

THE REACH
OCUUC'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ORANGE COAST
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH



SUNDAY SERVICES IN JANUARY 2024

Please note that given the changing nature of the world, topics may change to address the needs of our times. Below are the topics being considered.

January 7: Is Resistance Futile? The War and Peace Within Us.

--Rev. Sian

January 14: Remembering Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

--Wendy Karn, Intern Minister

January 21: Leadership and Love

--Rev. Sian

January 28: Was Jesus Woke?

--Rev. Sian

THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Nancy Loughrey, President, Board of Trustees

I have been reflecting on our Special Congregation meeting all month and want to say again how much I feel we are a great congregation together.

I get too much credit for our actions – it is all of us that make it happen. When the Sanctuary Construction Committee decided to challenge everyone to pledge again for the new Sanctuary, we knew full well that we would collectively determine the outcome. We did!

I know it seems like we are through the hard part, but those of us who have been around construction know this just means the challenges will be different. There is still no progress on our building permit. I'm assuming something will start happening after the first of the year. We will get there!

I am really looking forward to 2024 and whatever it brings. May you have a wonderful year and know that we will all be in it together!

Fondly,
Nancy

Nancy Loughrey
president@ocuuc.org

**ORANGE COAST
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH**

Many Different Beliefs,
One Loving Community



**JOIN FOR OUR SERVICES
SUNDAYS AT 10:30**

<https://zoom.us/j/3931579606>



Many Different Beliefs,
One Loving Community

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Costa Mesa, CA 92626
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SIAN'S SHENANIGANS

From Our Minister: Rev. Sian Wiltshire



Liberating Love

Love can sometimes be really annoying. It's often inconvenient; it's often very difficult; it can ask us to change or do something that is terrifying; and it can be exhausting. But when we let it in - when we take a deep breath and let it fill our hearts - it can be energizing and exciting, giving us strength, purpose and hope.

I'm thinking about all the love we've had for our Ukrainian guests as a good example. When we first took on the endeavor, it was scary - and a lot of hard work. We didn't know the language, the culture. We had to jump in and get the building ready. But we let love in, and we were galvanized into action - with everyone pitching in giving goods, time, money, food and love to our Ukrainian Guests. And they have been so grateful! They've helped us at times, shared meals, and created a home in our church home.

It's been a beautiful ministry, one that has been nurtured by the leadership of Tatiana H. and supported by all of you. I'm so proud of this church that loves so deeply and well. Love may be inconvenient, hard, terrifying and exhausting at times, but it also teaches us how powerful we are when we act together to live out our mission. We now know that we can do anything together. And look - now we have a new sanctuary we can build! Love always gives back tenfold what we put into it.

Yours in love,

Rev. Sian

INTERN'S CORNER

BY WENDY KARN

Intern Minister

This year, the federal holiday commemorating the life and work of Martin Luther King Jr. will be celebrated on 1/15.

Barack Obama proclaimed the third Monday of January to be MLK Day in 2017, with the call to all Americans to participate in civic and community service projects.

As Unitarian Universalists, we are called to care for each other and the wider world. One of the ways we live our values is through volunteerism.

I know many of you participate regularly in community volunteer work, and therefore, I have an ask for you. I see all the work you do for OCUUC, Rea Elementary and supporting our Ukrainian Neighbors. Where else do you volunteer in the community? How can we support you in your work? I invite you to share with me some of the places you volunteer your time to Wendy@OCUUC.org so I can add these to an upcoming post in our weekly newsletter, The BLAST.

If you are interested in finding a place to volunteer on 1/15/24, you can find information on this link <https://www.doi.gov/pmb/eeo/mlk-day-service>.

Sending all the best to you in 2024!





Please note that given the changing nature of the world, topics may change to address the needs of our times. These are topics currently being considered

Jan. 7: Is Resistance Futile? The War and Peace within Us. It's that time of year we make resolutions to change - but after an initial burst of steam, we run into resistance and often then fail. How do we make peace with the war going on inside ourselves? Rev. Sian

Jan. 14: Remembering Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In this service, we'll examine how the influence of this powerful leader lives on in our community and in our dreams for the future. Wendy Karn, Intern Minister

Jan. 21: Leadership and Love. There are many ways to lead in the world, but without love, it can be tyranny. Come hear from two "leaders" who share their stories of loving while leading. Rev. Sian with Rev. Karen Stoyanoff, Minister Emerita.

