



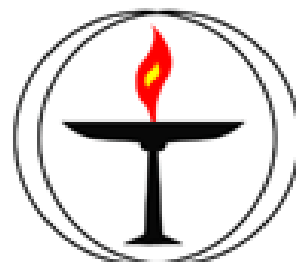
Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula

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

FEBRUARY 2021 SERVICES, SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM

FEBRUARY THEME: Mercy

The prophet Micah counseled us, "To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God." These qualities are universal and transformative. Justice and humility are important, but it is the love of mercy that is crucial. To love mercy is to understand how very important it is in human relations. Mercy is a grace because it is not deserved. It allows a person to return to life with dignity.



February 7 Does a Bear Think in the Woods? Dr. Audrey Vincent, Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford

Perhaps more to the point, are we smart enough to know? Such ponderings invite us into eco-theology, highlighting our annual tribute to the natural world in celebration of Groundhog Day. Rev. Audrey will share the latest findings on bear intelligence and what that might say about us humans in our relationship to nature.

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

February 9 Gathering Rev. Maddie, Lorin Rowan

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 Mercy. The music will be provided by Singer-Songwriter Lorin Rowan who has performed in our Concert Series and on Sunday mornings. Led by Rev. Maddie.

Tuesday, February 14 Side With Love Sunday Livestream Worship

This year Valentine's Day is the last day of the 30 Days of Love from the UUA's Side With Love that Rev. Maddie mentioned in her MLK Reflection. The 30 days began on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. It is an opportunity to lift up the ways Unitarian Universalists and many of our partner organizations are building and organizing by taking bold, courageous action for intersectional racial justice. More details in your Friday emails in February.

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



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**Rev. Maddie, Mary Nelson**

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Rev. Maddie, Ellen Deeb

Leslie Nichols

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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.

<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

As I am writing this column, the Board, the Office and I are in a flurry of preparing for the Annual Meeting of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula as well as our Treasurer Patricia English's Celebration of Life. Of course, anyone can attend our Annual Meeting but only our Members can vote. We are grateful for the three members who have joined since last year's meeting: Ariel Alexander, Beverly Holliday and most recently Mitch Stone. Ariel was recognized at our New Member Celebration on Flower Sunday last June; Beverly and Mitch will be recognized on Easter Sunday before I leave on Sabbatical. You can see more about Mitch elsewhere in this newsletter. This has led me to reflect on Membership, especially in the time of a pandemic, and how we can better support our members and those who may be on the path to membership during this time.

As many have been prone to quoting in recent months, Charles Dickens opened his novel *A Tale of Two Cities* with the line, "It was the best of time, it was the worst of times." Last year held plenty of both and we are not out of the woods yet as far as the pandemic is concerned and there are piles of work to do to address our economy, the climate, immigration and so much more. For many of us, our congregation, and our connections to each other have become even more important at this time. How do we deepen our connections when we can't gather in person? How do we reach out to the people who are joining us across the miles? Who are our thought partners here at UUCSP since we do not have a Membership Committee? Who has time to think about it when many of us are just trying to keep our heads above water (even in this dry California winter)—stay healthy, stay safe, do good work, and stay sane?

In the early moments of this crisis that started last March, your board, staff and I concentrated on keeping our current members and friends connected, becoming familiar with various technologies, and helping you learn them as well, and creating a Phone Tree which we recently updated. Then I started seeing new faces in some of the Zoom rooms, and I found ways to reach out to folks if possible. Lately I have been thinking about how to move our Path to Membership online or other ways to welcome and care for folks. I started Sip and Check in With the Minister right away last March and there is a faithful group who comes to that (with others always welcome). We now meet twice a month. What other ways do we have to connect? Would one of you like to host a Zoom cocktail hour? A wine tasting? A book group? A knitting or craft circle? A group to view your travel slides? Teach a class on your favorite subject? The sky's the limit. We have the Zoom Meeting Room that could be used for that. What would be fun for you? What would help you live out our mission of practicing inclusiveness, seeking justice, and fostering spirituality? Let us find more ways to deepen our connections with each other...and stay sane! And be sure to talk with me if you are interested in becoming an official member.

