

THE REACH

OCUUC'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ORANGE COAST
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH



SUNDAY SERVICES IN FEBRUARY 2023

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 currently.

Feb. 5: Perfect Love

– Rev. Rae Huang

Feb. 12: What's love got to do with it?

– Rev. Sian Wiltshire

Feb. 19: The Woodwide Web.

– Rev. Sian Wiltshire

Feb. 26: Gustavo Arellano speaks!

– Gustavo Arellano

THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Nancy Loughrey, President, Board of Trustees



CONTRACTOR'S BID

The Sanctuary Construction Committee finally received a bid from the contractor on Friday, January 20th. Unfortunately, it is \$2.7M, substantially higher than the \$1.8M we have authorized. Bad news.

As was presented at the town hall meeting in January, the principal reasons for the increased bids are inflation and increased requirements from the city.

The Committee has met twice now since receiving the bid, and has asked our architect to propose cuts that would bring us closer to our financial capabilities. Unfortunately, this means further delays. Our next meeting with the architect is Feb. 9.

Stay tuned!

Nancy Loughrey
Craig Spery, Chair
Audrey Prosser
Barbara Morihiro
Bob Loeschen
Debra Quam

ORANGE COAST
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH



Many Different Beliefs,
One Loving Community



JOIN FOR OUR SERVICES
SUNDAYS AT 10:30

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

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2845 Mesa Verde Drive East
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
714-556-2882

P.O. Box 3770
Costa Mesa, CA 92628
ocuuc.org

SIAN'S SHENANIGANS

From Our Minister: Rev. Sian Wiltshire



You all know how excited I get when we talk about “love.” For me, it’s the way I experience the holy and how I see it act in the world. And of course, different cultures around the world often note that there are different kinds of love and have different words for it. The most common are words coined by the Catholic church: *Philia*, *Eros*, and *Agape*. *Philia* is meant to express the type of love between friends or from a parent to a child – it’s a non-sexual form of love; *Eros* is meant to express not only love that comes with sexual attraction, but also creativity in all its forms; *agape* is a kind of divine love – one that is given to all of humankind, that connects us all together. Some might call it a passionate kind of love, but it’s also the love that mostly drives work for justice. According to the Catholic church, it is the “highest” form of love and the one that we should all aspire to. But I disagree. Love is love. It doesn’t matter how it shows up, in my opinion. It is what connects us together – love for children, our spouse, our friends, for the world, the environment, our neighbor. It’s all love.

So remember: Love is love, however you express it. So go out in the world and love it!

With love, Rev. Sian



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:

Feb. 5: Perfect Love. *"Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is love correcting everything that stands against love."* Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In a world where hate too often defines our politics and society, love must be the guiding force that leads us back to humanity and integrity. What can the labor movement teach the faith community about love, and how are we called into love with justice? *Rev. Rae Huang*

Feb. 12: What's love got to do with it? Romantic Love is an integral part of any good relationship, but it wasn't always that way. Come explore with Rev. Sian how the expectations of romance and love come together to help shape our culture in the modern world. *Rev. Sian*

Feb. 19: The Woodwide Web. This Sunday we explore the interdependent role of plants in our lives and the role that California White Sage plays in our ecosystem and indigenous cultures. Rev. Sian and members of the OC-CNPS (Orange County California Native Plant Society) present, and a forum following the service to speak on the topic further! *If*

available, there will be white sage plants given out for planting. Rev. Sian

Feb. 26: Gustavo Arellano speaks! Gustavo Arellano is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times and host of the podcast *The Times: Essential News from the LA Times*. He's a lifelong resident of Orange County, and would've become a UU if he wasn't already a Catholic.



NEW TO OCUUC?

Are you new to OCUUC as a visitor or are you a friend of the congregation considering membership?

If so, we'd like to invite you to a Newcomer Orientation/Meet the Minister event on Sunday, February 12.