Jan. 28: Was Jesus Woke? What is woke-ism? Depending on who you talk to, it is either a good thing or a bad thing. Let's have some fun today as we talk about this challenge facing our western culture. Rev. Sian



JANUARY 20TH, 2024

Allowing for membership growth is one of the stated reasons we are building our new sanctuary. We are counting on it! It won't happen unless we are intentional at welcoming and engaging more newcomers. We are planning a

Membership Workshop on Saturday, January 20th, 2024, to talk about how we might enhance our processes. Watch for more details in the [Blast](#).

This is not a meeting for the whole congregation, just those who have ideas on how to grow and are willing to make it happen! On a certain level we want that to be the entire congregation, but we hope to focus this workshop on doing and come out with at least the start of a plan. We particularly want those who are currently participating in membership in any way and newer people (you do not have to be a member) who may have recently experienced our processes and have ideas for welcoming.

Stay tuned!



Registration is now open for Winter Elementary Family Camp at de Benneville Pines over Presidents' Day Weekend.

Imagine all the fun of our beloved camp, but now with snow! This camp is for children in kindergarten through sixth grade and their families. Children in second grade and older are welcome to stay in independent counselor cabins.

This year's camp will have a Superhero Academy theme to add to the fun. Academy curricula take place inside and out across our campus, and youth and families will have plenty of time to socialize, including at kid-focused worship services.

There will even be a creativity space in the lodge where campers can accessorize their super persona or just have fun.

Sledding, snow play, and other winter activities are often highlights at this wonderful weekend of wintertime fun.

Study (and play) hard to become the very best version of yourself surrounded by the beauty of the forest in winter and share a cup of super serum (aka hot chocolate) with friends old and new at the toasty lodge fireplace.

Winter camp is the perfect way to spend quality time with the family, as well as allow children the opportunity for personal growth and foster independence.

Eight children and four adults from OCUUC attended last year, and it would be great to have even more this year!

Thanks to the generosity of our Share the Plate donors, all members and their children will be reimbursed 50% of the camp registration fee by the OCUUC camp scholarship fund. So don't wait – register now!



EXPLORING OUR WEBSITE

Our website has a myriad of information about all aspects of our congregation's life. It is designed to give a good overview to those wanting to know more about us, but that could be us! There is lots to learn about our many programs, our history, and our staff.

In addition, there is a **Member's Area** on our website that keeps more detailed history, like minutes, budgets, and bylaws. Check out the **Login button** at the top of our welcome page. Scroll down for information on access if you need it.

A new feature in our website is our **Resource Directory**, which lets you know if a room is booked. If you want to know the **program calendar**, that is on the top level. The Resource Directory just lets you know if a room, etc. is already reserved by anyone. It could be a renter or one of our programs. Thank you, Jonathan

M-P and Steve M.!

The Member Area of the website has a **church directory** in pdf format that is updated every few months. We also have a **member portal** available to our database in **Empower**. It allows you to update your current information and view your recent contributions. It also lets you look up directory level information on members and friends.

The Board and Staff have been using this function for a while. We are a **beta test site** for this software, so they will welcome suggestions. If you are a Member or Friend and are interested in accessing our Member Portal, please contact president@ocuuc.org and I'll send you an invitation.

Nancy Loughrey



We are Extraordinary!

By

Linda Spery, Capital Campaign Chair

Almost every week I volunteer as a docent at the Long Beach Museum of Art near where we live. Currently we have an exhibition called Ordinary People. However, the people featured in the show are far from being ordinary in what they have accomplished to benefit their communities, primarily in the poorest areas of Los Angeles County.

So when I tour with the 5th graders who visit the museum, I emphasize these are actually examples of extraordinary people. They're anything but ordinary.

I also consider our OCUUC congregation to be a group of extraordinary people. We come from a long line of members and friends who

have taken leaps of faith over the years to take bold steps to benefit not only our church but also those outside our doors.

Our group of extraordinary congregants and those before us have gotten us to where we are today as a thriving, caring and loving congregation deciding upon a new sanctuary, creating a legacy that has been 10 years in the making.

To highlight just a few of the bold moves this church has taken over the years:

- At the beginning in the 1950s, a UU minister's daughter, Catherine Hoffman, moved to Costa Mesa and started our congregation in her living room. Aren't we glad she did so? Thank you, Catherine!

