



Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula

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

May Theme: Imagination

The effort of the imagination is to turn the boundary into a horizon because there is no end point for you. The boundary says, Here and no further. The horizon says, Welcome.

~Barry Lopez

The two traditional flowers for May are the Lily of the Valley and the Hawthorn. The Lily of the Valley is a delicate, sweet-smelling flower often associated with humility and sweetness, while the Hawthorn, with its clusters of white or pink blossoms, symbolizes hope and supreme happiness.



Lily of the Valley



Hawthorn

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



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MAY SERVICES, SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM



May 4 *Star Wars Day: May the Fourth Be With You* **Mayor Pedro Chavez and Thomas Weisbecker**

This Star Wars-themed service explores the enduring tension between light and shadow—both in the galaxy and in our own society. Drawing from the mythic power of the Star Wars universe, we'll reflect on how imagination, faith, and moral courage help us face the challenges of our democracy and our daily lives. Join us as we explore how each of us is called to live with purpose, justice, and hope.

About Our Guest Speaker:

Pedro Chavez is the Mayor of Santa Paula and a longtime advocate for education, equity, and community empowerment. He is known for his collaborative spirit, creative leadership, and love for the Santa Paula community.

Stone Soup coffee hour

May 11 *Our Benedictine Mothers: Hildegard of Bingen & Elisabeth of Schönau* **Thomas Weisbecker and Ellen Deeb**

This Mother's Day, we honor the visionary wisdom of two remarkable 12th-century mystics: Hildegard of Bingen and Elisabeth of Schönau. Through music, reflection, and story, we'll explore how these Benedictine women shaped spiritual imagination, ecological awareness, and feminist theology long before their time. A celebration of the Divine Feminine and the enduring strength of mothers in all forms.

May 18 *Celebrating International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia* **Kate English and Ruth Ricards**

Join us for a special service grounded in cultural responsiveness as we recognize the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia. Instead of a traditional homily, Kate English and Ruth Ricards will offer a mini-training on how we can create more inclusive, affirming, and safer spaces for LGBTQIA+ individuals in our congregation and beyond. Together, we'll explore language, allyship, and the real-life impacts of bias—and how we can respond with love and action.

May 25 *One Veteran's Perspective on Memorial Day: Commemorating Those Who Gave All* **Sharon Kufeldt and Thomas Weisbecker**

Sharon Lee Kufeldt joined the U.S. Air Force in 1969 during the Vietnam War, following a family legacy of military service. Her father served in both WWII and the Korean War, and many of her relatives were also veterans. Immersed in the veteran community from a young age, Sharon later became an advocate for peace, serving as Past Commander of American Legion Post #315 in San Francisco and participating in Veterans For Peace. Her reflections appear in the award-winning anthology *Veterans of War, Veterans of Peace*, edited by Maxine Hong Kingston. In her message, Sharon invites us to remember those who gave everything—and to consider the lasting costs of war and the possibility of a better path toward peace for all.

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Message from Congregational Director

Dear Friends,

Together let us acknowledge in our hearts the recent death of **Pope Francis**, a beloved and courageous spiritual leader whose voice resonated far beyond the Roman Catholic Church. Throughout his papacy, Pope Francis championed the dignity of the marginalized, care for our common home, and the importance of dialogue across lines of faith and difference. His legacy will long inspire people of goodwill around the world.

To our Catholic neighbors, friends, and loved ones: we offer our heartfelt condolences and stand with you in grief, gratitude, and solidarity.

I also want to share with our congregation a message from our new friend, **Imam Muhammed Shoayb Mehtar**, who was our guest minister this March, just before the holy month of Ramadan. The Imam recently sent me these kind words:

“I really had a great time at your church. Folks were amazing. It is one of the few places where I have been that really left a very positive impression upon me.”

Well, gosh—me too! I couldn't have said it better. I always have a great time at our church. Folks are amazing, and, well, it's certainly one of the few places I go that truly leaves a lasting, positive impression.