On the path of our faith,

Reverend Maddie



# Sabbatical Moments

## SABBATICAL MOMENT

Rev. Maddie has completed her Sixth Year as minister at the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula and will take the first half of the six months Sabbatical she has accrued in 2021. Starting with this newsletter there will be Sabbatical Moments and she will preach on what a Sabbatical is in late March, leaving for three months followed by some of her vacation time, after Easter Sunday. At our



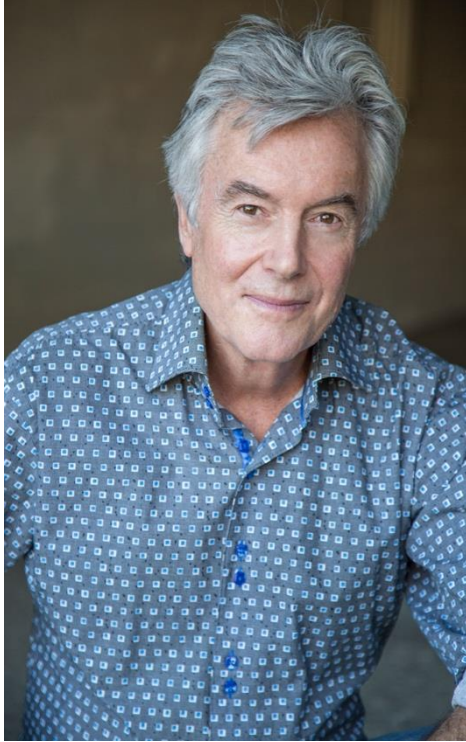
January Board of Trustees meeting, Nicholas "Nic" Filzen was affirmed as half time Sabbatical Minister from April through June. He is a newly fellowshipped UU minister who will be ordained in March jointly by our congregations in Santa Barbara and St. Petersburg (FL) on March 7. A Sabbatical Planning Committee has been meeting since July which will plan for this time which can be an opportunity to try out different things and for folks to step up to the fill the gaps. You will be hearing much more about it and about Nic...but for now, welcome Nic! The Sabbatical Team includes Krystal Johnson, MaryBeth East, Kate English, Rev. Betty, and Karen Harris. The next Sabbatical Planning meeting will be February 3 on Zoom. Please share any questions or concerns with Rev. Maddie or the Team members.



*Welcome*



# ***GATHERING\****



## **\*DEFINITION OF GATHERING**

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

## **FEBRUARY 9, 2021 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 Singer Songwriter Lorin Rowan

Free will offering for the Gathering musicians

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)

Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula, 740 E Main Street, Santa Paula

# 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 or Jim Cole lead Meditation on Wednesday evenings at 6 PM, on Zoom or livestreaming from our Facebook page. We offer socially distanced yoga in our rose garden with no access to the building. Be in touch with Lisa Hammond for more information. Our Spirit 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?

