



# Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula

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

uucspoffice@gmail.com website: uucsp.org

## *April Theme: Joy*



Joy doesn't simply arise  
It flies.  
It flings.  
No, it is flung.  
It is passed,  
it is spread,  
between you and me,  
between the one who just received a gift  
and the one that has been looking for it,  
for oh so long.  
It's a beautiful and elegant contagion,  
over which we have more control than we know.  
If only we share it.  
If only we notice that joy is not ours to keep,  
but ours to pass on.  
So let's light up the world, friends!  
Joy blesses us with its exuberance,  
so we can make that blessing grow.  
~Rev. Scott Tayler

*April's birth flowers, the daisy and sweet pea, bring joy to April-born individuals. Daisies symbolise innocence and purity and have a rich history dating back to ancient Egypt. Sweet peas, with their sweet fragrance, represent delicate pleasure, friendship, and gratitude.*



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



# Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula

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

uucspoffice@gmail.com website: uucsp.org

## APRIL SERVICES, SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM



### **April 6      *The Thing You've Got to Know is Everything is Showbiz!*** **Thomas Weisbecker and Ken Stock**

From political rallies to media spin, power has never been more theatrical. Inspired by *Springtime for Hitler*, we explore what Bertram Gross called “friendly fascism”—authoritarianism repackaged with a smile, wrapped in spectacle, and sold as entertainment. Rather than overt dictatorship, it emerges through the merger of corporate and state power, using propaganda, media, and bureaucracy to sustain control under a democratic façade. Through reflection and discussion, we’ll consider how Unitarian Universalists can cut through the illusion, interpret the news with clarity, and uphold our values in a world where politics feels like just another show.

**Coffee hour: Stone Soup Sunday**

### **April 13      *Ship of Dreams: When the Unsinkable Sinks*** **Thomas Weisbecker and Ariel Alexander and Ruth Ricards**

The Titanic was more than just a ship—it was a symbol of human ambition, innovation, and, ultimately, hubris. We’ll explore the history of shipbuilding that led to its creation, the fatal flaws that sealed its fate, and the tragedy that unfolded on that fateful night on April 14th, 1912. Yet from disaster came transformation, as maritime industries and safety regulations evolved to prevent future catastrophes. Through history, irony, and reflection, we’ll consider what the Titanic teaches us about progress, resilience, our human condition, and the fine line between confidence and overreach. In its beauty and its downfall, the Ship of Dreams still has much to offer us!

### **April 20      *John and the Realized Eschaton: “Written so That You Will Believe”*** **Thomas Weisbecker and Ellen Deeb**

In the Canonical Gospel of John, Easter is not just a promise of future resurrection, but a present reality. Unlike the synoptic gospels, which look to the second coming of Jesus in the future, John invites us to experience the resurrection now—not as a physical event, but as an inner transformation. John recounts the life of Jesus, not so much as a historical record, but as an allegory to help us realize spiritual truth. The supposed events of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection are not facts to believe in, but symbols that can point us to a deeper understanding of ourselves and our connection to the divine. This Easter, we explore how the resurrection is not something to wait for, but something to awaken to in our hearts—here and now!

### **April 27 Earth Day: Celebrating the Ground Beneath Our Feet** **Ellen Deeb and MaryBeth East**

Join us as we celebrate the sacred ground we all share, and recommit ourselves to its care. On this Earth Day Sunday, Ellen Deeb invites us to reflect on the most universal connection we all share—the very ground beneath our feet! In a world of uncertainty, Earth remains real, steady, and vital. If we seek truth, if we seek shared values, we need look no further than our responsibility to care for this planet. And as Beltane approaches, an ancient Celtic festival celebrating fertility, renewal, and the sacred bond between humans and nature, we are reminded of the deep, life-giving cycles of the earth. We will also observe this Sunday Lesbian Visibility Day, recognizing that just as the land sustains us all, so too does the strength and presence of those who still struggle for recognition and belonging.

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

# Message from Congregational Director

Dear Beloved Community,

As we move into April, our theme is Joy—not just fleeting happiness, but a deep, sustaining joy that can carry us through *both* triumphs *and* trials! I like to recall the words of the great teacher Imam Muhammed Mehtar Shoayb, who recently visited our congregation in February from the Islamic Center of Conejo Valley—to paraphrase: “*God tests you not when you lose everything, but when you gain it.*” Let us remember that whatever life throws at us, it is by Grace alone that we can behold any life whatsoever.

