

THE REACH

OCUUC'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ORANGE COAST
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH



Sunday Services in Dec. 2020

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

December 6 | Random Acts of Kindness
Rev. Sian Wiltshire

December 13 | Widening the Window: The Neurobiology of Stress and Healing
Rev. Megan Visser

December 20 | Still Small Voice
Rev. Sian Wiltshire

December 24 | Christmas Eve Service
Rev. Sian Wiltshire

December 27 | Fire Communion
Rev. Judy Tomlinson

THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

From Debra Quam, President, Board of Trustees

Here we are in December of 2020, a year like no other in our lifetimes. The pandemic has wreaked havoc on so many things we all used to take for granted, like family and friends gathering for the holidays and celebrating the season together at our church services. Thanks to our wonderful minister, music director, RE director, and our volunteer geek squad we can all still see each other through Zoom services and meetings. However, it sure will be nice to see each other in person when it is safe to do so once again.

The last thirty days have brought major changes for our congregation, country and world. The elections are over and many in our congregation worked diligently to implement locally the national UU THE VOTE initiatives. Special thanks to Sarah Hunter and Eva Lou Goodwin-Noriega for their work in this area.

Hope is on the horizon now with the recent announcement of efficacious corona virus vaccines on the way. This news makes me optimistic that we can meet again in person sometime in 2021. This will be such a good thing for all of our psyches when it happens.

We have all soldiered on through the trials of the pandemic and I am so proud of all we have accomplished in spite of the obstacles.

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

Our first ever all digital auction took place in November and it was a great success. Special thanks to Tom Loughrey for taking the lead on this new auction method and to all the auction committee members and everyone who donated and purchased items.

Our choir continues to hit it out of the ballpark each Sunday and for special events such as the Interfaith Thanksgiving Music Celebration and the Transgender Day of Resilience and Remembrance service all led by our very own Beth Syverson. These are huge undertakings at any time and even more so now that it must all be done digitally.

One more shout out in this letter must go to the Buildings and Grounds committee volunteers who have been working so hard on the remodel of the RE/Administration Building. Special thanks to Craig Sperry, Bob Loeschen, Cory Brown, Bob Gursky, Tom Loughrey, Anna Ryan and Audrey Prosser for all of their work on this project which is almost completed. It looks marvelous!

I wish you all, my dear friends, a happy and safe holiday season.

Debra Quam
President@ocuuc.org



SIAN'S SHENANIGANS

From Our Minister: Rev. Sian Wiltshire

As many of you know, I love the Solstice-Christmas season. I love the messages of love, hope and family. What I don't love is the commercialism, the sense of frantic and frenetic giving with all its politics and worries. It seems like the messages get drowned out amid the hustle and bustle.

But this year with the pandemic we have a golden opportunity to approach this season with perhaps more mindfulness than usual.



Because the normal round of parties, gift giving, and familial traditions are not happening (for the most part), perhaps we can approach this season with a sense of reverence and stillness — a time to notice

what is most important to us. Perhaps we can be mindful of the feelings we have in missing those no longer with us and create traditions of love and remembrance. Perhaps we can spend our holidays listening to the still small voice within: listening to our hearts.

May you each find moments of stillness, moments of hope and moments of love this holiday season.

With love,

Rev. Sian



Worship in December 2020

December 6 | Random Acts of Kindness. Sometimes it's those little moments, little gestures and little words that bring joy to all of us. How can we spread kindness wherever we go?

Rev. Sian

December 13 | Widening the Window: The Neurobiology of Stress and Healing. Rev. Megan draws upon neurobiology and spiritual practices to safely explore our responses to stress and trauma.

Rev. Megan Visser

December 20 | Still Small Voice. When we can sit still long enough, we can often hear what our hearts are telling us. As we honor the Solstice, let us listen to what it and our hearts are telling us.

Rev. Sian

December 24 | Christmas Eve Service. Come celebrate Christmas with stories, song and lots of love! Bring your hot chocolate, your candy canes and your candles!

Rev. Sian

December 27 | Fire Communion: A Transitions Reflection We will sit in the liminal transition space of the ending of 2020. There are many things from 2020 that we would like to let go of, personally and nationally. And, many things to look forward to in the New Year. Join us for a time of deep reflection.

Rev. Judy Tomlinson



Joys and Sorrows on Sundays

If you would like to express a Joy or Sorrow to be read during the service on Sunday, please send an email by 9:00 am on Sunday morning to joysandsorrows@ocuuc.org. You will also have an opportunity to type a response in the Zoom chat. And please continue to reach out to one another and stay in touch. An unexpected phone call is like a smile; free and does a world of good.