- The congregation soon outgrew its home base and made the smart decision to rent the Costa Mesa American Legion Hall and hold services there.

- Soon they outgrew that space also and built the church building on Victoria Street atop the mesa overlooking Victoria and Brookhurst. While construction was taking place they met at the Balboa Bay Club.

- During the time we were at Victoria Street, ambitious church leaders, some of whom are still members today, oversaw three expansions of that church home.

- Then in 2013 the congregation took a BIG leap of faith to sell the beloved Victoria Street property and move to our current home at Adams and Mesa Verde Drive East. And during all that span of time:

- *We cooked and distributed hundreds of meals to HIV and AIDS recipients via our AIDS Team Ministry.*

- *We were leaders in the fight for Marriage Equality.*

- *We protested for women's rights, abortion rights, immigrants' rights, LBGTQ rights, and continue to do so.*

- *We have shared over \$87,000 over the last 10 years with community nonprofits and continue to do so each Sunday through "Share the Plate."*

- We have not only sheltered 89 Ukrainian refugees on our campus while we patiently awaited City approval for our sanctuary project, but we also have had over 10 OCUUC sponsors who helped 63 Ukrainians come to the states on the United for Ukraine program. And we have at least 8 OCUUC members who hosted and/or currently host Ukrainian refugees in their homes.

- We also hosted the Environmental Film Festival for 5 years in support of environmental justice and to raise money for the new sanctuary.

Bottom line, we have a legacy of taking bold steps. As one of the fundraisers for the new sanctuary over the past five years, I want to thank each one of you for joining me in this leap of faith. Your gifts, pledges and patience have truly been EXTRAORDINARY.



SAVE THE DATES: April 19-21, 2024

For all in our congregation who identify as men, the Annual Camp deBonneville Pines Men's Renewal Weekend will occur on April 19 - 21, 2024.

The theme is in the process of development at this time. The Unitarian Universalist Men's Fellowship (UUMF) Renewal welcomes men of all ages, backgrounds, and diversities. Scholarships are available, so that no brother will be denied for financial reasons.

The Camp is located near Angeles Oaks in the San Bernardino Mountains at 6800 feet elevation.

Questions can be directed to Cory Brown at Church or at KG6EP@AOL.COM.



ARTICLE 2

We are a member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association, which is still working on a revision of Article 2 of its by-laws. Article 2 is our public statement of our reason for existence and would revise what we currently call our Principles and Purposes.

After General Assembly in June, the Commission has been working on revising their proposal and it is available here.

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission/final-proposed-revision-article-ii>

It is still possible to submit amendments by February 1, 2024.

We will be offering opportunities for discussion later in the Spring.

Nancy Loughrey

NEW ART QUILT EXHIBITION NOW ON DISPLAY

At OCUUC we are fortunate to have so many talented artists in our midst. Now on display in the RE/administration lobby are 14 fine art quilts designed and created by OCUUC member **Laurie Mutalipassi**. The colorful exhibition will be showing through April. A *“Meet the Artist”* reception is being planned after the service on February 18th from noon to 1 p.m.

Laurie is a fiber artist who “paints” with fabric. She has been quilting since the late 1970’s but transitioned to fine art quilting in 2015. She has held various leadership positions in the Southern California art quilt group *“Quilts On The Wall,”* which holds its meetings at OCUUC. www.quiltsonthewall.com

Some of her favorite themes for her quilts are animals, landscapes and her grandchildren. In addition she features the themes of saving

both endangered animal species and our endangered planet Earth. Some of these themes have become series as she explores different aspects of the themes.

Her work has toured the United States and internationally in shows, galleries and museums. Her quilts have been featured in books and magazines, along with numerous articles published in art quilting magazines. Laurie has also won multiple awards for her fiber art in a local art league.