Last month, we explored the theme of Trust—trust in each other, trust in transformation, and trust in the journey. We set sail with *Simply Messing About in Boats*, reflecting on the simple joys of boating, maritime ethics, and the deeper wisdom of stewardship, starting with our own local Channel Islands National Park. We also walked the spiritual deserts of Lent, finding meaning in solitude, non-attachment, disintegration, and renewal. We welcomed the Spring Equinox with Ostara, as Rev. Rayna Hamre guided us in exploring balance, renewal, and the natural cycles that shape our lives. We also honored World Down Syndrome Day with Karen Meier, who shared the incredible joys and challenges of supporting individuals with special needs. And finally, in commemoration of both César Chávez Day and Trans Visibility Day, we wove together movements for justice, recognizing our shared struggles for dignity and human rights. Thank you so much to all who participated in our wonderful March worship services, and to all who attended! Your love for, and your presence and participation in our community, simply never ever ceases to inspire me!

April brings new opportunities to seek joy in reflection, history, and celebration. First, in recognition of April Fool’s Day, and inspired by the satirical humor of Mel Brooks, come and behold *The Thing You’ve Got to Know is Everything is Showbiz!*, in which we’ll examine how demagoguery, performance, and spectacle have shaped power and politics since the days of Ancient Greece. We’ll also revisit the legacy of the HMS Titanic in *Ship of Dreams: When the Unsinkable Sinks*, in commemoration of the 113th anniversary of that tragic disaster. How did this significant event help reshape maritime conduct for a century, and what insightful lessons might this historic tragedy still teach us today about the human condition? And for the Christian celebration of Easter, which this year is on April 20th, we’ll explore the *nearly Gnostic* Gospel of John’s vision of resurrection versus that of the Synoptic texts; that is, “resurrection” and salvation not as some future event to look forward to, but as a “realized” reality here and now. And finally, as the month of April draws to a close, we’ll celebrate Earth Day, and the Celtic holiday Beltane, honoring the cycles of life, authentic freedom, renewal, and the very ground beneath our feet; also on April 27th, in solidarity with lesbian-identifying members of our community, we’ll commemorate Lesbian Day of Visibility.

Through it all, together let us seek to find joy in wisdom, wonder, and especially the strength of community.

May it be so!

In Joy,

Thomas J. Weisbecker, Congregational Director



# Message from Board of Trustees

Welcome, spring. I remember as a youth that spring cleaning was a big thing. Of course, that youth was spent mostly in Wisconsin where spring meant we could finally open up the house to Mother Nature and “air things out.”

I bring up spring cleaning as I have been considering this month’s topic for a while and want to clear it out of my mental to-do list. There are more than a few new or new-ish members in our congregation who may not know how things are done financially other than sitting through a boring Treasurer’s report at the annual meeting.

Our committees (should!) place requests for budget money during the autumn when the Finance Committee prepares the following year’s budget. They look at what they do and what they would like to do and make their best estimate of what those would cost. Assuming their requests are placed in the budget – and if reasonable, they are – they then have money to work with to do their work for the church.

An excellent example of a committee taking the knowledgeable and thoughtful steps to prepare their budget request is our Worship Team. They carefully determine the number of Sundays we will have guest speakers, figure how many candles we will use during the year, and so much more. Their budget request is made and voted on during the annual meeting.

During the church year when a committee decides that part of their budget monies are to be spent, they can do so in several ways. The easiest way is to buy the item(s) or service(s) and complete a Reimbursement Request form (available from Office Administrator Krystal) and turn it in with receipt(s) of the expenditure(s). Turnaround time for these reimbursements is pretty quick. Another method would be to request the funds ahead of time, if there is a static amount that won’t change before the event or purchase. Again, this would be a request to Krystal, preferably made by the committee chair.

Several things that committees must consider are 1) do we have the money in our budget? 2) does what we want to do or buy fit in with our committee’s charter or purpose? and 3) will it leave us the funds to complete the rest of our proposed work for the year?

In a perfect world, we’d have enough money to do everything for everyone, last-minute thoughts and wishes would be paid-for without worry, and we’d have ample parking and an air-conditioned building. But, I’m sure you’ve guessed it: this isn’t a perfect world. Until it is, please be thoughtful about what you and your committee would like to do and if you have questions or “over budget” requests, come talk with the Board.

And if you are not on a committee, for goodness’ sake find one or two! Committee membership is a wonderful way to get to know each other better and feel ever more part of the family that is the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula. See you in church!

