



Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula

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

uucspoffice@gmail.com website: uucsp.org

SEPTEMBER SERVICES, SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM



September 7 *Thirst in the Desert*

Carolyn Bjerke and Ellen Deeb

Every journey begins with longing. We know what it feels like to thirst, not only for water, but for connection, healing, and hope. In this opening season of our shared ministry, we will stand in the dry places and listen for what our thirst is teaching us. Sometimes it is in the desert that we most clearly hear the call to begin again.

September 14 *All the Waters of Our Lives*

Carolyn Bjerke and Ken Stock

The desert is not the end of the story. From streams and oceans, from faucets and tears, we bring the waters of our lives to pour together. Our annual Water Communion invites each of us to bring water from a place that holds meaning. As we pour these waters into one bowl, we create the living water of our community: a symbol of resilience, of memory, and of the way many streams form one river of love. Here we remember that though each of us arrives carrying our own story, together we become a river. *** Please bring water for our ritual.

September 21 *Married to Amazement: The Gospel of Huell Howser*

Kate English and MaryBeth East

The autumn equinox is a moment of cosmic balance—light and dark in near-perfect harmony. In our own lives, finding balance often means holding joy alongside struggle, amazement alongside uncertainty. Huell Howser, with his wholehearted “That’s amazing!” approach to life, practiced this balance every day, refusing to let the beauty of the ordinary go unnoticed.

Mary Oliver once wrote, “All my life I was a bride married to amazement, I was the bridegroom, taking the world into my arms.” This service explores the spiritual practice of wonder as a way to steady ourselves in an unsteady world. Drawing on the UU values of Love, Interdependence, and Generosity, we’ll ask: how can practicing amazement help restore balance—in our hearts, our communities, and our shared life on this Earth?

September 28 *The River Remembers the Way*

Carolyn Bjerke and Ruth Ricards

Once gathered, the waters move. A single drop finds its course, a stream carves the rock, a river shapes the land. So too, can our lives become currents of change. In the closing service of this opening series together, we will claim the persistent, transforming power of water and of community, to carve new pathways toward justice, healing, and renewal.

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

Message from the Minister

By the time you read this, I will have begun my first days as your minister. On Monday, August 11, I walked into the church and was greeted with flowers and kindness, the kind of welcome that makes you feel like someone has been getting ready for you. I'm so grateful for the care that's gone into creating space for us to begin this ministry together.

I've just returned from three weeks in Scandinavia, where I saw the quiet ways people show up for each other: holding a door, speaking gently, offering help without fanfare. It reminded me of something our Unitarian Universalist tradition shares with many others: the sacred doesn't just live in grand moments. It's right there in the steady, ordinary ways we tend to one another's well-being. Zen Buddhists talk about "chop wood, carry water", the holiness of everyday work done with care. In Judaism, the practice of *chesed*, lovingkindness, comes alive in visiting the sick, welcoming the stranger, bringing comfort. In Islam, even moving a stone from the road is considered an act of faith. We don't have to wait for the big moments to live our values; we can practice them in how we greet each other, how we listen, and how we make space.

Here in Santa Paula, we are on a path where grief, hope, and uncertainty are all part of the landscape. These are tender threshold times, and we will meet them together, with courage to face what is, care for one another along the way, and curiosity about what might be ahead. I hope you'll join me for my first service with you on **Sunday, August 31, *At the Threshold***, as we honor what has been and open ourselves to what may emerge next.

With gratitude,
Carolyn

Message from Board of Trustees

Someone more intelligent than I may be able to speak to the origins of “the church year” and why we still use the term. What I do know is that every September we start a new one. I suspect that it’s related to summer heat or summer vacations. I also know that I “take the summer off” in that I cut back on my church-related work for a month or two. Treasurer duties are still honored, and Board meetings are still attended, so I wouldn’t consider myself a slacker. I just take a little breather to rejuvenate, so to speak.