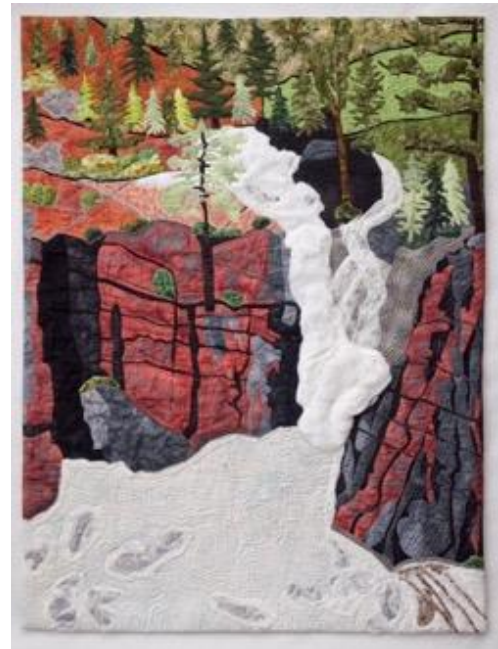


Photo Caption: “Shell Falls”

Shell Falls is a magnificent waterfall known as the “Thundering Heartbeat” of the Bighorn Mountains in Wyoming.



DATE CHANGE

Starting in January, 2024, the Nonfiction Book Club will be meeting on **first** Sundays (instead of third Sundays), from 12:30 to 2:30pm.

For information, contact Maureen. alsklinng@gmail.com



Monday, January 1

New Year's Day

Tuesday, January 2

Fiction Book Group 7:00pm on Zoom

Thursday, January 4

Choir Rehearsal, 7pm Daniels Hall

Saturday, January 6

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Sunday, January 7

Meditation Grp, 9:45am Youth Rm, Zoom

Worship Service, 10:30am Daniels Hall &

Zoom

RE, 10:30am on Site

AHA Group, 12:15pm on Zoom

Nonfiction Book Club, 12:30pm on Zoom

Monday, January 8

Anti-racism Reading Group, 7pm on Zoom

Wednesday, January 10

Comm. on Ministry

Thursday, January 11

Choir Rehearsal, 7pm Daniels Hall

Saturday, January 13

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Sunday, January 14

Meditation Group, 9:45am Youth Room &

Zoom

Worship Service, 10:30am Daniels Hall &

Zoom

RE, 10:30am on Site

Writing Group, 11:45am Victoria Room

Dream Group, 12pm Suite 7

Monday, January 15

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Day

Tuesday, January 16

Life Changes Group 12pm on Zoom

Sci Fi and Philosophy Group 7pm on Zoom

Wednesday, January 17

Finance Council, 5pm Zoom

Thursday, January 18

Choir Rehearsal, 7pm Daniels Hall

Saturday, January 20

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Sunday, January 21

Meditation Grp, 9:45am Youth Rm, Zoom

Worship Service, 10:30am Daniels Hall &

Zoom

RE, 10:30am on site

Monday, January 22

Anti-Racism Reading Group 7pm on Zoom

Wednesday, January 24

Board Meeting, 7pm on Zoom

Thursday, January 25

Choir Rehearsal, 7pm Daniels Hall

Saturday, January 27

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Sunday, January 28

Meditation Group, 9:45am Youth Room &

Zoom

Worship Service, 10:30am Daniels Hall &

Zoom

RE, 10:30am on site

Women's Circle



STITCHWITS

Do you knit, crochet, sew, or enjoy any other crafts? Do you believe in using your skills to help others? Then you might be a Stitch-Wit! Stitchwits meet on Zoom every Saturday from 10:30am to 12:30pm and are knitting, crocheting, or sewing items for different needs. Find the Zoom link on the [calendar page](#) of our website or contact Barbara at harper0117@gmail.com

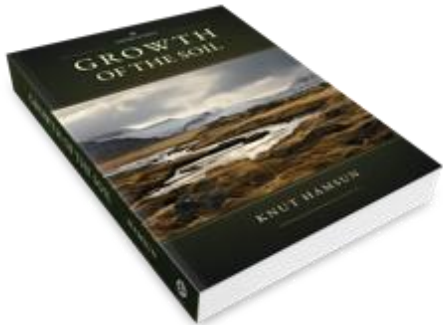


ATHEIST/HUMANIST/AGNOSTIC GROUP

This is a discussion group supporting humanists, agnostics, atheists, deists, and others who view human activity as the basis for moral systems, and view humans as an integral part of the nature of the cosmos.

The Zoom link is on the [church calendar](#). The **Atheist/Humanist Group** meets on first Sundays at 12:15 p.m. on Zoom **and in person in the Victoria Room**.

