of Democracy Rev. Maddie Sifantus, Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford

As we write this newsletter, we have no idea how our elections will turn out. Join with Rev. Maddie and Rev. Betty as they consider how it is with our spirits as we head into the end into the holiday season in this pandemic year and after the most important election of our lifetimes, knowing that Democracy is one of our Principles as UUs: “the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.”

#### Tuesday, November 10 Gathering Rev. Maddie, Donna Lynn Caskey

This is a reflective time in our busy week to hear some inspiring music, share some silence and hear spoken word on the theme of spirituality. Led by Rev. Maddie Sifantus who will be joined by Singer-Songwriter, “Banjo-Gal” Donna Lynn Caskey.

#### November 15 The Struggle of Spiritual Symbols Nic Filzen, Pat English

There are many different definitions of spirituality. All words, symbols, struggling to simplify an incredibly complex subject. Struggling to amplify that which is bigger than ourselves. Depending on the definition, how do our individual and communal spiritual practices help us to work through the struggle of spiritual symbols? How does that translate into the way we live our lives? Nic is newly Fellowshiped for UU ministry. He and his family live in Santa Barbara where he is the former Intern for the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara.

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



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**November 22**

**The Meaning of Home**

**Rev. Maddie, Michelle Cowan**

On this Sunday before Thanksgiving, we think of the meaning of home, especially through the eyes of Guest at Your Table from the UUSC (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee) and our own feelings about home in this pandemic year when most people will not find it safe to travel to be with family as in “normal” years. Yes, we will have Guest at Your Table boxes and share our annual communion virtually in our homes!

**November 29**

**Sermons are Funny Things**

**Erik Halseth, Ken Stock**

Given the state and rate of change in our world, we are asked to make adjustments to our lives on a seemingly daily basis. How do we accommodate a future that seems impossible to know, and what sources can we draw on to keep ourselves strong in these times? Erik Halseth is our sponsored seminarian, a student at Starr King School for the Ministry and an Aspirant for Unitarian Universalist professional ministry.

First Sunday in Advent and UUs Back in the Day 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](mailto: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](http://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



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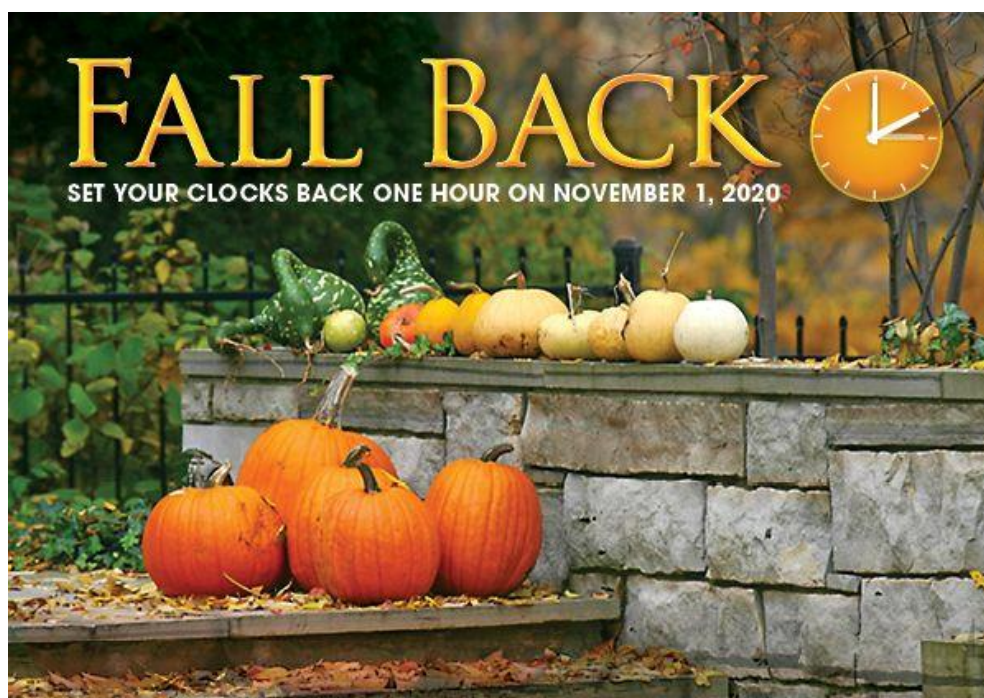
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## DAY OF THE DEAD ALTAR

