



# Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula

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

uucspoffice@gmail.com website: uucsp.org

## MARCH SERVICES, SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM

**Theme: Paying Attention**



### March 1 – Who Owns Your Attention?

**Carolyn Bjerke and Alice Henderson**

Our attention has become a commodity. It is bought, sold, tracked, and shaped.

The devices in our pockets are not neutral. They are designed to keep us reactive, scrolling, comparing, outraged, and slightly unsettled. And over time, what we repeatedly attend to begins to shape who we become. This service asks: Who is forming your heart?

Paying attention is not just a productivity issue. It is a spiritual one. If attention is the doorway to love, wisdom, and discernment, then reclaiming it may be one of the most faithful acts of our time.

*First Sunday Plate to : Poder Popular*

*Stone Soup coffee hour*

### March 8 Pronouns and Pluralism: Beyond the Binaries

**Kate English and Ruth Ricards**

What if both faith and identity are more expansive than the categories we inherited? This sermon explores pluralism through the lenses of non-duality, science, and gender diversity. With personal reflection, accessible information about evolving understandings of gender, and a grounding in our Welcoming Congregation commitment, we'll reflect on how moving beyond binaries can deepen compassion, belonging, and love.

### March 15 – They Are Listening

**Carolyn Bjerke and Ken Stock**

Children do not become who we tell them to be. They become who we show them how to be. They are listening to how we speak about our neighbors. They are watching how we handle anger, difference, apology, and power. Long before they understand our beliefs, they are absorbing our patterns. This service reflects on the quiet moral formation happening all the time in homes, churches, and communities. What are we teaching about courage? About kindness? About who belongs?

Paying attention, in this case, is an act of responsibility. Our lives are speaking. The question is: what are they saying?

*On Sunday, March 15, we'll gather for our monthly Soul Explorers all-generation service.*

*If you have grandchildren, neighbors, or families in your life who are looking for a spiritual home, this is a wonderful Sunday to invite them. We're building something intentional and joyful for our children, and for you.*

*We hope you'll join us and bring someone with you.*

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is to practice inclusiveness, seek justice and foster spirituality.



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## **March 22 – The Life You Are Living**

**Carolyn Bjerke and Ellen Deeb**

It is possible to be attentive to everyone else and still be estranged from yourself? Many of us override our exhaustion. We dismiss our grief and postpone joy. We keep functioning long after something inside us has gone quiet. This service turns inward. What signals have you been ignoring? What part of you is waiting to be heard?

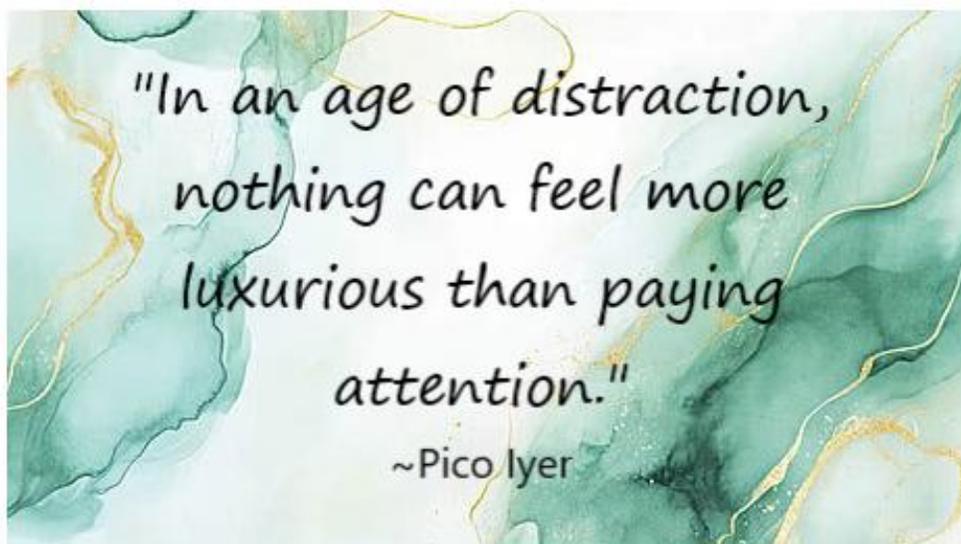
Paying attention to your own life may be the beginning of integrity. It may be the difference between surviving and actually being alive.