# Spiritual Growth Center

## SPIRITUAL GROWTH CENTER

Discover a deeper sense of connection, purpose, and transformation at our Spiritual Growth Center. Through engaging programs and practices, we cultivate love, compassion, service, and personal growth—empowering individuals to enrich their lives and create a more just and peaceful world.

Our core offerings include:

- Yoga – Energize and restore with weekly classes.
- Meditation – Find stillness and clarity every Wednesday evening.

For more details about any of our offerings, or to bring your ideas for spiritual growth to life, contact the church office.



### SOARING HEARTS YOGA

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

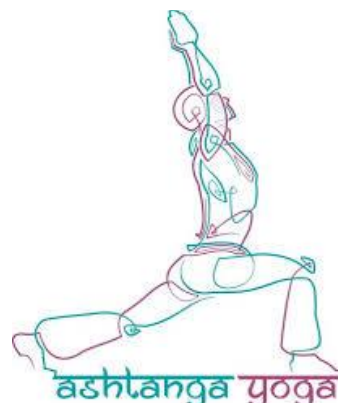
Bring your own mats and props.

Please contact

Lisa Hammond at 831-801-2276 or

[soaringheartsyoga@gmail.com](mailto:soaringheartsyoga@gmail.com)

for more information.



### ALL-LEVEL ASHTANGA EVENING YOGA

Prepare to sweat...

and maybe shed a tear.

Tuesdays at 6 PM in the Parish Hall.

Bring your own mats and props.

Free Will Offering.

Contact Vibay Weisbecker at

818-669-3719 or [Vibay.c@gmail.com](mailto:Vibay.c@gmail.com).

Free will offering

# Spiritual Growth Center



## MEDITATION PRACTICES GUIDED BUDDHIST MEDITATION

Experience authentic zazen with  
Buddhist Master Rev. Seikai Luebke  
from Pine Mountain Meditation Center.  
First Wednesday of each month in the Parish Hall.  
Free Will Offering.

**April 2**

## ZEN MEDITATION PRACTICE

Find your center with alternating Wednesday night Zen  
practice, in person and on Zoom with Thomas Weisbecker.

Check the church calendar for details.

Contact Thomas Weisbecker at 805-856-8120  
or [CongregationalDirector.UUCSP@gmail.com](mailto:CongregationalDirector.UUCSP@gmail.com).

Free Will Offering.

**April 16 & 30**



## GUIDED MINDFUL MEDITATION



A gentle, introspective practice, alternating  
Wednesdays, in person and on Zoom,  
with psychologist Jim Cole.

Check the church calendar for details.

Free Will Offering.

Join us as we explore, reflect, and grow—together.

Contact Jim Cole at 805-607-9890 or  
[jcolepsy@charter.net](mailto:jcolepsy@charter.net).

**April 9 & 23**



# People and Doings



## 2025 1st QUARTER 1st SUNDAY OFFERING April 6, May 4, June 6

This month, our First Sunday plate offering will support Food Share of Ventura County, a vital nonprofit dedicated to feeding those in need. Food Share provides meals to thousands of individuals and families facing food insecurity, relying on corporate and small business support, individual donations, and federal funding. This year, a \$400,000 federal funding cut—equivalent to eight truckloads of food—has significantly impacted Food Share's ability to serve the community. With an annual budget of \$8 million carefully planned in advance, this reduction poses a serious challenge. While only 10% of their funding comes from the federal government, the majority is sustained by the generosity of donors like you.



### **Sip And Check In With Sharon Kufeldt** **Tuesday, April 8 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 will NOT be showing this month**



### **The Social Concerns Action Committee – Wednesday, April 16**

Universalist Unitarians have a long-standing commitment to issues like human rights as well as environmental and social justice issues. Our Social Concerns Action Committee (SCAC) has long been concerned with issues about immigration, detainees, DACA, Dreamers, farmworkers housing and other relevant issues. We meet on zoom the third Wednesday of each month at 3:00. You are each invited to tune in!

# People and Doings

Caring Committee meeting on April 17 at 4pm in the parish hall

## Mary A. Livermore Society – Thursday, April 24

Mary Livermore was a woman's rights activist, educator, journalist/editor, and nurse who lived during the late 19th Century. Our Mary A. Livermore Society ("Mary A's") has held meetings for over 100 years and is the longest standing women's group in Ventura County. We meet in the Parish Hall on the 4th Thursday of each month at 3:00. Our programs are interesting and relevant! Attendees bring their lunches and often there are delicious goodies available. Come join us!