This year our Day of the Dead service honors all the festivals of this time of year, including the earth-based roots of Samhain as well as Dias de Los Muertos, All Souls Day, All Saints Day with a little Halloween thrown in. In this year of Zoom, we will be honoring those who have died in two ways: by a photo slide show during the service on Sunday, November 1 and by collecting objects or photographs to put on the altar in the Sanctuary which will be seen during the service. Please send photographs to [minister@uucsp.org](mailto:minister@uucsp.org) by October 31 or make arrangements with Rev. Maddie to bring your object to the church by October 30. You can also build your own home altar near your Zoom space. And don't forget to turn you clock back the night before the service!



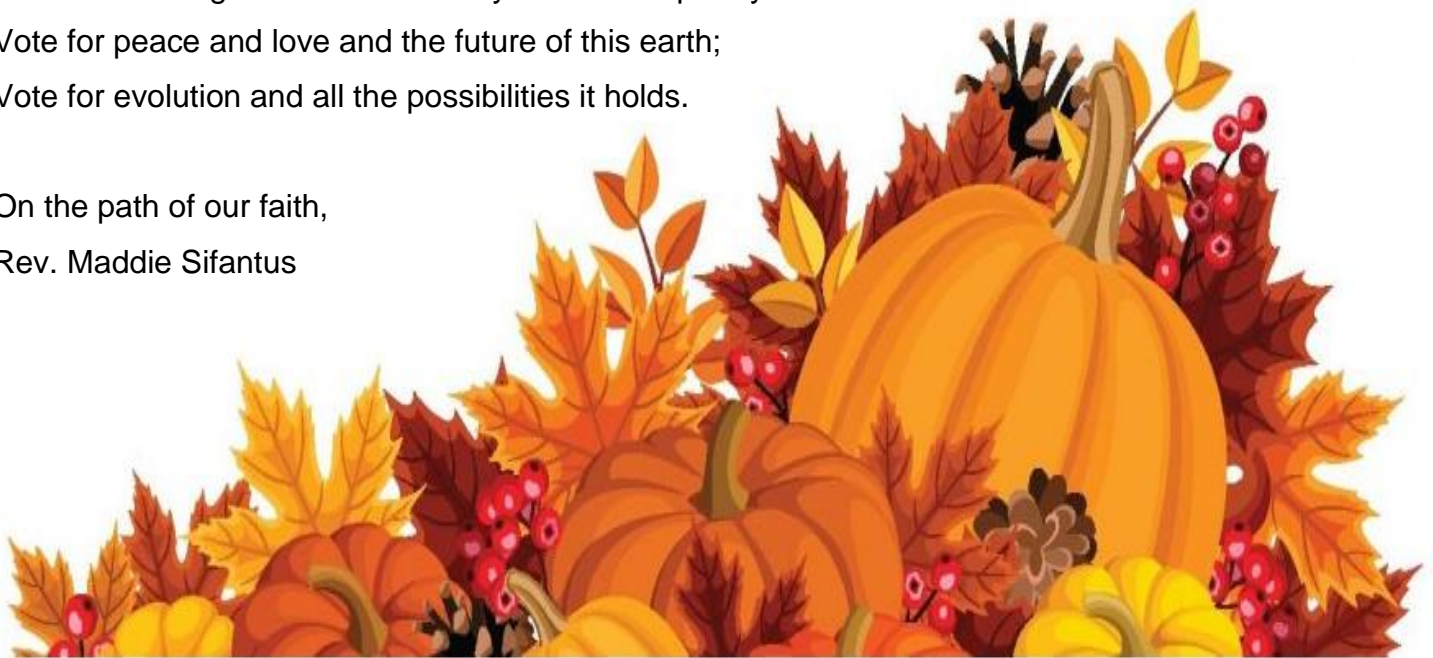
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## Message from the Minister

