

THE REACH

OCUUC'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ORANGE COAST
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH



SUNDAY SERVICES IN DECEMBER 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.

December 3: Are We the Universe?

--Rev. Sian

December 10: I Wonder...

--Wendy Karn, Intern Minister

December 17: Miracles and Mysteries

--Rev. Sian

December 24: Christmas EVE Service! 7pm
(no morning service today)

--Rev. Sian

December 31: Fire Communion

--Rev. Judy Tomlinson

THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Nancy Loughrey, President, Board of Trustees

Our Special Congregation Meeting is Sunday, December 3rd after church. I am deep in the "sausage making" of preparing the information we will all need to make a good decision. We are all in this together, and I'm certain Sunday will be a great example of our democracy. Many of you have complimented me on my leadership style, but it is because we are a great congregation and we complement each other that it works.

Regardless of the outcome of the meeting, it is time to focus on our membership process. Our current Chair of the Membership Committee, Linda Sperry, is ready to move on to other tasks. We have a committed group of volunteers. If we are going to pay for a new Sanctuary, we will need more members.

Rev. Sian and I are planning an open meeting on Membership on Saturday morning, January 20th to envision how we might enhance the process. We would love to see a great group of people interested in making this happen! It would be especially wonderful to see some newer people, members (yet!) or not, as they are the experts on our current process.

As the Holidays approach, it is a great time to reflect on the past year and all the blessings we enjoy. I am grateful for so much. Even when I am distressed at politics and world events, there is so much to remember about the inherent worth of everyone and how we mostly work together to create an awesome world. Tom and

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

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

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

I wish you and your families, by birth or chosen, all the blessings of peace and wholeness.

Nancy Loughrey
president@ocuuc.org

SPECIAL
CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING

SUNDAY DEC. 3RD AFTER WORSHIP
SERVICE

In Daniels Hall at OCUUC and on Zoom.
All are welcome, but only members may vote.

SIAN'S
SHENANIGANS

From Our Minister: Rev. Sian Wiltshire



Mystery

I love mysteries! Actually, I love *solving* mysteries. I even bought a mystery advent calendar. I love word puzzles and anything that makes me problem solve. But the biggest mysteries of all are people. I love it when people surprise me! We are all mysteries to one another. Part of our purpose in life (I think) is to try and solve each other's mysteries: to get to know one another beyond our preconceived notions and ideas about one another. People are endlessly fascinating because they have infinite depths to them.

Do you remember the time when Oprah would take random people from her audience and do a segment on them? Her point was to show that each of us are interesting and fascinating people - if we just dig a little deeper.

People sometimes point out that I've led a "fascinating" life because I've lived around the world or had multiple careers. But I've also never been married or raised children - those are mysteries to me and endlessly fascinating how people navigate those relationships. We are all fascinating mysteries to one another. I hope the coming holiday season will help you open your heart to the mysteries of those you think you know - family and friends. Dig a little deeper and see what comes up. You might find yourself fascinated and surprised - like any good mystery.

Yours in mystery,
Rev. Sian

MUSIC NOTES

From Our Director of Music
Ministries: Jakob Swetland



New Beginnings.

It's been over a month since I became the Director of Music Ministries at OCUUC and I could not have asked for a more inclusive and more welcoming congregation and staff! As always, the first day at a new job comes with the first day jitters and nerves. It's been a journey of discovery: learning new things, new processes and meeting new people. It's been a journey of excitement: finding new music, planning future services and music Sundays. It's been a journey of New Beginnings.

Having just graduated with my music degree in May, I never expected to be getting on a career path this soon. I grew up in a family of teachers, specifically math. My mom teaches high school math, my grandma taught middle school math for 21 years before retiring and both my aunts taught middle school math as well, one of them is now a principal at an elementary school.

I was the only one who pursued music in my family, and I wasn't formally trained in music until I enrolled in community college. That's where I started getting formal voice lessons and

where I started my love of conducting choirs. The road has been long and tough, but it has also been rewarding. I never thought at the age of 23, I would be the founder of a community choir in Irvine, where there are now over 50 singers. Now at the age of 26, I have my first "big boy" job, being a Director of Music Ministries at a very welcoming and opening congregation.