## **March 29 Attention! Hyperactivity as Human Divinity**

**Alice Fulmer-Zelinka and Ellen Deeb**

Drawing from personal experience, pop culture anecdotes, and the recent embrace of neurodiversity from across the UUA and progressive communities of faith, guest speaker Fulmer-Zelinka will illuminate on how ADHD functions in the life of someone seeking a free faith. This service will celebrate the joys and strengths of hyperactivity as well as the sorrows which afflict neurodivergent life.

Alice Fulmer-Zelinka is discerning her call to ministry and is a member of Live Oak UUC in Goleta, where she sits on the Social Justice Ministry's committee. She is a PhD candidate in the Department of English at UCSB, poet, and podcaster.



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# Message from the Minister

At the end of February, I spent a week in Scottsdale, Arizona with ministerial colleagues from across the Pacific Southwest Region: Arizona, New Mexico, and California. Twice a year, we gather not simply for meetings, but for sustenance. We worship together. We study together. We sing. We ask hard questions about the state of our congregations and our wider world. And perhaps most importantly, we listen to one another in ways that are rare and deeply needed.

This year's gathering held a session on the new virtual hymnal, which many of our congregations will begin using more fully in the years ahead. We sang through new pieces, explored digital access, and talked about how shared music shapes theology. A hymnal is not just a collection of songs. It is a statement of who we are becoming. Paying attention to the words we sing, the voices we include, and the accessibility of our resources is part of our ministry of care and inclusion.



The theme of paying attention feels especially alive for me after this week. In a culture that rewards speed and productivity, it is easy to mistake constant motion for faithfulness. But ministry, at its heart, is an act of attention. Attention to what is happening beneath the words. Attention to the song that wants to be sung.

The poet and activist Mary Oliver once wrote, “To pay attention, this is our endless and proper work.” Paying attention is not passive. It is an intentional turning toward. It is noticing what is fragile and what is growing. It is listening for the undercurrents beneath the surface of conversation. It is discerning where love is being asked of us next.

Gathering with colleagues is both work and renewal. It requires discernment to step away from the daily demands of parish life. And it requires trust to be honest with one another about the challenges we carry. But I return each time clearer and steadier. Professional support for ministers is not a luxury. It is part of how we sustain healthy congregations. Connection keeps us grounded. Shared learning keeps us growing.

I am grateful to serve in a congregation that values learning and the steady work of becoming more fully who we are. And I am grateful to return from this time away with new songs, new insights, and renewed commitment to the shared ministry we practice together.

# Message from Board of Trustees

Besides the hackneyed referral to the Ides of March, this month also signifies all kinds of beginnings. Your 2026 Board of Trustees has been and is embarking on new and sometimes new-to-us adventures.

After serving as our more than capable President during uncharted years (remember? .... Rev Maddie Sifantus retiring, decisions about our church's insurance, searching for our new Minister, dealing with basement mold and remediation and so so much more), Mitch Stone has agreed to be the Secretary to the Board. We welcome his precise thinking and analysis. We also welcome Ariel Alexander as our member-at-large. This rounds out our current Board to full membership. Jerry Gray remains as our Treasurer, and Ken Stock as our Vice President.

To launch our new Board, we held a half day retreat on February 10<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was a very positive experience, where we confirmed that our congregation and Board is characterized by kindness and caring, among other many positive qualities. We show these qualities through our daily interactions in the church and community, and in our involvement in Church committees.