For more information, email programs@ocuuc.org



FICTION BOOK CLUB

The Fiction Book Group will meet on Tuesday, January 2nd, 2024, **not Monday**, at 7pm on Zoom to discuss *Growth of the Soil* by Knut Hamsun.

This book won the Nobel Prize for Literature so prepare yourself for a good read! Please join our group discussion. and find the link on the church website.

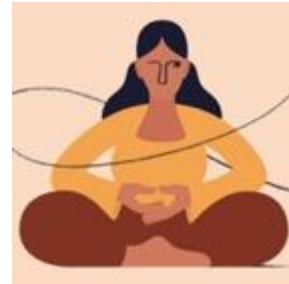
Co-chairs: Eva /Goodwin-Noriega and Marcia Hackett.



FLOWERS FOR SUNDAY SERVICES

If you would like to sign-up for flowers to celebrate someone or for yourself, please see Sandie Martin after the service to reserve your date. You can also email her at sandiemartin@mac.com.

Let her know if you'd like to bring your own flowers on a particular date, or she can make an arrangement for you at a cost of \$20 cash.



MEDITATION GROUP

In our fast-paced culture, more than ever before we need to set time aside to quietly be in touch with ourselves and our surroundings in the present moment. True presence, termed mindfulness, is a quiet state of mind that, when practiced regularly, increases concentration, reduces stress and creates opportunities for significant personal growth over time.

Mindfulness practice allows us to set aside our worries, regrets and plans for a brief but important period of time, opening us up to refreshing, real elements of nature (both within us and around us!). As we all know, regular practice (for even very brief periods) is essential for turning a new skill into a healthy habit. Practicing with a group is always easier than

developing this new skill on one's own. Please join us any Sunday before church service (9:45 – 10:20 AM in the Youth Room) for a brief meditation practice, followed by opportunity to briefly share something about our experience along the path. Newcomers are most welcome! In person and on Zoom. Link is [here](#).



(from Wikipedia)

In 2004, *UU World* magazine asked for contributions of "[elevator speeches](#)" explaining Unitarian Universalism. These are short speeches that could be made in the course of an elevator ride to those who knew nothing of the religion. Here are examples of the speeches submitted:

In Unitarian Universalist congregations, we gather in community to support our individual spiritual journeys. We trust that openness to one another's experiences will enhance our understanding of our own links with the divine, with our history, and with one another.

— *Jonalu Johnstone, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

Most Unitarian Universalists believe that nobody has a monopoly on all truth, or ultimate proof of the truth of everything in any one belief. Therefore, one's own truth is unprovable, as is that of others. Consequently, we should respect the beliefs of others, as well as their right to hold those beliefs. Conversely, we expect that others should respect our right to our own beliefs. Several UU's then, would likely hold as many different beliefs. Other beliefs they may hold in common are a respect for others, for nature, and for common decency, leading to a particular caring for the poor, the weak and the downtrodden. As a result, issues of justice,

including social justice are held in common among most.

— *Gene Douglas, Harrah, Oklahoma*

It's a blessing each of us was born; It matters what we do with our lives; What each of us knows about God is a piece of the truth; We don't have to do it alone.

— *Laila Ibrahim, Berkeley, California*

JANUARY PLATE SHARE



One life at a time.

STAND UP FOR KIDS — ORANGE COUNTY

was established in 1990 and serves homeless and at-risk youth and young adults 25 and younger. Programs in Orange County offer street outreach, mentoring, housing support and so much more.

Programs have the overall goal of leading homeless youth to self-sufficiency and preventing at-risk youth from gang involvement, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and from dropping out of high school.

Youth that have been served include sexually exploited youth, victims of abuse and/or neglect, LGBTQ youth, kids with disabilities, pregnant and parenting young people, and kids forced out of their homes.

For information about Stand-Up for Kids contact them directly at 714 356-5437. www.StandUpForKids.org

There are many ways to connect with our OCUUC community online



OCUUC.org website



Facebook Group Page

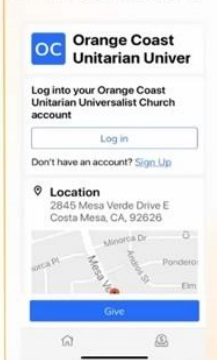


Methods to Give to OCUUC

1. Our Website: OCUUC.org



2. Vanco Mobile



3. Baskets

Those worshipping onsite will have our traditional offering baskets available at the door for check and cash donations.