RANDOM KINDNESS

Religious Education News
from RE Minister Rev. Judy Tomlinson

Stillness. How perfect for the month of December...one of the busiest months of the year! But think of it. Feel the peace and serenity that comes from just breathing in the word before the panic of all that must be done to have a perfect holiday season rises from deep within.

Then breathe the word stillness in again until the anxiety passes. Reflect on who told you what the perfect holiday is supposed to look like. How come they get to set your standards? Take back your power to create the narrative. In this season, while the Pandemic reasserts itself, we have a good excuse to experiment with stillness and see if it has some lessons to teach us that might last long enough to become tradition.



At all levels of RE, from Pre-K through Youth Group, we will be focusing on *Stillness* this month. In this Advent season we will try on, Dec. 6, to step away from busyness by placing our attention on beauty and peace. On Dec. 13 (Hanukkah), we will listen for the voices of Angels, our inner voices, and pay attention to the ideas and insights that arise in us out of the silence. For Winter Solstice we will celebrate the sacred circle of life and the returning of nature's light that brings us hope. On Dec. 27 we engage in the work of anti-racism and learn about the tradition of Watch Night/Freedom's Even. On New Year's Eve there is a church service in the African Methodist Episcopal tradition called Watch Night. It started when enslaved Africans watched all night for news that they would be freed.

In peace,
Rev. Judy



Thank you to those of you who sang and played, attended, and assisted behind the scenes in our two big November events—Transgender Day of Resilience and Remembrance and NMIIC Thanksgiving Interfaith Music Celebration. Both events came off beautifully, and if you missed either of them, they are available on our church's YouTube channel –

<https://www.youtube.com/user/OrangeCoastUU>

For the past 10 or 12 years, we've held a Winter Solstice service at the church, complete with altar, candles, and a cappella choir. This year we will host the Winter Solstice Singing Ritual on Zoom—on December 19 at 7:00pm. We will provide the music, narration and poetry, and you will each provide your own candlelight and altar if desired. This service is what gets me through the holiday season every year. I love the music, and I love the concept of going into the darkness—accepting it as a cycle of life—knowing that the sun will return again. There's a line in one of the poems in the ritual that goes "A year like no other this was...". Every time we get to that part, I chuckle and say to myself, "You've got that right!" Well, this year, it's even more appropriate, don't you think? Let's all gather (virtually) and acknowledge the darkness and leave with some hope in our hearts.

Our Christmas Eve service on December 24 at 7:00 pm will feature lovely music by Susan Shaw on handbells, Amelia Russo-Nuestadt on oboe, a women's trio with a beautiful new Christmas anthem, a men's quintet with a traditional carol, and the whole choir on our

traditional finale—"Peace, Peace" with "Silent Night."

Lastly, I want to give a big thanks to Steve Morihoro, Barbara Morihoro, and Ginny Chan, who all worked very hard to make our two November events so seamless and beautiful. Barbara and Steve created the candlelight vigil video compilation for Transgender Day of Resilience and Remembrance, plus Steve was the Zoom MC for both events. Ginny was the slideshow operator for both events, plus they both worked the Sunday morning service on that same weekend, too. Thank you so much!

May whatever holidays you celebrate in the next month bring you peace and joy. Especially this year, when everything is turned upside down anyway, it's a good time to reevaluate what we love about the holiday season, and focus on those things. I hope music is a big part of your holiday season!

Musically Yours,
Beth Syverson, Director of Music Ministries
MusicDirector@ocuuc.org



All events are Online
Sunday Services: 10:30 am on Zoom

Most of our meetings take place on Zoom. Find your event on the OCUUC website calendar and click on details to find the Zoom meeting ID.

Thursday, December 3

Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 pm

Friday, December 4

Social Hour, 5:00 pm

Saturday, December 5

StitchWits, 10:00 am

Sunday, December 6

RE Class, 9:30 am

Meditation Group, 9:45 am

Worship Service, 10:30 am

Youth Group, 11:30 am

AHA Group, 12:00 pm

Monday, December 7

OCUUC Fiction Book Group 7:30pm

Wednesday, December 9

Finance Council Meeting 1:30pm

Thursday, December 10

Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 pm

Friday, December 11

Social Hour, 5:00 pm

Saturday, December 12

StitchWits, 10:00 am

Hanukkah Party, 6:00 pm

Sunday, December 13

RE Class, 9:30 am

Worship Service, 10:30 am

Youth Group, 11:30 am

LGBT Action Group, 12:15 pm

Tuesday, December 15

Caring Circle, 12:00 pm

Wednesday, December 16

Board of Trustees, 7:00 pm

Thursday, December 17

Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 pm

Friday, December 18

Social Hour, 5:00 pm

Saturday, December 19

StitchWits, 10:00 am

Winter Solstice Singing Ritual 7:00pm

Sunday, December 20

RE Class, 9:30 am

Meditation Group, 9:45 am

Worship Service, 10:30 am

Youth Group, 11:30 am

Nonfiction Book Club, 12:30 pm

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve Service, 7:00 pm

Friday, December 25

Social Hour, 5:00 pm

Saturday, December 26

StitchWits, 10:00 am

Sunday, December 27

RE Class, 9:30 am

Worship Service, 10:30 am

Youth Group, 11:30 am

Women's Circle, 12:00 pm

uncertain times, we need social connection more than ever.