As I write this week, I am totally aware that most important election of our lifetimes is looming in our near future, on Tuesday, November 3. I hope you have registered and perhaps you have already voted. As Unitarian Universalists, our Fifth Principle is “the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.” Some of us were involved these last months in UU the Vote, helping to encourage people who may have been thrown off the rolls in other states or who didn’t vote in recent elections for whatever reason. All votes need to be made. For us as UUs, voting can be a spiritual practice, an extension of our faith. We can vote for the kind of country we want to live in and for the very future of our planet. I shared this poem by Buddhist teacher and humorist Wes “Scoop” Nisker at a recent service and it sends me voting with a smile:

Vote! Vote! Vote!  
Vote for the birds, the bugs,  
the reptiles, the rabbits, the trees, the grasses,  
The bison, the salmon, the whales, the elephants.  
Vote for the lions and tigers and bears, oh my;  
And for the fox who goes out on the town-o;  
Vote for Kermit the Frog and for Big Bird;  
Vote for Ganesha and Hanuman  
and all the beings who live in our myths and our poetry.  
Vote for peace and love and the future of this earth;  
Vote for evolution and all the possibilities it holds.

On the path of our faith,  
Rev. Maddie Sifantus

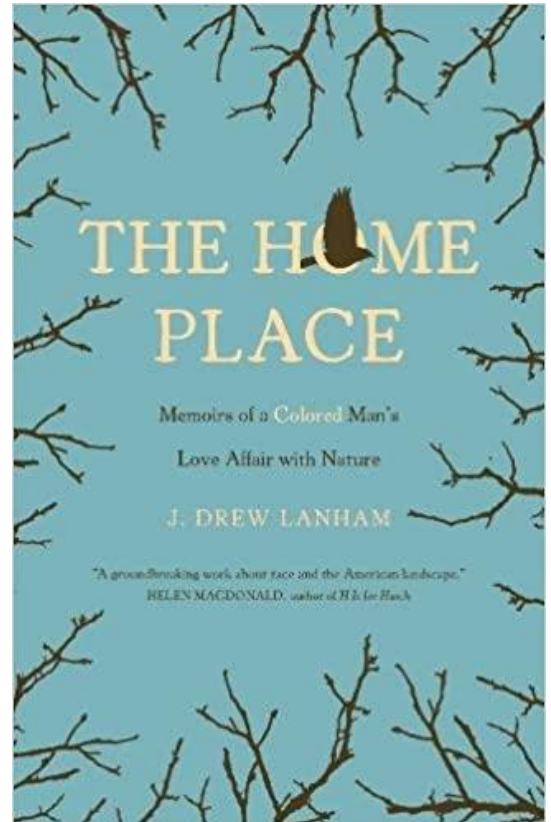




## Message from the Minister

### *WHAT THE PASTOR IS READING*

I don't know about you, but I have done a lot more reading than usual during these months of shutdown from COVID. During August when I was back East in Quarantine with my sister, I read piles of mysteries set in France, including some set in the Dordogne near where my in-laws lived and Brittany where I was married. I enjoyed the natural world around me, both here in Santa Paula and in South Hadley, Massachusetts and read several books by John Hanson Mitchell who writes about the natural world around his home. Currently I am reading his "Field Guide to Your Own Backyard" as well as naturalist J. Drew Lanham's "The Home Place: Memoirs of a Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature". I am finding Lanham's book helpful in understanding white supremacy, race and the American Landscape, as he shares his passion for the natural history of the land where he was raised in South Carolina, "finding joy and freedom in the same land his ancestors were tied to by forced labor". What are you reading?



*Happy Thanksgiving!*

# Message from the Board of Trustees



Greetings from your Board of Trustees. As we enter the 'holiday season' in earnest, not knowing how a Covid Christmas or Pandemic Thanksgiving will feel, we will hopefully remember to find order in the chaos and perhaps make some new traditions. Old isn't the only way and new can be exciting.

Two hundred and fifty years ago, a date most of us would consider "old," Universalism came to the New World. Our 130-year-old Universalist Unitarian Church building has new technology available, thanks to the newly installed infrastructure for social media broadcasting. The board recently discussed how a mixed in-person and Zoom/Facebook Sunday service (and other events and programs) will look.

Our annual meeting has been scheduled for January 31, 2021. It will be different - we can be guaranteed of that. At the October Board meeting, we discussed some of the nuts and bolts of running the meeting and more details of that will be forthcoming. One thing that stood out was that we have a convergence of old and new even here: our traditionally printed Annual Meeting packets will be electronic for the majority of the congregation. The trees will give a sigh of relief for that. Of course, some folks will want to have printed materials and that's ok too. If printing the packet out at home is not possible, we will put in place a method for mailing physical copies.