For those who are new to us, or with renewed interest, please consider joining the backbone of our congregational participation. Below are the committees and contacts:

## Building and Grounds Committee

Ann Hewitt

## Caring Committee

Karen Harris

## Finance Committee

MaryBeth East

## Social Concerns Action Committee

Ellen Deeb

## Worship Team

Ruth Ricards



Contact me at 805-320-0931 or [ahewitt@anacapa.ca](mailto:ahewitt@anacapa.ca) if you are interested or want further information. Stay tuned for news on upcoming committees: Fundraising, and Religious Education.

Thank you to everyone for your commitment to our kind and caring community.

Ann Hewitt, President

# People and Doings

**2026 1st QUARTER  
FIRST SUNDAY OFFERING  
March 1**



Poder Popular in Santa Paula, CA, is a vital community organization focused on empowering residents, especially agricultural workers, by providing essential resources like a food pantry (with groceries, diapers, formula), health/literacy workshops, and advocacy for better living/working conditions, operating through local partnerships and community engagement to strengthen the Santa Clara River Valley community's well-being.



## **SOARING HEARTS YOGA**

Soaring Hearts Yoga meets in the Parish Hall.  
Join them on Mondays 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.



## **MEDITATION WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4 6:00 PM**

We'll continue our First Wednesday meditation with Vibay Weisbecker, creating space for reflection and grounding in the middle of the week. This will be in person and online

## **SIP AND CHECK IN TUESDAY, MARCH 10 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.



# People and Doings

## “SPIRIT TALK” (Book and Discussion Group)

**Wednesday, March 11 3:30 to 5:00 P.M. Zoom.**

Our March selection for discussion: **Edgar Cayce on the Akashic Records: The Book of Life** by [Kevin J. Todeschi](#). This book describes the Akashic Records, the source from which Edgar Cayce (the most documented psychic of the twentieth century) received many of his remarkable insights. Also known as the Book of Life, the Akashic Records is the storehouse of all information-- every word, deed, feeling, thought, and intent -- for every individual who has ever lived upon the Earth. Todeschi explains how each of us can access our own Book of Life to learn about our past, present, and future. The book is available in both print and audio.

## Song Circles: reclaiming the joy of singing together

Before screens and earbuds, people often gathered in living rooms and around tables to share music, not as an audience, but as participants. In many ways, we've lost something in the shift from making art together to mostly consuming it.

This month we will have our second monthly Song Circle at UUCSP

A Song Circle is communal singing in its simplest form: we sit in a circle and share songs that are easy to learn and remember, and sing them together, sometimes adding harmonies or layered parts as we go. You do not need to be trained, confident, or even particularly comfortable. You can lead a song, request one, pass, or simply listen until you're ready. All genres are welcome. You are welcome and invited to bring an instrument!

We also practice a couple norms that help everyone feel safe: this is not a performance space; it's a shared practice. There is room for all voices.

Song Circle: **March 11th 6:00 - 7:30 pm**

Snacks and beverages are welcome.

If you've been waiting for a low-pressure way to "try your voice," this is it. Come as you are and let the circle hold the song with you.

# People and Doings

## SANTA PAULA CINEMA SOCIETY



With all of the recent controversy over the definition and origins of autism, a key film to visit on the topic is the fine 2010 biopic "Temple Grandin." The narrative tells the story of an autistic woman's journey from a non-verbal childhood to a highly respected scientist whose insights into animal behavior changed the livestock industry.

The film's greatest strength lies in its visual language. Director Mick Jackson uses clever overlays and fast-paced editing to describe the unique workings of Grandin's mind. Illustrating how she "thinks in pictures," we are shown the blueprints and technical diagrams forming in her mind's eye, inviting us to appreciate autism not as a deficit, but as a different way of processing the world.

Claire Danes captures Grandin's unique cadence and physical presence without ever lapsing into caricature. The supporting cast includes David Strathairn, Julia Ormond, and (another reason to watch it now) the recently departed Catherine O'Hara.

This is a moving, witty, and profoundly empathetic portrait of a woman who refused to let a "door" stay closed, and essential viewing for anyone looking to understand the beauty of neurodiversity. It is also a film guaranteed to make you feel a little better about the world we live in. It will be presented with a short, recent TV interview with the remarkable Temple Grandin.