We'll be serving a light lunch in an informal setting in the Victoria Room after the church service. This will be a great opportunity for you to get to know Rev. Sian and to ask any questions you might have about OCUUC membership. We'll gather at noon and be finished no later than 1:30.

Please RSVP to Linda Sperry to confirm your attendance at lindaspery@gmail.com

Attending the lunch meeting does not obligate you to membership but hopefully will provide you with information that might prove useful for a better understanding of the OCUUC church community.

If you are a Zoomer and unable to attend in person, please let us know and we'll arrange to have you attend virtually.



Throughout my life, I've often reflected that music has literally saved my life. I can't imagine my life without it. It's how I communicate, how I bring myself peace, how I express myself, how I open to the Mystery, and so much more. How is music healing in your life?

I'm reading the book *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* by Bessel van der Kolk. (Great book!) The author gives lots of recommendations for finding healing for one's trauma. One of the best ways is to create music, dance, or act IN COMMUNITY with other people. Our bodies and minds work with other peoples' bodies and minds to co-regulate and heal. I find that to be very true in the taiko drumming class I attend every week in Pasadena.

(See me playing in my taiko concert from last June here:

<https://youtu.be/79vE85KJBIE?t=200>)

The vibrations of the drums, combined with the uncanny ability for 20 people to strike the drum at EXACTLY the same time (usually, anyway), is transformative to me. The vibrations feel like a jackhammer that breaks up all my stuck energy and moves it out of me. I highly recommend drumming as a spiritual practice - plus it's really fun.

Of course singing together is another excellent way to co-regulate with other individuals and create an almost-magical healing space for each other. Orange Coast Choir prepares music for Sunday morning worship,

yes, but in the process we are helping heal each other's hidden wounds.

Every Thursday night we gather to create this intangible, ethereal substance we call music. If you're looking for an excellent way to heal trauma, grief, or loneliness, I invite you to join the choir. Or if that's impossible for you right now, I invite you to join in singing jubilantly when we have congregational songs on Sunday morning. The songs on Sunday morning are not just filler in between the speaking elements. The songs are part of the worship, part of the healing, part of the magic of collective transformation.

May you find your healing elixir in music and in community.

Musically yours,

Beth Syverson, Director of Music Ministries

MusicDirector@ocuuc.org



FORMING FAITH

Religious Education News

Karen Magoon Pearson

Director of Religious Education

This year the Elementary Religious Education class, for kindergarten to sixth grade, is using a curriculum called *Superhero Academy*. On January 22nd, they learned from Spider-Man that “great power comes with great responsibility” and also that you don’t always have to try to save the whole world. Sometimes it’s important to focus on helping in your own neck of the woods, just like Peter Parker started out being everyone’s “friendly neighborhood Spider-Man.”

With that in mind, the class turned their focus to OCUUC. We talked about the Board here at our church and how decisions get

made. Then the kids brainstormed their ideas about things they would like to see improved at church and eventually turned them into a letter that we sent to the Board.

I thought you all might enjoy hearing what these kiddos, ranging in age from 5 to 11, thought about how we could make our church a better place for everyone:

1. Kid-friendly drinks during Coffee Hour (apple juice, lemonade, soda) - several of the children expressed that their parents would not allow them to drink coffee, so what were they supposed to drink during Coffee Hour?

2. More trash cans in the RE/Admin building - The trash can from our elementary classroom sometimes disappears, and there has been some frustration in trying to find an alternative in the building while cleaning up after crafts, etc.

3. Larger, newer sink for the outside bathroom (in courtyard) - Several of the kids were surprisingly passionate about this one! Apparently, this sink is too small, and they find it difficult to use.

4. Church potluck for everyone! - The kids loved the idea of having a big potluck where people that had enough food could bring some to share and people that did not have enough food could get something to eat.

5. Bigger courtyard - The courtyard is their domain during coffee hour, and they wish for more room to roam!

It was great to see that even the youngest among us already have some strong opinions and passionate ideas. Big thanks go out to Mira, Kate, Jayden, Zoe, Derek, and Dominic for sharing their thoughts. The future of Unitarian Universalism is bright!