Committee chairs and all others who typically create reports to be included in the Annual Meeting packets, please be aware that the usual timelines for turning in those reports will be moved up this year. The Board is no exception to this. We will be meeting earlier than usual in January (the seventh, to be exact), so that we can approve material such as the Budget to be presented to the entire congregation. We will have dates and deadlines in next month's newsletter, and reminders in email blasts.

The annual canvass for pledges will have begun by the time you read this. Please return your pledges as soon as you can. The Finance Committee will be creating our 2021 budget and the same deadlines apply to this committee as with all others. Many of the expenses that are incurred while the church is open still apply during our pandemic closure, so please be mindful of this when determining your pledge. We will be opening up again, of course, and when that is feasible, extra care and, unfortunately, expense will be necessary to keep everyone as safe as possible. We thank you for your generosity.

One other major part of the upcoming annual meeting is that the Bylaws Task Force will be presenting an updated set of our Bylaws for the congregation's approval. There has been one Zoom meeting to introduce our work and another is scheduled for this weekend. We are hoping that most of the congregation will have seen the document prior January 31, so that the annual meeting can be run efficiently (and chaos-free... is that possible?). If you haven't attended one of these presentations, please let the Task Force (Mary Beth East, Jyl Atmore, Patricia English, Jerry Gray) know. We want everyone to feel comfortable and knowledgeable.

For those of you still awake after all I've written, please know that especially in these different times, your Board of Trustees is always open to you. If you have a question, please ask one of us. If you have comments to make, please pass them along. If you want to scream, please mute your Zoom screen first. If you want to feel love, understanding and a sense of calm, come to Sunday services via Zoom or Facebook. See you in church!

# GATHERING\*



## \*DEFINITION OF GATHERING

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

## NOVEMBER 10, 2020 at 7:00 PM

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

With Maddie Sifantus and “Banjo Gal” Donna Lynn Caskey

On Zoom, exported to Facebook.com/uucsp

Join Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 731 217 7775

+1 253 215 8782 (to call in by phone)

Password uucsp93060

Free will offering to UUCSP, 740 E Main St, Santa Paula, CA 93060

With Gathering in memo line



# 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

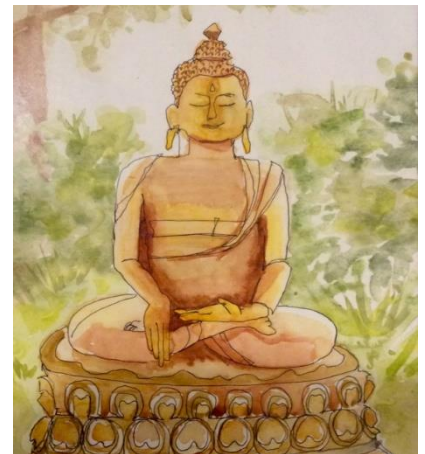
Sit with Rev. Maddie or Jim Cole on Zoom or Facebook livestream

November 4	Jim Cole
November 11	Rev. Maddie
November 18	Jim Cole
November 25	Rev. Maddie

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

*Leadership schedule subject to change*

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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

## NEW: Meet the Members!

While we're unable to meet face-to-face in worship and coffee hour, and via committee meetings and events, we thought it would be nice to keep and deepen connections up by providing a member profile each newsletter, starting with the members of your Board of Trustees. Whether you are getting to know someone for the first time, or getting to know something new about them, we hope "Meet the Members" will help to get and keep us connected despite the need for social distancing. For more information, please contact Rev. Maddie at [minister@uucsp.org](mailto:minister@uucsp.org) or Krystal Johnson at [uucspoffice@gmail.com](mailto:uucspoffice@gmail.com)

*This month we send our love and best wishes to our member Donna Hamer who has moved to Ferndale, Washington to be near her son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren. She will continue to be connected to us through Zoom and Facebook and will be looking into the UU congregation in nearby Bellingham as well as a community chorus.*