Here's to many new beginnings in the near future. Don't be afraid to look for me after services on Sunday and talk to me about anything, I would love to meet you all!

Jakob

INTERN'S CORNER

BY WENDY KARN
Intern Minister

Solstice Self-Care

It has been a joy to be part of this beautiful congregation. Thank you for making me feel so welcome in your community. It's a busy time coming into the month of December -- I know. Before I received my call to ministry, I worked for Starbucks Coffee Company and sometimes that was really fun. But towards the end I found myself longing for January -- that time when I could stop thinking about it for the next 10 months.

It's easy to get overwhelmed with all the anticipations and expectations of the holiday season. It can bring memories of joy and sadness, sometimes in equal measure. It's important as a community to be tender with each other as we move into winter. I encourage you to take care of yourself. Don't forget to give yourself a break! Even a short rest can benefit you for the remainder of the day. Part of excellent self-care is also letting others take care of you.

I am so grateful for the care I've received at OCUUC in my first months as your intern minister. As we move toward the Solstice, I invite you to take in the early arrival of darkness that the late fall brings to get some well-deserved rest.

The long dark days aren't everyone's favorite, but I like them. Hope you can take this opportunity to wrap yourself in the velvety darkness of the universe with coziness.

DECEMBER 24TH

CHRISTMAS EVE!

Join us for a Christmas Eve worship service at 7:00 pm. *Please note there will be NO Sunday morning worship service on Christmas Eve, only the evening service at 7:00pm.*

*Worship
With Us*

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.

Dec. 3: Are We the Universe? Carl Sagan once said, "We are the cosmos made conscious and life is the means by which the universe understands itself." This philosophy is part of "Process Theology." Come explore what this means for Unitarian Universalists and the world. Rev. Sian

Dec. 10: I Wonder... As the story goes, a star once motivated three wise men to go on a long journey. Where do you find wonders and miracles in your life? And what the heck is a miracle anyway?! Wendy Karn, Intern Minister

Dec. 17: Miracles and Mysteries. Thomas Jefferson once created his own bible by cutting out all the miracle stories in the Bible. He was more interested in the philosophy of the bible. I can't blame him. But maybe there's a way we can understand miracles - not as something that requires a God to occur, but rather that requires curiosity. Rev. Sian

Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Service! Come join the choir and Rev. Sian for our annual Christmas Eve service, spreading light and love into the world.

NOTE: There is **no Sunday morning service on Christmas Eve!** Our Christmas Eve service will be held at 7pm, instead.

Dec. 31: Fire Communion. The fire communion separates the end of the year from the beginning, helping us to put in perspective the joys and sorrows, the changes and transitions, the ups and downs of the year. It's a half-way point in our church year, but a celebration of the outside calendar year's end and year's beginning. Rev. Judy Tomlinson



COME TO THE HANUKKAH PARTY AT
OCUUC ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9,
AT 5:00 P.M.
IN DANIELS HALL.

FOOD AND FUN FOR ALL AGES, ALL
BACKGROUNDS! THE MEAL WILL BE
POTLUCK; A VEGAN MAIN DISH AND
LATKES WILL BE PROVIDED.

\$5 DONATION; KIDS UNDER 12 FREE.

PLEASE EMAIL [MAUREEN](mailto:MAUREEN@OCUUC.ORG) TO RSVP AND
TELL HER WHAT YOU WILL BE BRINGING
FOR THE MEAL.

MAUREENM@OCUUC.ORG.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME
COME CELEBRATE!



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 take place on April 19 - 21, 2024.

The theme is currently in the process of development. 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 bylaws. 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



Saturday, December 2

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Sunday, December 3

Meditation Grp, 9:45am Youth Rm & Zoom

Worship Service, 10:30am Daniels Hall & Zoom

RE, 10:30am on Site

Special Congregational Meeting, 11:45am

Daniels Hall & Zoom

AHA Group, 12:15pm Victoria Rm & Zoom

Monday, December 4

Fiction Book Group 7:00pm on Zoom

Thursday, December 7

Choir Rehearsal, 7pm Daniels Hall

Friday, December 8

Ministerial Intern Comm. 1:30pm

Saturday, December 9

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Hanukkah Celebration 5pm Daniels Hall