So, with this “new church year” upon us there are a number of quite new things happening at the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula. We’ve got a new minister, Carolyn Bjerke and are looking forward to getting to know each other. We’ve got some renewed energy around a religious education program for young people. We’ve had, and will continue to have more use of the building and grounds for weddings, quinceañeras, and possibly even a film.

As the Board Treasurer and member of the Finance Committee, this time of year also means we start thinking about pledging and budgeting. If you’re new with us, or maybe just curious about these things, our church – as are all Unitarian Universalist congregations – is self-sustaining. We raise and spend our money without the interference of or dictates from any outside entity. Of course, we are associated with the Unitarian Universalist Association, which gives our denomination a larger voice in the world. But we support them, not the other way around.

In October, you will hear things like “canvass kickoff Sunday” – our name for the beginning of the annual pledge drive we organize. All members and friends of our congregation will be asked to pledge financial support to the church for 2026. And with that support, the Finance Committee will draw up a budget, which will go to the Board and ultimately the congregation for approval.

Part of that budget is for the work of our committees. Part of it is for salaries (we have five dedicated employees), utilities, and contracted work. It takes a lot to keep the church’s doors open!

None of this is done in secret or in a vacuum. It takes a village, I’ve heard, and we want our entire village to be involved and knowledgeable about our processes. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please check in with a Board member or our new minister. We want you to know the why’s and wherefore’s.

Of course, our church is about much more than the finances needed to run things. I’m the Treasurer and that’s my area of responsibility, so that’s what I address. Our social actions, our spiritual needs, and our camaraderie with each other are all important and the best way to address those is to be or become more involved. Sunday services are a wonderful place to start as that is when most of us are gathered together. You can socialize while learning “what’s going on” and what is important to your fellow congregation folks. See you in church!

Jerry

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 –Our Meditation Practice Group is currently on hold.*

Please stay tuned for future offerings.



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.



2025 3rd QUARTER 1st SUNDAY OFFERING September 7



Providing short-term financial relief to undocumented residents.

Before disaster hits, 805 UndocuFund works with a lean team that focuses on developing community partnerships, advancing inclusive policies for immigrants in disaster, and helping shape local and state disaster planning, community preparedness, and long term recovery work.

When disaster hits, we distribute emergency one-time financial relief to undocumented residents in Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties, and we work with key stakeholders to share critical information with our community. Much of our work is possible thanks to the invaluable support and leadership of hundreds of bilingual and trilingual immigrant volunteers who deeply care and wish for better treatment and opportunities for their community members.

<https://www.805undocufund.org/>

People and Doings

SIP AND CHECK IN TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 9 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

SANTA PAULA CINEMA SOCIETY



This month we will try something new: showing a film I have never seen before (but wish I had). The film is "Broker" by Hirokazu Kore-eda, one of the most renowned filmmakers in Japan. (We watched one of his earlier films, "Like Father/Like Son," at SPCS a few years ago.) Throughout his career, Kore-eda has been obsessed with the subject of family, and he continues on that theme here. In "Broker" (2022), Kore-eda explores this subject from the point of view of the "baby in a box" phenomenon common to both Japan and Korea (the latter being where the story is set). What becomes of these children abandoned by their parents — literal foundlings? In a Kore-eda film, they always have hope. His families are as accidental as they are intentional, thrown together as much by chance as by biology. Ultimately, his obsessional films are optimistic statements on the ability of human beings to make connections with each other in even the most challenging circumstances. Kore-eda has a knack for approaching this sentimental material with such a sympathetic and gentle touch that each of his films comes off as a small, hopeful elegy to humanity. Does this make you want to see it? Personally, I can't wait! The Korean cast includes Song Kang-ho, Gang Dong-won, and Bae Doona.

SANTA PAULA CINEMA SOCIETY
FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 12, 2025

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

Worship Team will meet pm on Zoom **Tuesday, September 16 at 3:00 pm** in person

The Social Concerns Action Committee

There is an increasing amount of news related to social concerns these days. Our Social Concerns Action Committee (SCAC) has long been concerned with issues about immigration, detainees, farm workers housing and more. Many of us also attend weekly meetings at Poder Popular, volunteer at the Thursday Food Bank or speak at City Council meetings. **Our September meeting will be on Wednesday, the 17th at 3:00 on zoom.** You are each invited to tune in!