## Member Profile Donna Hamer Moore

Capital Fund Trustee, choir member

**Age:** 76

**Occupation:** Retired Paralegal

**Residence:** 6189 N. Beulah Ave., Ferndale, WA 98248  
(after 10/26/20)

**E-mail:** [ddhamer@gmail.com](mailto:ddhamer@gmail.com)

Cell phone: 805-746-6587

**What is your faith of origin?**

Generic Christian, very simple and basic

**How did find out about Unitarian-Universalism?**

I was living in Fillmore when I turned 40 years of age. I felt it was time to look for a spiritual home. The Christian churches in Fillmore were too fundamental for me, so I looked into churches in Santa Paula. I found the

Universalist Unitarian Church there and Marjorie Leaming was the Minister. I went to see what it was about, loved Marjorie's sermons, was invited to be part of the Mary A's, and joined the church.

**Why UUCSP?** It wasn't too far away, and I liked the minister and the congregation members.

**What do you find/ hope to find here?**

I love the historic church building and the feeling of peace and quiet I have when I am inside. I like being reminded of the history of the denomination, the lives and contributions of the founders and leaders, and how I can lead a good life following the principles and guidelines of the faith.

**If you could have dinner with any religious/spiritual leader, past or present, who would you choose and why?**

Mahatma Gandhi because he made such a difference in the world through practicing non-violence.

# People and Doings

## **NEWS FROM AMONG US** November 2020

- Jan Shepherd is once more at her home in Santa Paula with care coming in. Cards may be sent to her at 500 W Santa Maria St, #147, Santa Paula, CA 93060
- Our prayers are with our member Pat English who is going through some significant medical tests.
- 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 this time of the 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 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).



## **SIP AND CHECK-IN WITH REV. MADDIE TUESDAYS NOVEMBER 10 AND 24 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. Your Safe Congregation Team is Rev. Maddie, Erik Halseth, Ken Stock, Karen Harris representing the board, Pat English on fiduciary safety, Krystal Johnson from the staff and our friend Sharon Kufeldt. The next meeting is November 13 at Noon on Zoom. The Safe Congregation Team reports and is advisory to the Board.

# People and Doings

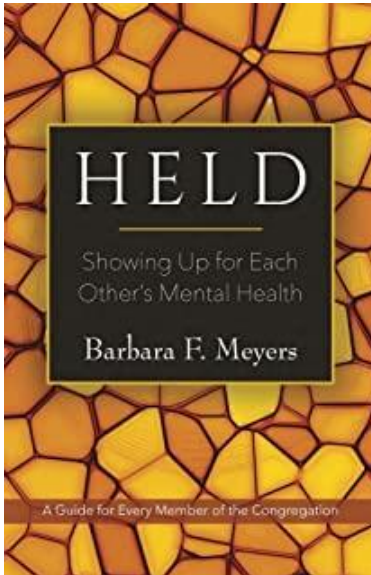
## **MARY A. LIVERMORE SOCIETY**

The Mary A. Livermore Society will meet the THIRD THURSDAY, NOV. 19, 11:30 am as our usual 4th Thursday is Thanksgiving.

## **SOCIAL CONCERNS ACTION COMMITTEE**

The Social Concerns Action Committee will meet Wednesday, Nov. 11, at 4:00 on zoom.

## **CARING COMMITTEE**



### **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 will be 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, November 19 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).



## **CHOIR AND RISE UP SINGING**

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. You might like to check up Rise Up Singing's Daily Song of Hope by going to <https://www.riseupandsing.org/songs/daily>





# People and Doings

## **THANKSGIVING, COMMUNION AND A GUEST AT YOUR TABLE:**

In this pandemic year, our family Thanksgiving Service, which is the Sunday before Thanksgiving, November 22, will, of course, be on Zoom. We will share communion on Zoom with a cornbread muffin which will be delivered to the homes of our members and friends (see below).

Each year on this Sunday we participate in the annual Guest at Your Table program of the Unitarian

Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) which raises support for and awareness about their work to advance human rights. This year their program theme is **The Meaning of Home, which will also be the theme of our service.** For many of us, our relationship with home has intensified this year. The pandemic has given many of us new appreciation for, and concerns about, the places we call home and the centrality of these places in our lives.



