

Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula

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

uucspoffice@gmail.com website: uucsp.org

January Theme: Story

Welcome to a new story!
Welcome to a day unwritten.
We gather to speak of possibility.



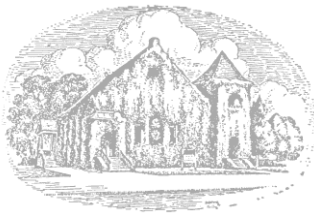
We remember the losses,
we celebrate the victories.
We embrace the possible
over than the probable,
weaving a story of hope.

Join us in the new story.
Join us in the day unwritten.
Join us in the future of possibility.

~Rev. Dr. David Breeden



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



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JANUARY SERVICES, SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM

Sunday, January 5 The Burning Bowl John Nichols and Jerry Gray

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.

Sunday, January 12 Make Radical Love Our Super Power

Dr. Roberto Vargas and MaryBeth East

More than behaviors and feelings, love is vital force energy that can expand our intelligence and power to create miracles of positivity. Our times are calling us to expand our abilities to uplift courage, goodness, and healing. When we come to recognize and practice love as *porvida* life energy we can expand our intelligence and power to create miracles of positivity. This sermon will focus on using intention, breath, prayers, and movement for practicing Radical Love.

Bio: Dr. Roberto Vargas is a nationally recognized organization psychologist who provides leadership coaching and team building for proactive organizations seeking to be their best. During his activist career, Roberto co-founded several Latino counseling centers, taught at the University of California at Berkeley, and authored the book, Family Activism: Empowering Your Community Beginning with Family and Friends. This Sunday he is more so present as an indigenous Porvida Teacher sharing about spirit and love.

Sunday, January 19 Future of Churches and Religions in America

Dr. Arik Greenberg and Ellen Deeb

Dr. Greenberg will be speaking about the crisis facing religious houses of worship in North America and the West, focusing on the decline in religious affiliation and attendance, and why this matters. He will emphasize the work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., among other faith-based activists, as a model for how religions can be useful in the 21 st century and beyond.

Bio: Dr. Arik Greenberg (PhD, President) is the founder of the Institute for Religious Tolerance, Peace and Justice, and is an ardent advocate for interfaith dialogue and collaboration as pathways to world peace. Having studied numerous world religions, he received his Ph.D. in Religious Studies from Claremont Graduate University, specializing in New Testament and Christian Origins, with emphasis on the diversity of belief within early Christianity. He currently serves on the Theology faculty of Loyola Marymount University as Clinical Assistant Professor in Interreligious Dialogue. The founding of the Institute is the culmination of his vision, the realization of his dreams and his life's work in the years to come. His spiritual memoir, The Exile Trilogy, was published by Enlightened Religion Press in 2023.

Sunday, January 26 Purple Not Just a Color

Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford and Thomas Weisbecker

Most of you know that Rev. Betty wears purple almost every day. But what you probably don't totally understand is why she does it and the ways that could make a difference for you too. So, please come on the last official Sunday she will be at UUCSP and discover mysteries and meanings for yourself. It will be a time for new possibilities, leave-taking, and celebration.

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Message from Congregational Director

Dear UUCSP Members and Friends,

It is my distinct honor and privilege to serve this wonderful community as your first Congregational Director. I am deeply inspired by the vibrant spirit of UUCSP and excited to support our shared journey of connection, growth, and service.

My primary responsibility will be to facilitate our dedicated Worship Team in the planning and execution of our excellent worship services. I look forward to collaborating with our talented members to ensure our worship continues to be meaningful, inclusive, and enriching for all who join us.

In addition, I will be available during weekly office hours for visits, consultations, and to provide care and support to each and every one of our members and friends, including collaborating with our Caring Committee to offer additional assistance in times of need.

I bring to UUCSP eight years of ministry experience, including six years with the Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles, and two years with the United Church of Christ in Dallas, Texas. While in Dallas, I also had the privilege of serving at the Cathedral of Hope's Interfaith Peace Chapel. Over the years, I have held roles as Youth Minister, Resident Minister, Director of Spiritual Formation, and Director of Congregational Life.

My academic background includes a master's degree in theology from Loyola Marymount University, and a master's in transpersonal psychology from Sofia University in Palo Alto, CA. Theologically, I embrace the mystery, wonder, and paradox of life, with a spirit of hope, curiosity, and reverence.