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UUMF SPRING MEN'S RENEWAL WEEKEND

The UUMF Spring Men's Renewal Weekend at deBenneville Pines Camp will be held on April 28 - 30, 2023.

The current working theme for the weekend is

"Masculinity: What Story am I Living?"

The Camp is located in Angeles Oaks, California at an elevation of 6,800 feet. It will be an opportunity to refresh, celebrate, and renew our cherished bonds established and nurtured over many years, establish new ones, and to open our hearts to songs of life and fulfillment.

In the beauty of the mountains and the safety and fellowship of our brothers, we have an opportunity to work on issues, support each other, and just hang out together.

The weekend will include workshops, deep sharing, music and drumming, silence, ritual, songs, laughter, great food and just spending time together. If you have an interest in attending, contact Cory Brown for information. KG6EP@AOL.COM.



HOME FOR REFUGEES

OCUUC's Home for Refugees team has been supporting an Afghan family for six months. Because they have relatives in Afghanistan, I will not use their real names. I will call them the "Kozis." This is a large family of nine people. There are four brothers, ranging in age from 23 to 30. The oldest brother is married and has a five-year-old daughter. They live with their father, mother and aunt in a large house in Anaheim.

Our five-person team underwent several weeks of training to understand our role as mentors to newly-arrived refugees. Our coach, Navraj, was very helpful in getting us ready to be of assistance with our family. At first we met weekly on Zoom, but we transitioned to monthly meeting as we and the family got settled in. Navraj will be leaving us to concentrate on his seminary training, so we are getting ready to meet a new coach.

Each of us on the team agreed to take on certain responsibilities, such as assisting with medical needs, finances, job searches, educational goals and language acquisition. All of us visit regularly. They already had a place to live and most of their basic needs taken care of when we met, but we obtained a washing machine and a sewing machine for them, as well as some furniture.

The Kozis are adapting very well to their new lives. H is in pre-kindergarten. As the only child in the home, she gets a lot of attention, and she is a precocious and active child.

All of the brothers have found jobs and are able to support the family. They all speak English, but are unsure about their skills.

The other adults are less fluent. The three adult women are taking online ESL classes, and we try to engage them in conversation when we visit. The family also have relatives who live in the area and that has been a big help in getting settled. We find them friendly, curious and very grateful for our help. S, the mother, is also a fantastic cook! We have enjoyed sharing meals and have had a few potlucks. We hope to be able to introduce the family to all of you at church soon, and hopefully you will be able to enjoy some of S's homemade bread.

OCUUC agreed to put up \$10,000 to help this family with their resettlement needs. We appreciate your confidence in us and your willingness to reach out to these lovely people and show them what true caring is. Please speak with any of us if you have questions or comments.

Home for Refugees Team

- Rev. Sian
- Paula Peterson
- Judith Stamper
- Marilyn Giss
- Barbara Schilling



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 StitchWit!

Stitchwits meet on Zoom every Saturday from 10:30am to 12:30pm and are knitting, crocheting, or sewing items for **Stand Up for Kids**.

Find the zoom link on the [calendar page](#) of our website or contact Barbara Schilling at 949/285-0918 or harper0117@gmail.com



JOYS AND SORROWS ON SUNDAY

If you would like to express a Joy or Sorrow to be read during the service on Sunday, you may send an email by 9:00 am on Sunday morning to joysandsorrows@ocuuc.org, type in the chat during this part of the service, or, when attending the service in person, you may write your joy or sorrow for in-person share.





PACIFIC SOUTHWEST SERVICE AREA ASSEMBLY

In the spirit of our beloved District Assembly, Camp de Benneville Pines will be sponsoring a traditional assembly to bring members of our 50 churches together to enjoy an engaging keynote speaker, UU-themed workshops, music, worship, and other activities.

The assembly will take place at the San Luis Obispo UU Fellowship and will also feature the camp's annual business meeting with updates.