Last month, we were “impressed” in many ways: by the spectacle of authoritarian politics through the irreverent genius of Mel Brooks; by the tragic lessons of the Titanic disaster; by reflections on resurrection—not as a far-off hope, but as a present transformation; and finally, by our celebration of “the ground beneath our feet” for Earth Day. Special thanks to our Worship Team, including Ruth Ricards, Ellen Deeb, MaryBeth East, Ken Stock, Kate English, and our newest team member, Ariel Alexander!

We have an exciting variety of worship services planned for May. Our theme this month is *Imagination*—a force that calls us beyond the reality of what is into the world of what could be. May begins with Star Wars Day, May 4th (“May the Fourth be with you!”), where we’ll explore what the struggle between light and shadow can teach us about our democracy—and about finding the moral and spiritual courage to face the dark side. We’re honored to welcome the Mayor of Santa Paula and proud Star Wars fan, Pedro Chavez, as our guest speaker.

On Mother’s Day, May 11, we’ll travel to the 12th century to meet two remarkable Benedictine mystic “mothers”—Hildegard of Bingen and Elisabeth of Schönau—who broke ground in theology, ecological consciousness, and early feminism. They remind us that visionary feminine voices have long challenged the status quo, especially when the status quo becomes overtly patriarchal and authoritarian.

Later in the month, we’ll recognize the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia with a practical, justice-rooted educational seminar led by Kate English and Ruth Ricards. Together, we’ll explore how we might foster cultural responsiveness and build a community where all people can live, love, and worship in safety and dignity.

Finally, in observance of Memorial Day, our beloved member Sharon Kufeldt will share her personal story as a veteran who has seen the cost of war up close—and who now advocates for peace.

I truly look forward to this wonderful month of worship with you!

**With gratitude and hope,
Thomas Weisbecker**

Message from Board of Trustees

It's been a busy last few months at the UUCSP. But don't we always say that? Yes, we do, but it's true — especially now!

A front-and-center task has been finalizing a contract with our new minister. The ministerial search process has been a long and winding one, but at this writing we are on the verge of a contract signing. In fact, the congregation may know more than I can say at this moment by the time this newsletter lands in your inbox. Getting to this point is a tribute to countless hours of work put in by our Search Team over the past year and a half. (It only seems like longer!)

The anticipated start date for our new minister is September 1, but we expect introductions can be made well before then and we can begin the exciting process of forming this new, productive relationship between minister and congregation. We're confident this will be a match made in... wherever you believe matches are made!

A priority for the Board throughout has been to build on the positive growth and development of the congregation, to preserve all we've gained recently. We were determined to add, rather than simply replace. Doing so has required some fancy financial footwork, including meeting with the Capital Fund trustees to discuss the fund's commitment to next year's budget, many months before we normally have to take up this question.

Another major issue before us is insurance. The property insurance crisis that has befallen the entire state and much of the nation came to our doorstep a few months ago with a notice of the non-renewal of our policy, effective in May.

We have few appealing options. One is to pay much higher premiums for significantly reduced coverage through the very expensive "last refuge" California Fair Plan, or to go without property insurance, at least until the insurance market improves, assuming it does. Note that this does not affect liability coverage, which will continue either way. Again, by the time you read this, the congregation will have met (after the service on April 27) to hear a report from the Board with more numbers attached, and a decision will have been reached. But this is the background.

You may be wondering whether we have the expectation that pledges from members will help with these financial challenges going forward. We certainly do have that hope. If you are reading this as a Friend of the Church now, consider becoming a full, pledging member. If you are wondering how, feel free to approach any member or board member and ask.

These are troubling times in so many respects. We may start our days feeling demoralized and end them exhausted. But the church reminds us, each time we attend or help in any way we are able, that we are not in this alone, and of the importance of having this community, this refuge, and this support structure. It's there for you, and it happens only with you.

Gratefully,
Mitch
Board President 2025

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

for more information.



MEDITATION PRACTICES GUIDED ZEN 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.

May 7



MEDITATION PRACTICE

Find your center with on 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

Free Will Offering.

May 14, 21, & 28

People and Doings



2025 1st QUARTER 1st SUNDAY OFFERING 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.