Since moving to Santa Paula in 2021 from Morro Bay, my husband Vibay and I have been delighted to call this vibrant and welcoming community our home. We feel incredibly fortunate to be part of such a loving and supportive congregation, and I look forward to deepening our shared connections in the months and years ahead. Thank you for entrusting me with this role—I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to serve our congregation, to grow alongside you, and to support the continued flourishing of UUCSP!

With gratitude and joy,

Thomas J. Weisbecker
Congregational Director
Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula

Message from Board of Trustees

The Annual Meeting of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula will be held via Zoom at 12:30 p.m. on January 26, 2025 - after the Sunday Service and a short break. Election of three Board trustees, one Capital Fund trustee, one Cash Reserve Fund Trustee, two Committee on Congregational Life members, and next year's Nominating Committee team will occur.

In addition to these elections, we will vote to adopt our 2025 operating budget. We will hear from our Board President, and several committees will augment their written reports. Those written reports, the budget and complete agenda, along with the minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting (the "packet") will be sent via email to members after the Board of Trustees accepts the budget submitted by the Finance Committee, which should happen at the January 16 regular board meeting.

The Board of Trustees is proposing the repeal of Amendment II (Cash Reserve Fund) from our church's bylaws. The Amendment was created when the receipt of revenue was uncertain, and the Board believes it has become archaic and cumbersome. There will be a request for a twofold vote: (1) to first transfer funds in the Cash Reserve Fund to the Operational Savings account, and (2) to then retire the Amendment from the Bylaws. Moving the funds to Savings will keep access to them in the event of an emergency.

During the Zoom 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. Our technology team will be watching for questions, nominations, raised hands and such, and there is the chat feature on Zoom. All who wish to speak will be heard.

If you are one who normally blocks their camera during services, 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.

If you require a printed packet be mailed to you, please advise our Office Administrator Krystal. It should arrive by post with plenty of time for you to familiarize yourself with it. Emailed packets should arrive about a week prior to the meeting. Please make sure that the church office has your current address.

Those who submit reports for the Annual Meeting packets should all have been notified that the deadline is again earlier this year. If you haven't already done so, please send your report in Microsoft Word or plain text format to Krystal by the first week of January.

We ask 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.

If you have any questions, please contact any Board member.

Mitch Stone, President
Ken Stock, Vice President
Ann Hewitt, Secretary
Jerry Gray, Treasurer
Margaret Wilson, Trustee

Spiritual Growth Center

SPIRITUAL GROWTH CENTER

In 2015 we gathered some of activities we already did and those we hoped to do under the umbrella of the Spiritual Growth Center at the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula. It provides opportunities and programs to awaken and sustain love, compassion, service and personal transformation. Our goal is to help individuals discover how spiritual practices, learning, and community service can transform their lives and move the world toward peace and justice. The activities of the center are yoga on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Meditation on Wednesday nights at 6 PM and Twilight Gathering on the second Tuesday of the month, coordinated by Kate English. Over the years we have had Singing Meditation, T'ai Chi, Sound Baths and more. There is room for book discussions, craft events and the sky's the limit. All it takes is the ideas and someone to organize them. For questions be in touch with the office.



SOARING HEARTS YOGA

Soaring Hearts Yoga meets in the Parish Hall. Join them on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 AM.

Bring your own mats and props.

Please contact Lisa Hammond at 831-801-2276 or soaringheartsyoga@gmail.com for more information.

MEDITATION PRACTICE GROUP

*In person in the Parish Hall and on Zoom and FB
Call church office for the Zoom address and password.
Like the FB page: Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula*

January 1 NO MEDITATION

***January 8 with Rev Seikai Luebke of Pine Mountain Buddhist Temple SP
& Thomas Weisbecker***

January 15 with Jim Cole

January 22 with Thomas Weisbecker

January 29 with Jim Cole

EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 6 PM

For Zoom info, email office@uucsp.org ~Free Will Offering



Twilight Gathering

Tuesday, January 14 7:00 PM

Please refer to the Friday Blast or website, www.uucsp.org,
for further details.