This is intended to serve the former district or is a 'district-wide' assembly with workshops, including keynote speakers that will interest all UUs.

We would like to encourage you to join with other 'district-wide' or Camp's Service Area UUs **on April 21 - 24** in beautiful San Luis Obispo for the 2023 PSW Service Area Assembly.

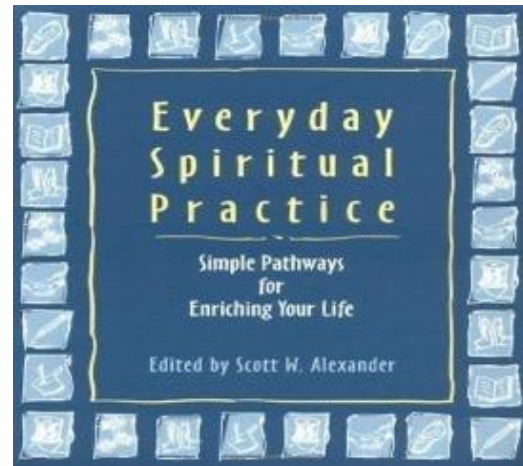
Beyond the assembly, SLO will be celebrating Earth Day all weekend, and the city has many great activities planned. We hope you stay an extra day to enjoy time in the area.

Ministers, DREs, Camp Champs, social justice advocates, delegates, and church members are all encouraged to join together in covenant to share ideas, concerns, and

solutions with one another at this dynamic gathering.

Flyer here:

<https://www.uucamp.org/2022/02/07/2023-pacific-southwest-service-area-assembly/psw-service-area-2023-save-the-date-flyer/>



"Everyday Spiritual Practice" Discussion Group

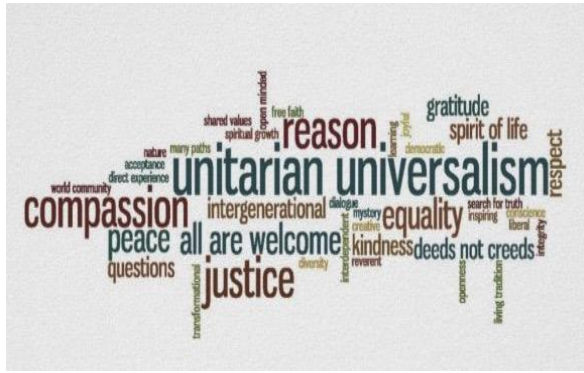
Thursday March 2, 9 and 16
5-6:15 p.m.

Led by Linda Spery

Have you ever wondered how to integrate your heartfelt beliefs into your daily life?

In this discussion group we'll explore ways to make every day more meaningful as we explore the discoveries of 40 contributors to the book *"Everyday Spiritual Practice: Simple Pathways for Enriching Your Life,"* edited by UU Scott W. Alexander. Limited to 12 participants on Zoom. You will need to purchase the book. It is available from www.uua-bookstore.org and www.amazon.com. If you can commit to all three sessions and would like to reserve a spot, please contact Linda at lindaspery@gmail.com.





ARTICLE II STUDY COMMISSION

Article II of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) Bylaws, Principles and Purposes, is the foundation for all of the work of our UUA and its member congregations and covenanted communities. It is the covenant to which all of our congregations and covenanted communities pledge themselves when they become members of our UUA.

At the request of the UUA Board, a study commission has been working for two years to propose a major revision. It is not done yet, but it is time to pay attention! Their full report, which includes a description of the history and process, is available here.

(https://www.uua.org/files/2023-01/a2sc_rpt_01172023.pdf).

We will be offering workshops and feedback session throughout this Spring for discussion and feedback. Stay tuned!



ENVISIONING OUR FUTURE



MEDITATION GROUP

Our Meditation Group meets every Sunday at 9:45am — in person and via Zoom. Meditation and mindfulness practice are so important for our well-being! Please join our community. We will conduct a short but nourishing guided meditation, then share our experiences along the path. All are welcome!