Sunday, December 10

Meditation Grp, 9:45am Youth Rm & Zoom

Worship Service, 10:30am Daniels Hall & Zoom

RE, 10:30am on Site

Writing Group, 11:45am Suite 7

Monday, December 11

Anti-racism Reading Group, 7pm on Zoom

Wednesday, December 13

Finance Council, 5pm Zoom

Thursday, December 14

Choir Rehearsal, 7pm Daniels Hall

Saturday, December 16

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Sunday, December 17

Meditation Grp, 9:45am Youth Rm & Zoom

Worship Service, 10:30am Daniels Hall & Zoom

RE, 10:30am on site

Nonfiction Book Club, 12:30pm on Zoom

Tuesday, December 19

Life Changes Group 12pm on Zoom

Sci Fi Group 7pm on Zoom

Wednesday, December 20

Board Meeting, 7pm on Zoom

Thursday, December 21

Choir Rehearsal, 7pm Daniels Hall

Saturday, December 23

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Sunday, December 24

Christmas Eve Worship Service, 7pm in Daniels Hall

No Sunday morning worship service.

Monday, December 25

Christmas day

Wednesday, December 27

Cluster Meeting, 10am Youth Room

Thursday, December 28

Choir Rehearsal, 7pm Daniels Hall

Saturday, December 30

StitchWits, 10:30am on Zoom

Sunday, December 31

Meditation Grp, 9:45am Yth Room & Zoom

Worship Service, 10:30am Daniels Hall & Zoom

RE, 10:30am on site



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 morning from 10:30am to 12:30pm and are knitting, crocheting, or sewing items for

different needs. Find the Zoom link [here](#) or contact Barbara at harper0117@gmail.com



AHA – ATHEIST/HUMANIST/ AGNOSTIC GROUP

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 an integral part of the nature of the cosmos.

The Zoom link can be found [here](#). For more information, email programs@ocuuc.org



FICTION BOOK GROUP

The church fiction book group will meet [online](#) Monday, Dec. 4th at 7:00pm to discuss *The Dead Romantics* by Ashley Poston. Please join our usual lively discussion. If you wish to read ahead for January 2024, our book will be *The Growth of the Soil* by Knut Hamsun.

Please note our January meeting will be on **Tuesday, Jan. 2nd** due to the New Year's holiday.

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 an opportunity to briefly share something about our experience along the path. Newcomers are most welcome! In person and on Zoom. The link is [here](#).



In addition to providing food bags and assistance with utility bills, scholarships and backpacks with school supplies, dinners at Thanksgiving and fulfilling wish lists at Christmas, did you know that Share Our Selves (SOS) provides medical, dental, and behavioral health services to the community?

Share Our Selves (SOS) is a Federally Qualified Health Clinic, with locations throughout Orange County. They believe in personalized care to deliver quality services, improve population health and stability, and reduce costs. Valuing the concept of the right person, the right treatment, at the right time means SOS sees care as predictive, preventive, personalized, and participatory. They emphasize care of the whole person through their comprehensive services, including medical and dental care, social services, behavioral health, and seasonal outreach programs.

SOS offers excellent case management, patient navigation, and solutions for social stressors for families and individuals of low-income and/or experiencing homelessness in Orange County.

SOS has five facilities delivering health care throughout Orange County, plus mobile services. Plans are being finalized for a new medical facility across the street from OCUUC. More information: <https://www.shareourselves.org/>



Editor's Year-end Note:

Having had some experience in the 1960s preparing the Reach, I agreed in early 2020 to take on the privilege of once again publishing it for a few months...and here it is, the end of 2023... From the bottom of my heart, I thank all who have supported and contributed to this newsletter and continue to make it what it is. Unless someone is itching to take it over, I will take another run in 2024...with love and gratitude.

Linda Clough
(the other Linda)

There are many ways to connect with our OCUUC community online



OCUUC.org website



Facebook Group Page

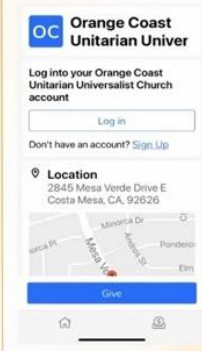


Methods to Give to OCUUC

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.