In person at the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula
740 E Main Street, Santa Paula
OR ON ZOOM

Free will offering (\$5-20 suggested)

People and Doings

2025 1st QUARTER 1st SUNDAY OFFERING

January 5, February 2, March 2



Poder Popular represents the power of grassroots organizing, which has been essential in driving meaningful social change. By amplifying important voices, it brings a rich community perspective to the table, offering valuable input and raising new issues of concern. It continues to harness the passion for equity and social justice, championing democratic values and striving to fulfill the promise at the heart of the American dream.

Congregation Members and Friends

MaryBeth East is working with Karen Harris, the chair of the UUCSP Caring Committee, to collect primary and secondary contact information for church members in case of emergency. The information will be held in a confidential folder to be accessed by board members, caring committee or church administrator if there is a need. Thank you to all those who already returned a contact form.

You can email MaryBeth at mb526e@gmail.com with the following information or ask for a more detailed information form to be kept on file in the church office.

Primary contact name and phone number:

Secondary contact name and phone number:

Any allergies?:

This request is voluntary with no obligation, but we hope you will consider sharing the information.

MaryBeth and Karen

Universalist Unitarian Caring/Safety Committee

People and Doings

Guest At Your Table

Thank you all who have sent your checks to UUSC or turned them into the church. If not, there is still time to pick up an envelope from the Fellowship Hall and mail it to UUSC or turn it into the church by January the fifth. The UUSC partners with grassroots organizations around the world, who provide disaster relief, food scarcity help, education for families, human rights, including women's issues and gender equality, and environmental issues. Guest At Your Table is personal. We are encouraged to think of a member from one of these communities who would share a meal with us and tell us about their life and hopes. Gifts of \$150 will be matched



SIP AND CHECK IN WITH SHARON KUFELDT TUESDAY, January 14 AT 4 PM ON ZOOM

After a few minutes of casual chat as people arrive, we light a chalice with a reading and then invite people to take turns checking in about what's going on for them, answering the question, "How is it with your spirit today?" If there is still time left after the individual check-in's, the group will chat about topics of shared interest to them all or the monthly theme. We aim to be inclusive of everyone present who wishes to talk or ask questions.



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

SANTA PAULA CINEMA SOCIETY

OLIVER!



Carol Reed's musical "Oliver!" is unabashed family fare, but nevertheless a thoroughly entertaining adaptation of the Dickens classic novel – or more nearly, the Lionel Bart stage musical on which it is truly based. The result is a rare musical masterpiece made in a decade when lavish movie musicals were considered passé. The memorable numbers everybody left theaters humming back in 1968 include "Consider Yourself," "Food, Glorious Food," "You've Got to Pick a Pocket or Two," and "Where Is Love?"

The film's casting may lack obvious star power, but Reed had the good sense to cast Ron Moody, who created the unforgettable Fagin on stage. Jack Wild shines as the mischievous Artful Dodger and Mark Lester delivers an endearing performance as the titular orphan. Also featuring Oliver Reed, Harry Secombe, Hugh Griffith, Leonard Rossiter, Peggy Mount – and a number of other instantly recognizable faces and voices, even if their names are unfamiliar.

While the film certainly does not adhere strictly to Dickens' darker themes, and the sentimentality is often over the top, this remains a visually stunning and emotionally resonant cinematic experience loaded with colorful sets, energetic choreography, and memorable music. It still has the power to charm. Winner of five Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Director. (153 minutes)

SANTA PAULA CINEMA SOCIETY
FRIDAY JANUARY 10, 2025

Unitarian Universalist Church of Santa Paula • 740
E. Main Street • 7PM • Free! • Enter Side Door

People and Doings

THE SOCIAL CONCERNS ACTION COMMITTEE

Our January meeting will be held online on January 15th at 3:00. As there is much to discuss these days with possible mass deportation, we have decided to change the length of our meetings from 60 to 90 minutes.

Please feel free to join us during these worrisome times. Other relevant topics will be brought up as well! Hope to see you then!

UNIVERSALIST-UNITARIAN CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA Social Concerns Action Committee Calls for Ceasefire In Gaza

“As a Unitarian Universalist congregation, we uphold the inherent worth and dignity of every person and affirm our commitment to justice, equity, and compassion in all human relations. We are deeply saddened by the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, which has brought unimaginable suffering to countless lives.