FRIDAY MARCH 13, 2026

SANTA PAULA CINEMA SOCIETY

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

**WORSHIP TEAM** will meet on **Tuesday, March 17** at 3:00 pm

### **SOCIAL CONCERN'S ACTION COMMITTEE**

The SCAC continue to be actively involved in advocating for those in need in our community and beyond. We educate ourselves, volunteer, and strive to "move the needle" to make life better for those who lack resources and who need help. Ellen is our excellent convener. Please join us on Zoom at 3:00 pm on **Wednesday, March 18th!**

**CARING COMMITTEE** will meet on **Thursday, March 19** at 4:00 PM

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES** will meet on **Thursday, March 19** at 6:30 pm on Zoom.

# People and Doings

Universalist Unitarian Church  
of Santa Paula  
Spiritual Growth Center

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

March 21, 2026  
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](http://www.friendshipbridge.org)



## **TAIZÉ MEDITATION** Wednesday, March 25 6:00 PM

We'll hold a Taizé-style meditative service, an evening of simple singing, readings, silence, and candlelight, inspired by the contemplative tradition of the Taizé community. This service isn't about learning something new or solving anything. It's about resting the nervous system, sharing quiet, and remembering that we don't carry life, or resistance, alone.

## **MARY A. LIVERMORE SOCIETY**

We are looking forward to our meeting on **Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup>** at 11:00 am in the parish hall when Chris Espinosa will be our featured speaker. He is running for the seat currently occupied by Julia Brownley. "Everything I have done my entire career has been oriented toward helping my community," said Espinosa. The Primary Elections will take place on June 2, 2026. We will organize a potluck lunch and look forward to welcoming Chris! Contact Constanica for details, and tell her what you would like to bring for lunch!

# People and Doings

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT/MEETING	Zoom/In-person
Sunday	1-Mar	10:30 AM	Worship service	both
Monday	2-Mar	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Wednesday	4-Mar	6:00 PM	Meditation with Vibay	In-person
Thursday	5-Mar	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Friday	6-Mar	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	8-Mar	10:30 AM	Worship service	both
Monday	9-Mar	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Tuesday	10-Mar	4:00 PM	Sip & Check In	zoom
Wednesday	11-Mar	3:30 PM	Spirit Talk	zoom
Wednesday	11-Mar	6:00 AM	Song Circle	both
Thursday	12-Mar	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Friday	13-Mar	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Friday	13-Mar	10:00 AM	Finance Committee meeting	zoom
Friday	13-Mar	7:00 PM	SP Cinema Society	In-person
Sunday	15-Mar	all day	Newsletter submission deadline	
Sunday	15-Mar	10:30 AM	Worship service	In-person
Monday	16-Mar	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Tuesday	17-Mar	3:00 PM	Worship Team Meeting	In-person
Wednesday	18-Mar	3:00 PM	Social Concerns Action Committee meeting	zoom
Thursday	19-Mar	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Thursday	19-Mar	4:00 PM	Caring Committee meeting	In-person
Thursday	19-Mar	6:30 PM	Board of Trustees meeting	zoom
Friday	20-Mar	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	22-Mar	10:30 AM	Worship service	In-person
Monday	23-Mar	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Wednesday	25-Mar	6:00 PM	Taize Meditation	both
Thursday	26-Mar	9:30 AM	Yoga with Lisa	In-person
Thursday	26-Mar	11:00 AM	Mary A's meeting	In-person
Friday	27-Mar	7am - 1pm	Church Cleaning	
Sunday	29-Mar	10:30 AM	Worship service	both
Monday	30-Mar	9:30 AM	Yoga with Yoga	In-person

THE UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN  
CHURCH OF SANTA PAULA

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



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Sunday Worship Services at 10:30 am

Carolyn Bjerke, Minister

Board of Trustees:

Ann Hewitt, President,

Ken Stock, Vice-President

Mitch Stone, Secretary,

Jerry Gray, Treasurer

Ariel Alexander, 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.

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

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*

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