SANTA PAULA CINEMA SOCIETY



The way to deal despots like Hitler is not to get on a soapbox, to fight dictators, and people like that, with rhetoric, but to fight them with ridicule, to laugh at them. To laugh them into oblivion, rather than with philosophy or psychology. You can't win a debate with those guys, that's what they are born to do. But you can certainly make fun of them, and laugh them into eternity. – Mel Brooks

For Mel Brooks, the original idea for "The Producers" wasn't to make a big statement film, but to fashion a tribute to a bombastic stage producer he knew early in his career. In fact, he wasn't even thinking of a film when he germinated the concept in his fertile comic mind. Originally, he tried to write the story that became "The Producers" as a book titled "Springtime for Hitler," but found he couldn't make it work. Next, he tried rewriting the story into a stage production. Too many sets. Then someone suggested what he really had was a screenplay. Now, he just had to sell this impossible idea to a studio. For this, he agreed to alter the title – but rejected a demand that he change the name of the show within the movie to "Springtime for Mussolini." Brooks readily admits that a lot of viewers found the film deeply offensive. They didn't get the joke. But Brooks' satirical instincts proved to be right on target. He'd created a classic with an enduring life matched by few other films, including a stage production and remake. But here's the original in all of its outrageous glory, the one that made audiences gasp in 1967. With Zero Mostel, Gene Wilder, Lee Meredith, and Kenneth Mars in one of the most uproarious (and speediest) 88 minutes of film ever made.

SANTA PAULA CINEMA SOCIETY FRIDAY MAY 9, 2025

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



People and Doings

Sip And Check In with Sharon Kufeldt

Tuesday, May 13 at 4 pm on Zoom

Each month, on the second Tuesday, Sharon Kufeldt graciously offers members of the congregation an opportunity to connect with one another on Zoom. This unstructured segment of time (between 4 and 5 p.m.) gives those who do check in, whether regularly or occasionally, a chance to share. Oftentimes one doesn't wish to express anything directly, yet it is another avenue for fellowship with one another.



Join Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 731 217 7775 Password: uucsp93060



Caring Committee meeting on May 15 at 4pm in the parish hall



Indian Cooking Class with Raji Chandran on May 19th!

Raji came to us from Kerala, India and has graciously volunteered to hold an Indian cooking class at her home in Santa Paula on Monday, May 19th from 4 pm to 7 pm. Menu to include Chicken Curry, Spinach Paneer, Chapiti and a delicious Rice Dessert. Homemade lemonade and a unique beverage to be served as well. Recipes provided! This first class is limited to 10 people and there will be a sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall. Cost is \$25 (cash only) that you can bring to this first class. Direct any questions to Ruth Ricards or to Constanica! Stay tuned for future class offerings.



The Social Concerns Action Committee - Wednesday, May 21

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 pm. You are each invited to tune in!



Mary A. Livermore Society - Thursday, May 22

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 11:00 am. Our programs are interesting and relevant! Attendees bring their lunches and often there are delicious goodies available. Come join us!

People and Doings

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

Universalist Unitarian Church
of Santa Paula
Spiritual Growth Center

Sound Bath & Tipica Sale to Benefit Friendship Bridge

July 19, 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

JUST FOR FUN !! MAY

The month of May is named after the Greek Goddess Maia, goddess of nature and growing plants. She was identified in the Roman era as Bona Dea, the goddess of fertility, whose festival was held in May. In Greek and Roman mythology, Maia is associated with concepts related to fertility, motherhood, midwifery, and growth.

Welcome May! This month is about the happiness that unfolds as blossoms burst forth in vibrant colors. For many people in the Northern Hemisphere, thoughts of summer fun come to mind as temperatures rise to comfortable new highs and spring's stormy weather tends to balance out.

May is filled with symbols that remind us of renewal and joy. The dainty bloom, the lily of the valley, symbolizes the return of happiness and love, while the emerald stone stands for wisdom and intuition, providing the energy we need for appreciating life. Taurus and Gemini stand as the month's zodiac guardians, bringing ambition and intellect to those born during this month. The hummingbird, May's bird of the month, buzzes with excitement and brings the message of good things to come! Thyme and mint are healing herbs associated with this month, adding even more meaning to those born during May.