## De Colores presents Four Women Drum Circles

Blanchard Community Library

11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Saturdays, May 17

June 21 (Tentative)

Bilingual

**PODER POPULAR**

Mujeres

Ceremonia de círculo de percusión y  
testimonio

en español Jueves 17 de abril

4:00 – 6:00 pm

Favor de llamar a

Vanessa (805) 616-8272



Judith Lara, Nancy Martin, Vanessa Acosta, Lola Mondragón and Karina Arcia of IPOS Women's Drum at **Justice For All** Women's March, 2024

Please Join us for four (4) women drum circles and meaningful cultural practice including writing, drumming, storytelling and testimonial with Two Spirit Drum Keeper, Lola Mondragón, PhC. Lola, a Chickasaw/Chicana woman and a Veteran of the U.S. Navy, will lead the drum circles and the writing/storytelling workshop.

This event is *LOVE*. Please call Vanessa at (805) 616.8272 to make a reservation. Peace Through Music & Art!

Funding provided by Ventura County Behavioral Health, Mental Health Services Act





## *Just For Fun !!*

### Attract the Bugs That Are Good for Your Plants!

#### What Are Beneficial Insects?

The average backyard is home to thousands of insects, but you may be surprised to learn that only about a tenth of these are destructive. In fact, most are either beneficial or harmless. Beneficial insects fall into three main categories:

- **Pollinators:** We depend on these insects—including bees, butterflies, flies, and moths—to pollinate our garden's flowers.



- **Predators:** These insects eliminate pests by eating them. Ladybugs, praying mantids, and green lacewing larvae fall into this category.



- **Parasitizers:** Like predators, parasitizers also prey upon other insects, but in a slightly different way. They lay their eggs on or in the bad bugs, and when the eggs hatch, the larvae feed on the host insects. Parasitic wasps are the main members of this category.



*Do you have a "Just For Fun" to share in the May newsletter?*

*Please contact or email Krystal at 805-525-4647 or [office@uucsp.org](mailto:office@uucsp.org)*

# People and Doings

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT/MEETING	Zoom/In-person
Tuesday	1-Apr	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Tuesday	1-Apr	6:00 PM	Yoga with Vibay	In-person
Wednesday	2-Apr	6:00 PM	Meditation - Rev Seikai & Thomas	both
Thursday	3-Apr	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Friday	4-Apr	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	6-Apr	10:30 AM	Worship	both
Tuesday	8-Apr	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Tuesday	8-Apr	4:00 PM	Sip & Check In	zoom
Tuesday	8-Apr	6:00 PM	Yoga with Vibay	In-person
Wednesday	9-Apr	6:00 PM	Meditation with Jim Cole	both
Thursday	10-Apr	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Friday	11-Apr	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Friday	11-Apr	9:30 AM	Finance Committee meeting	zoom
Friday	11-Apr	7:00 PM	SP Cinema Society	In-person
Sunday	13-Apr	10:30 AM	Worship	both
Tuesday	15-Apr	all day	May newsletter deadline	
Tuesday	15-Apr	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Tuesday	15-Apr	6:00 PM	Yoga with Vibay	In-person
Wednesday	16-Apr	3:00 PM	Social Concerns Action Committee	zoom
Wednesday	16-Apr	6:00 PM	Meditation - Thomas Weisbecker	both
Thursday	17-Apr	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Thursday	17-Apr	4:00 PM	Caring Committee meeting	In-person
Thursday	17-Apr	6:30pm	Board of Trustees meeting	In-person
Friday	18-Apr	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	20-Apr	10:30 AM	Worship	both
Tuesday	22-Apr	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Tuesday	22-Apr	6:00 PM	Yoga with Vibay	In-person
Wednesday	23-Apr	6:00 PM	Meditation with Jim Cole	both
Thursday	24-Apr	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Thursday	24-Apr	11:30 AM	Mary A's	In-person
Thursday	24-Apr	5:00 PM	Worship Team meeting	zoom
Friday	25-Apr	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	27-Apr	10:30 AM	Worship	In-person
Tuesday	29-Apr	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Tuesday	29-Apr	6:00 PM	Yoga with Vibay	In-person
Wednesday	30-Apr	6:00 PM	Meditation with Thomas Weisbecker	In-person

THE UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN  
CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA

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

[office@uucsp.org](mailto:office@uucsp.org)

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

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



---

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

Thomas Weisbecker, Congregational Director

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

Rev. Maddie Sifantus, Minister Emerita

## 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](http://www.uucsp.org)

Join our Facebook page at

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

*Dated Material  
Time Value*

Universalist Unitarian Church  
of Santa Paula  
740 East Main Street  
Santa Paula, CA 93060