“We call for an immediate ceasefire, an end to the violence, and a commitment to protecting all civilians and troops. We stand in solidarity with those working for peace, justice, and reconciliation in the region. Our faith compels us to reject hatred and division and to advocate for solutions that honor the humanity and rights of all involved.

“Let us move forward with hope and resolve, embodying the values of peace and compassion in our words and actions.”



MARY A. LIVERMORE SOCIETY

Our first meeting of the year will be held in person on Thursday, January 23 in the Parish Hall at 11:30 am! It will feature a presentation from one of our members, Sharon Kufeldt and promises to be quite interesting!

Please bring your own good energy and a sack lunch! Beverage and dessert provided! We look forward to seeing you!

Universalist Unitarian Church
of Santa Paula
Spiritual Growth Center

**Sound Bath &
Tipica Sale to Benefit
Friendship Bridge**

January 25, 2025
1:00-2:30 p.m.

*740 E Main Street
Santa Paula, CA*

\$30 suggested donation

Can't attend but want to help?
Make a donation online at
www.friendshipbridge.org



People and Doings

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT/MEETING	Zoom/In-person
Wednesday	1-Jan	6:00 PM	NO Meditation	both
Thursday	2-Jan	10:30 AM	Yoga	In-person
Friday	3-Jan	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	5-Jan	10:30 AM	Worship	both
Tuesday	7-Jan	9:30 AM	Yoga	In-person
Wednesday	8-Jan	6:00 PM	Meditation	both
Thursday	9-Jan	9:30 AM	Yoga	In-person
Friday	10-Jan	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Friday	10-Jan	9:30 AM	Finance Committee meeting	zoom
Friday	10-Jan	7:00 PM	SP Cinema Society	In-person
Sunday	12-Jan	10:30 AM	Worship	both
Tuesday	14-Jan	9:30 AM	Yoga	In-person
Tuesday	14-Jan	4:00 PM	Sip & Check In	zoom
Tuesday	14-Jan	7:00 PM	Twilight Gathering	both
Wednesday	15-Jan	all day	Feb newsletter deadline	
Wednesday	15-Jan	3:00 PM	Social Concerns Action Committee	zoom
Wednesday	15-Jan	6:00 PM	Meditation	both
Thursday	16-Jan	9:30 AM	Yoga	In-person
Thursday	16-Jan	6:30pm	Board of Trustees meeting	In-person
Friday	17-Jan	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	19-Jan	10:30 AM	Worship	both
Tuesday	21-Jan	9:30 AM	Yoga	In-person
Wednesday	22-Jan	6:00 PM	Meditation	both
Thursday	23-Jan	10:30 AM	Yoga	In-person
Thursday	23-Jan	11:30 AM	Mary A's	In-person
Thursday	23-Jan	5:00 PM	Worship Team meeting	zoom
Friday	24-Jan	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Saturday	25-Jan	1:00 PM	Sound Bath & Tipica Sale	In-person
Sunday	26-Jan	10:30am	Worship	both
Sunday	26-Jan	12:30 PM	Annual Meeting	zoom
Tuesday	28-Jan	9:30 AM	Yoga	In-person
Wednesday	29-Jan	6:00 PM	Meditation	both
Thursday	30-Jan	9:30 AM	Yoga	In-person
Friday	24-Jan	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	

THE UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN
CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA

740 East Main Street
Santa Paula, CA 93060
Office: 805-525-4647



office@uucsp.org
www.uucsp.org
www.facebook.com/uucsp

Sunday Worship Services at 10:30 am

Rev. Maddie Sifantus, Minister Emerita
Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford, Affiliate Minister
Krystal Johnson, Office Administrator
Vincent Sorisio, Church Musician

Board of Trustees:

Mitch Stone, President,
Ken Stock, Vice-President
Ann Hewitt, Secretary,
Jerry Gray, Treasurer
Margaret Wilaon, Member at Large

Tech Support Team:

Monika Murillo Giselle Larios

HOW TO CONNECT WITH UUCSP

**JOIN US SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM IN PERSON,
ON ZOOM**

Read our newsletter which you can find at

<https://uucsp.org/newsletter/>

Contact our office if you want to be added to our
Friday email and our monthly newsletter email or
want to have a nametag for in person events.

Visit our website to see more about UUCSP and see
what's new at www.uucsp.org

Join our Facebook page at

www.facebook.com/uucsp

Dated Material
Time Value

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