Since UUSC works in more than 20 countries, with over 60 grassroots partners, there are thousands of individuals involved in and who benefit from the work that our members make possible. The program is an opportunity to celebrate grassroots partnership, support human rights, and learn about just four of these individuals – the “guests” in Guest at Your Table. We collect our change or donations daily in the GAYT boxes which are then collected, and the total of the funds are sent from UUCSP to the UUSC. You can also write a check to UUCSP with UUSC or Guest at Your Table in the memo line. Boxes will be collected in early 2021.



***We need several mini-cornbread muffin bakers and some folks willing to drive locally to supplement our Caring Committee members to drop a Guest at Your Table box with a muffin for our Sunday communion at members and friends' homes on Saturday, November 21. Please be in touch with Rev. Maddie at [minister@uucsp.org](mailto:minister@uucsp.org) or a Caring Committee member, Karen Harris, chair, if you can help.***

# People and Doings

## 4th QUARTER FIRST SUNDAY PLATE OFFERING

NOVEMBER 1

DECEMBER 6



Again, this year for this last quarter we will support Interface Children & Family Services, thereby providing many needed services for our fellow Santa Paula residents now during this pandemic. Thanks to our tax-deductible year-end gifts this time last year at year, Interface provided direct services to 1,378 adults, teens, and children who live in and around Santa Paula, Fillmore and Piru. Interface also provided critical information and referral services to 1,005 community members via 211 Information & Assistance.

By calling 211 (or texting their zip code to 898211), people are able to access help right when they need it right there in their homes, thanks to remote access. Be it assistance for problems relating to domestic violence, mental health issues, child abuse prevention, or trauma treatment, help is forthcoming. No more re-arranging schedules to comply with difficult appointment times; no more transporting the children along for lack of childcare. Such accessibility sustained critical services like mental health counseling sessions for our valley residents, especially during the pandemic, hopefully bringing about greater health, sustainability, and wellbeing to our corner of the County.

We are fortunate in having easy access to Interface's many services. Let's help Santa Paulans and Santa Clara River Valley residents get the professional counseling services they need. Let's support Interface!

*Because Black Lives Matter.*

*Because this is good work.*

*Because of the inherent worth  
and dignity of EVERY person.*

## Walking Each Other Home

2nd Thursday of Each Month at 7pm via Zoom

Register: <https://bit.ly/weohuucsp>



A monthly discussion group addressing racial justice in both a personal and community context. We will be utilizing articles, videos and our individual perspectives to inspire reflective discussion and self work. Kate English will facilitate. For more information call or text 805-207-5013.



THE UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN  
CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA

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



DECEMBER newsletter deadline NOVEMBER 15

Sunday Worship Services at 10:30 am

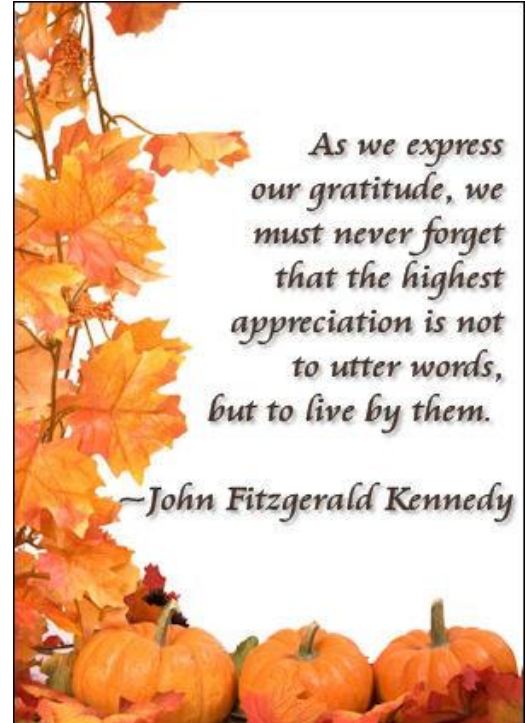
Rev. Maddie Sifantus, Minister, Choir Director  
Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford, Affiliate Minister  
Krystal Johnson, Office Administrator  
Vincent Sorisio, Church Musician  
Albie Alamillo, Custodian

Board of Trustees:

John Nichols, President,  
Karen Harris, Vice-President  
Jerry Gray, Secretary,  
Pat English, Treasurer  
Jyl Atmore, Member at Large

Tech Support Team:

Erik Halseth  
Michael Gonzalez  
Evan Holt



*Dated Material*  
*Time Value*

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