Find the zoom link on the OCUUC website calendar page by clicking [here!](#)



AGNOSTICS, HUMANISTS AND ATHEISTS

The Atheist/Humanist Group meets on first Sundays at 12:15 p.m. on Zoom. 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 integral parts of the nature of the cosmos. The Zoom link is on the [church calendar](#).

For more information, email programs@ocuu.org.



Thursday, February 2

Choir Rehearsal 7pm Hybrid

Saturday, February 4

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Sunday, February 5

Meditation Group, 9:45am Youth Room and on Zoom

Worship Service, 10:30am Daniels Hall and on Zoom

Dream Group, 12:00pm Suite 7

AHA Group, 12:15 pm on Zoom

Monday, February 6

OCUUC Fiction Book Group 7:00pm on Zoom

Wednesday, February 8

Comm. On Ministry 6pm

Thursday, February 9

Choir Rehearsal 7pm Hybrid

Saturday, February 11

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Sunday, February 12

Meditation Group, 9:45am Youth Room and on Zoom

Worship Service, 10:30am Daniels Hall and on Zoom

RE & Youth Group, 10:30am on site

Writing Club, 11:45am Suite 7

Newcomer Orientation 12pm Victoria Room

Monday, February 13

Anti-racism Reading Group, 7pm on Zoom

Wednesday, February 15

OCUUC Moviegoers (TBD) Regency SC

Finance Council 5pm Zoom

Thursday, February 16

Choir Rehearsal 7pm Hybrid

Saturday, February 18

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Sunday, February 19

Meditation Group, 9:45am Youth Room and on Zoom

Worship Service, 10:30am Daniels Hall and on Zoom

RE & Youth Group, 10:30am on site

Nonfiction Book Club, 12:30pm on Zoom

Tuesday, February 21

Caring Circle 12pm on Zoom

Wednesday, February 22

Actionable Antiracism Group, 1pm Zoom

Thursday, February 23

Choir Rehearsal 7pm Hybrid

Saturday, February 25

Board of Trustees 9:00am Victoria Room

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Sunday, February 26

Meditation Group, 9:45am Youth Room and on Zoom

Worship Service, 10:30am Daniels Hall and on Zoom

Women's Circle, Victoria Room and Zoom

Monday, February 27

Anti-racism Reading Group, 7pm on Zoom



FICTION BOOK GROUP

The Fiction Book Group will meet on Mon Feb. 6th at 7:00pm online to discuss *"Fifty Words for Rain"* by Asha Lemmie.

Please join us for what is usually a lively discussion.

If you're planning ahead, for March 6th we're reading *"Do Not Say We Have Nothing"* by Madeleine Thien. Please find the link on the church website.

Co-chairs: Eva Goodwin-Noriega & 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.

FEBRUARY PLATE SHARE



If you were at our Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival in September, you'll remember the charismatic Alyssa Hofman, star of *"Rebuilding Butte"* and founder of Tiny Pine Foundation, building homes for fire survivors.

Single mother of three, Alyssa learned how to build tiny homes by watching countless hours of YouTube videos. In December 2018, she set out to build 10 tiny homes completely with donations and volunteers, with the goal of providing housing after devastating California wildfires.

In the first year, 20 homes were funded through various sources including public and corporate donations, grants and fundraisers.

Also in that first year, 13 homes were completed and gifted to Camp Fire survivors. They later expanded to Oregon, building 4 homes for survivors of the 2020 Almeda Fire.

Initially they raised \$7,000 per home, but as prices for lumber and other building materials continue to increase, their budget is now \$9,000 per home. They also fill the homes with necessities including new kitchenware, bedding, furniture, and decorative touches. The final cost for each home ranges between \$12,000-\$15,000.

Tiny Pine Foundation could use our help now, more than ever. Read more about Alyssa and this wonderful effort here. <https://www.tinypinefoundation.org/tinyhomes>