### MEDITATION PRACTICE GROUP

WEDNESDAYS AT 6 PM

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

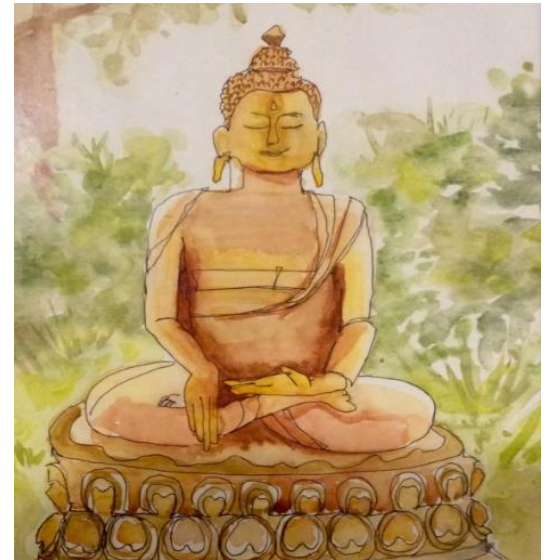
February 3 Rev. Maddie

February 10 Jim Cole

February 17 Rev. Maddie

February 24 Jim Cole

*Leadership schedule subject to change*



*Image: Lynn Holbein*

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7312177775>

Meeting ID: 731 217 7775 Passcode: uucsp93060

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

### SOARING HEARTS YOGA

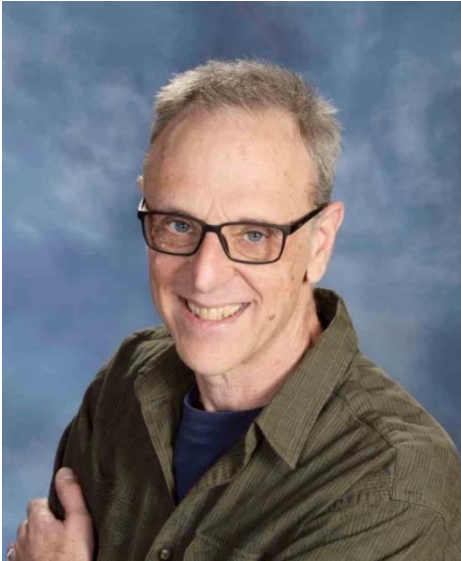


Soaring Hearts Yoga invites you to join them in their shady outdoor space on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 AM. Bring your own mats and props. No access to the building. Please contact Lisa Hammond at 831-801-2276 or [soaringheartsyoga@gmail.com](mailto:soaringheartsyoga@gmail.com) for more information.

# People and Doings

## Meet the Members! Our Newest Member, Mitch Stone!

*While we're unable to meet face-to-face at this time 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. 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).*



**Name:** Mitch Stone **Age:** 65 **Occupation:** Historian

**Residence:** 1328 Woodland Dr, Santa Paula

**E-mail:** [mitchstone@me.com](mailto:mitchstone@me.com)

**Cell phone:** 805-990-2367

*Mitch is the husband of our member Judy Triem and a member of our Tech Team, as well as the Coordinator of our Friday night classic film series in non-pandemic times.*

**What is your faith of origin?** Reform Judaism.

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

As someone who's been a "friend" of the church for probably more than 25 years, it's difficult to remember when I didn't know, but I'm sure it was mainly through Judy (Triem). I've also known innumerable other longtime members over the years.

### **Why UUCSP?**

It seems as if I've been member of the church for such a long time, without having actually taken the step of joining. This was the time for me overcome that personal inertia and to commit to being a member in a more definite way. This year of having to gather online actually made the decision easier, or maybe it simply took away the last of my excuses! I hope I will be able to keep it up when we can be in the same room together again. I'm really looking forward to it, as we all are.

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

It's difficult for me to say, exactly, and I hope that's okay! Actually, I can't imagine a faith community more open to not being able to say exactly than this one, so maybe that's the best explanation. I fell away from religious life as a teenager and assumed I would probably never be interested in it again, but then in reality I've been a member of this faith community forever without acknowledging it. Especially over this past year I came to recognize that I had been taking more comfort from it than maybe I had understood. So, I hope to find more of that, and I also hope to find ways to give some of it back.

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

It's probably going to sound as if I am not taking this question completely seriously, but it's only because I can say honestly, I've never thought about this before, and the first spiritual leader who came to mind is not the least bit well known. It was Rabbi Goldman, who led our congregation in New Jersey (of which my parents were founding members) when I was a child. He was young, big-hearted, and rode a motorcycle to synagogue. He was a cool Rabbi. As long ago as that was, I remember him well and I realize now what a huge impression he must have made on an antsy child unhappy to be confined to a folding chair every Friday night. Maybe it's simply nostalgia but I think it would be great to talk to him again about human and spiritual matters. I'd like to believe he would be just as cool now as he was then.

# People and Doings

## **NEWS FROM AMONG US February 2021**

- Our beloved member and Treasurer Pat English died early January 2, 2021. Our thoughts and prayers are with her children Kate and Travis and all her many family, friends, and colleagues. Rev. Maddie officiated at a green graveside service for the immediate family on January 12 at Joshua Tree Memorial Park and a Zoom Memorial Service on January 23. We will miss her more than words.
- We are excited to welcome our newest member (but certainly no stranger to us!) Mitch Stone. Please see more about him on the Meet the Members page.
- Our longtime custodian Albie Alamillo and her husband Johannes (John), who is our sometime handyman, both are recovering from COVID-19 which they got from their granddaughter. We wish them both a speedy recovery. They will not be cleared to be in the building until they have notes from their doctors.
- One of our newest members Beverly Holliday is also recovering from COVID-19. Get better soon! Stay safe everyone.
- Our thoughts are with our member Mary Nelson lost her brother Charlie after a period of declining health on January 16.
- Our friend Diana Worthington lost her mother, Nancy, after a long illness. Cards may be sent to Diana at 1025 Hillside Drive, Santa Paula, CA 93060.
- 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 FEBRUARY 9 AND 23**

**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



# People and Doings



## **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 two new members 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 February 10 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**



**Santa Clara Valley Hospice**  
A MEDICAL LENDING PROGRAM

Our Caring Committee presents Susanna Willeford, the Executive Director of our local Santa Clara Valley Hospice will attend our February meeting on Thursday, February 18 at 3 PM at Zoom Meeting Room. All are invited to hear of the offerings of this organization which has been serving Santa Paula, Fillmore, Piru, Somis, Saticoy and East Ventura for over 40 years.