Emeralds are beautiful green gems admired by people all over the world. They come in many different shades of green, from light to dark. The word "emerald" comes from old French and ancient Greek words that mean "green gem." A famous Roman writer named Pliny the Elder said that emeralds are the greenest thing there is.

May's full moon is known as "The Flower Moon," in honor of the blossoming flowers across North America during this time. Native American names for the Moon reflect the greenery of May. The Flower Moon, the full moon in May 2025, will reach peak illumination at 12:56 PM on Monday, May 12th. In Santa Paula, CA, it will be visible at 9:56 AM Pacific Daylight Time on the same day.

Hummingbirds are a cherished sight in any bird lover's yard, symbolizing hope, peace, and good fortune. These agile and graceful creatures embody joy, love, and the ability to navigate life swiftly and effortlessly, making them particularly meaningful for those born in May.

The name "hummingbird" originates from the humming sound created by their wings. Some species beat their wings as much as 80 times per second! Their unique design allows them to fly in a figure-eight pattern (forward, vertically, horizontally, and even backward)—unlike any other creature!

May Fun Facts:

- Thyme has been known to be an effective pest control for rats, mice, and mosquitos. You can make your own homemade repellent by mixing four drops of thyme oil for every teaspoon of carrier oil, such as olive oil, jojoba oil, etc. (or every two ounces of water).
- Beltane, or May Day, is celebrated on the first of May, marking the halfway point between the spring equinox and the summer solstice. Beltane is a Pagan holiday, celebrating life and fertility. During Beltane, people light bonfires and dance around Maypoles as a way to symbolically stir up the earth's energy to promote fertility.
- Despite popular belief, Cinco de Mayo (May 5) is not Mexican Independence Day, but a celebration to commemorate the defeat of the French army during the Batalla de Puebla (Battle of Puebla) in Mexico on May 5, 1862. In the US, Cinco de Mayo is regarded as a day to celebrate Mexican culture, experiences, and achievements.
- On the last Monday of May, we celebrate [Memorial Day](#), when people in the United States remember and mourn the soldiers and military personnel who died in military service. It is a tradition to visit cemeteries and place flags on the graves of soldiers.

People and Doings

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT/MEETING	Zoom/In-person
Thursday	1-May	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Friday	2-May	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	4-May	10:30 AM	Worship	both
Tuesday	6-May	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Wednesday	7-May	6:00 PM	Meditation with Rev Seikai	both
Thursday	8-May	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Friday	9-May	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Friday	9-May	7:00 PM	SP Cinema Society	zoom
Sunday	11-May	10:30 AM	Worship	both
Tuesday	13-May	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Tuesday	13-May	4:00 PM	Sip & Check In	zoom
Wednesday	14-May	6:00 PM	Meditation - Thomas Weisbecker	both
Thursday	15-May	all day	May newsletter deadline	
Thursday	15-May	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Thursday	15-May	4:00 PM	Caring Committee meeting	In-person
Thursday	15-May	6:30pm	Board of Trustees meeting	zoom
Friday	16-May	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	18-May	10:30 AM	Worship	both
Tuesday	20-May	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Wednesday	21-May	3:00 PM	Social Concerns Action Committee mtg.	zoom
Wednesday	21-May	6:00 PM	Meditation with Thomas Weisbecker	both
Thursday	22-May	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Thursday	22-May	11:00 AM	Mary A's	In-person
Thursday	22-May	5:00 PM	Worship Team meeting	zoom
Friday	23-May	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	25-May	10:30 AM	Worship	In-person
Tuesday	27-May	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Wednesday	28-May	6:00 PM	Meditation with Thomas Weisbecker	In-person
Thursday	29-May	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Friday	30-May	9:30 AM	Finance Committee meeting	zoom

THE UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF
SANTA PAULA

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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

Join our Facebook page at

www.facebook.com/uucsp

*Dated Material
Time Value*

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