People and Doings

Caring Committee will meet on Thursday, September 18 at 4pm in the parish hall

Board of Trustees will meet on Thursday, September 18 at 6:30 pm on Zoom.

Mary A. Livermore Society – Thursday, Thursday, September 25 at 11:00 am

Our Mary A. Livermore Society, aka "The Mary A's", has held meetings for over 100 years and is the longest standing women's group in Ventura County. **Our September meeting will be on Thursday, September 25 in the Parish Hall at 11:00 am.** It will feature Kate Watkins, Emergency Services Coordinator for the City of Santa Paula. Our city provides education, resources, and develops, implements and maintains programs so that our community can be ready and resilient for natural, man-made or technological disasters. This program will be super interesting. Come bring your lunch and join our lively group!



JUST FOR FUN

The flowers for September



Asters

Asters once symbolized revolution. They were used to honor soldiers lost in war. Also, they served as inspiration for painters and writers.



Morning Glory

The **morning glory** is a fast-growing vine that has long been a symbol of love, both undying and unrequited.

RIDDLE ME THIS

1. **Riddle:** What is the only currency we spend without ever knowing its balance?
2. **Riddle:** I appear when darkness falls, growing fuller until I'm complete, then slowly fading away, only to be reborn. What am I?
3. **Riddle:** I'm a vessel of memories, growing fuller with age. I can be shared but never emptied and am most valuable when old. What am I?
4. **Riddle:** If you have me, you want to share me. If you share me, you haven't got me. What am I?
5. **Riddle:** Open me, and you can't see me without a mirror. Close me and you can't see me at all. What am I?
6. **Riddle:** You have me today, Tomorrow you'll have more; As your time passes, I'm not easy to store; I don't take up space, But I'm only in one place; I am what you saw, But not what you see. What am I?

Answers found at the bottom of the next page.

People and Doings

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT/MEETING	Zoom/In-person
Tuesday	2-Sep	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Thursday	4-Sep	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Friday	5-Sep	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	7-Sep	10:30 AM	Worship service	both
Tuesday	9-Sep	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Tuesday	9-Sep	4:00 PM	Sip & Check In	zoom
Thursday	11-Sep	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Friday	12-Sep	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Friday	12-Sep	10:00 AM	Finance Committee meeting	zoom
Friday	12-Sep	7:00 PM	SP Cinema Society	In-person
Sunday	14-Sep	10:30 AM	Worship service	both
Friday	15-Sep	all day	October Newsletter deadline	
Tuesday	16-Sep	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Tuesday	16-Sep	3:00pm	Worship Team Meeting	In-person
Wednesday	17-Sep	3:00 PM	Social Concerns Action Committee meeting	zoom
Thursday	18-Sep	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Thursday	18-Sep	4:00 PM	Caring Committee meeting	In-person
Thursday	18-Sep	6:30pm	Board of Trustees meeting	zoom
Friday	19-Sep	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	21-Sep	10:30 AM	Worship service	In-person
Tuesday	23-Sep	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Thursday	25-Sep	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Thursday	25-Sep	11:00 AM	Mary A's meeting	In-person
Friday	26-Sep	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	28-Sep	10:30 AM	Worship service	In-person
Tuesday	30-Sep	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person

Riddle answers

- 1) Time - spend it wisely 2) The Moon, 3) Wisdom, 4) A Secret, 5) Your Eyes, 6) Memories

THE UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN
CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA

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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

Board of Trustees:

Mitch Stone, President,

Ken Stock, Vice-President

Ann Hewitt, Secretary,

Jerry Gray, Treasurer

Margaret Wilaon, Member at Large

Krystal Johnson, Office Administrator

Vincent Sorisio, Church Musician

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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