Lay ministers play a vital role in our congregation, extending the reach of our professional minister. Let Rev. Maddie or Karen Harris, chair, know if you have interest in serving this committee which will be all the more important when Rev. Maddie is on Sabbatical this year. We will be returning to our discussions of *Held: Showing Up For Each Other's Mental Health* by Rev. Barbara Meyers at our March 18 at 3:00 PM meeting

## **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



## **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.

# People and Doings



## **SOCIAL CONCERNS ACTION COMMITTEE**

The Social Concerns Action Committee will meet Wednesday, February 17 at 4:00 PM on Zoom.



## **MARY A. LIVERMORE SOCIETY**

The Mary A. Livermore Society will meet Thursday, February 25 at 11:30 Am on Zoom.



## **2021 FIRST QUARTER SUNDAY OFFERINGS TO BENEFIT** **HOUSE FARM WORKERS**

**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.



# People and Doings



## Protecting Youth from Recruitment into Online Hate

with

Shelly Tochluk, Ph.D.

Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 p.m. PT (via Zoom)



"As the nation wrestles with the impact of a pandemic and a moment of racial reckoning, it is incredibly important to pay attention to how white nationalists work to take advantage of this historical moment that has many youth spending more and more time online." Parents, teachers, and others need to fully "understand the scope of the threat, recognize the warning signs, and interrupt the indoctrination." -Shelly Tochluk

**Shelly Tochluk, Ph.D.**, is an educator with a background in psychology and has spent years as a researcher, counselor, and teacher in California's public schools. Dr. Tochluk now works with AWARE-LA (Alliance of White Anti-Racists Everywhere-Los Angeles) and trains teachers as a Professor of Education at Mount Saint Mary's University-Los Angeles.

Co-sponsors: Buen Vecino, Educators Doing Justice, Justice in the Classroom, and Showing Up for Racial Justice – Ventura County (SURJ)



Please register in advance here:

<https://chaliceuu.breezechms.com/form/4ba0965374142533>

*Our Mission: To nurture spiritually courageous people who transform the world through justice and compassion.*

OUR PROGRAM IS FREE BUT DONATIONS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

Chalice Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Conejo Valley  
3327 Old Conejo Road, Newbury Park  
[forum@chaliceuu.org](mailto:forum@chaliceuu.org)

# People and Doings

## PACIFIC WESTERN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

**Saturday, February 13, 2021**

**12:00 pm - 5:00 pm PST**

**Type of event: Celebration**



This has been a year and we have done many things to Love Right Through all the challenges. Join us for an afternoon of celebrating our accomplishments and challenges with sharing from spotlighted congregations. Engage with small groups around shared identity and how that impacts church and life. Hear what is happening for good in the world and opportunities yet to come.

Regional Assembly will run mid-day Saturday opening with a lively celebration, welcoming and congregational spotlights before a break headed into identity-based discussion groups and back for

The Pacific Western Region encompasses 4 districts, each of which may gather during the weekend as well. Register once & stay informed. Mountain Desert District will add a Saturday morning business meeting, and Pacific Northwest District will gather socially at that time. Other districts are still determining details.

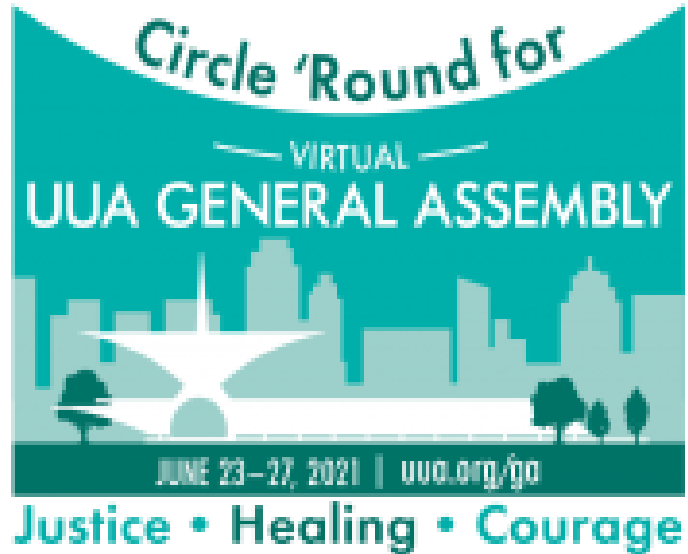
Copy the [Google \(ICS\)](#) or [Outlook \(ICS\)](#) link address to subscribe to this event (or download the file to import it) in a program which supports the iCal format.

Zoom link provided to registrants

For more information contact [pwr@uua.org](mailto:pwr@uua.org).

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People and Doings

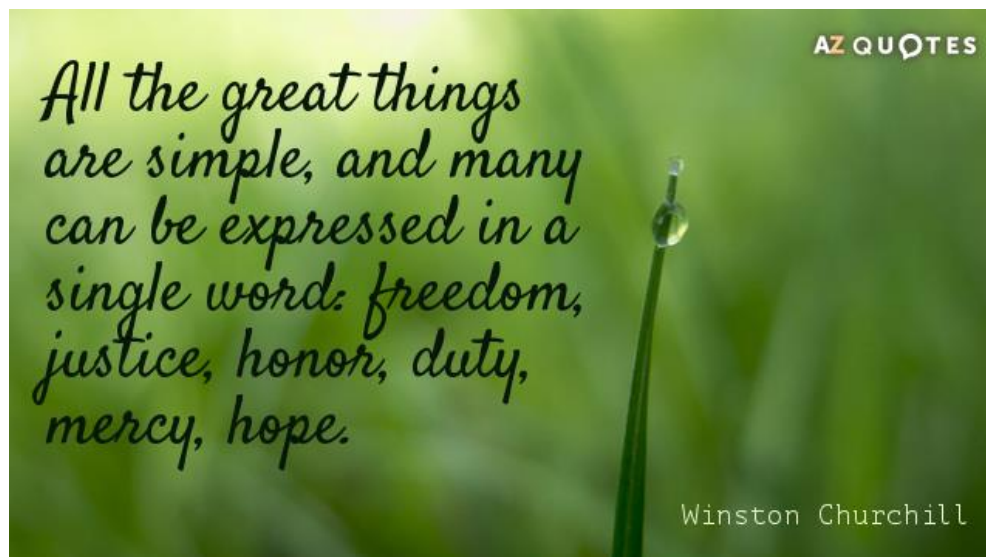


General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Participants worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend; congregations must [certify](#) annually to have voting delegates

The UUA Board of Trustees has passed a resolution making the 2021 UUA General Assembly a **100% virtual event**. Let's reach record-breaking attendance **June 23-27, 2021!**

Why Virtual General Assembly?

General Assembly is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists, where we conduct business of the Association, explore the theological underpinnings of our faith, and lean fully into our mission and principles. That remains true even when we cannot gather physically. Last year, GA had more than 4,900 registered attendees participate from remote locations around the world. Although we give up the face-to-face interaction and hugs that are prevalent when we meet in-person, we retain our dedication to community and make our experience more accessible and more environmentally sustainable.



THE UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN
CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA

740 East Main Street
Santa Paula, CA 93060

Office: 805-525-4647

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www.uucsp.org

www.facebook.com/uucsp



March newsletter deadline FEBRUARY 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:

New lineup for the Board of Trustees next month

Tech Support Team:

Evan Holt Monika Murillo

Michael Gonzalez Mitch Stone

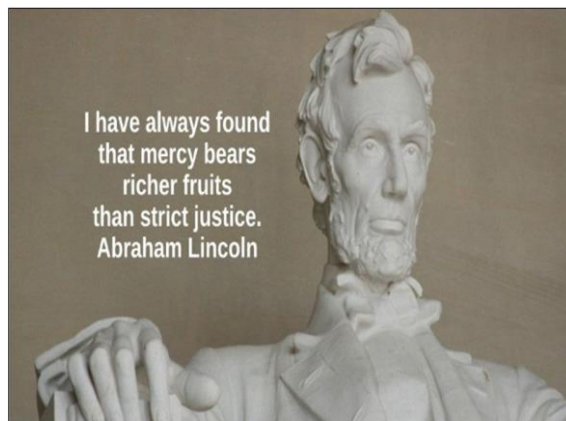


Image by Matthew Morris from Pixabay

*Dated Material
Time Value*

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