LGBTQ Action Group

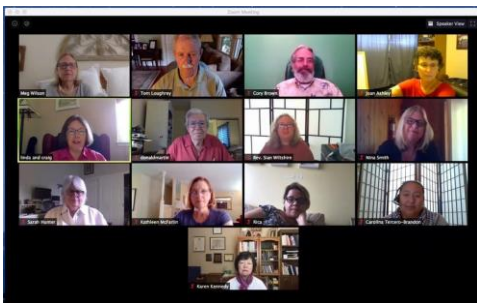
On December 13 at 12:15 pm, we will have our monthly LGBTQ Action Group meeting. Our special guest will be a transman who Jan has known for many years. You won't want to miss it.

We will be foregoing our 4th Sunday Transgender Inclusion in Congregations course because of the holidays, but we'll pick it back up again on the 4th Sunday of January.

Thank you to all those who participated in the Transgender Day of Resilience and Remembrance, as a musician, candlelighter, speaker, or tech support. It was a beautiful tribute to our lost trans and non-binary siblings, and a reminder to work harder to protect the most vulnerable among us. If you missed the service, you can view it on our church's YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/OrangeCoastUU>

Beth Syverson and Jan Mabie, coordinators
LGBTQ Action Group
Janselectrical@gmail.com



Groups at OCUUC

Due to COVID-19, in person meetings are suspended indefinitely.

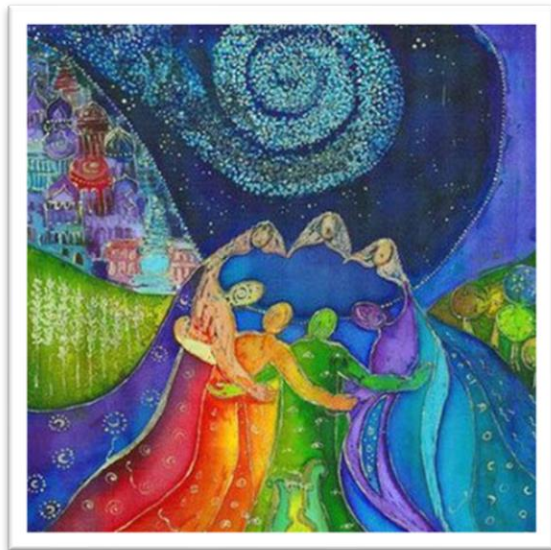
Stay in touch (electronically) and stay safe. We need to physically distance, but in these



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 is currently meeting weekly on Saturdays at 10am on Zoom! Find the meeting ID on the OCUUC website calendar or contact Barbara Schilling.



Women's Circle

The Women's Circle has also moved into cyberspace for the present. It meets on the fourth Sunday of the month at 12 noon. Find the meeting ID on the OCUUC website calendar.



Capital Campaign Update for New Sanctuary

By

Linda Spery, Capital Campaign Chair

Thanks to a recent generous donation from the Environmental Film Festival, our Capital Campaign total is now \$1,120,632 as we near the end of 2020. Gifts and pledges have come from a total of 108 current members, friends of the congregation, staff and former members, including 100% participation by the current Board of Trustees.

Over the past month members of the Task Force have held Zoom meetings with our architect and construction estimators to refine design and construction costs as we move forward. At present the team is revising architectural design elements and earlier estimates from 2018 to bring costs in line with our fundraising goals and prepare us for additional financing needs. Concurrently, Beth Syverson has done extensive research to define the scope of our AV needs that will allow the new sanctuary technology to accommodate both live and on-line worship, concerts and performances.

Speaking of our beloved Beth, did you know that she will celebrate her 20th year at OCUUC in 2021? How fortunate we are to have her heading our music ministry! Starting

December 1, we are launching a special new sanctuary gift outreach to provide you the opportunity to show your appreciation for all Beth contributes to us as a congregation with her talent and hard work. Look for a red envelope in your snail mail to donate to the sanctuary fund in Beth's honor. Also feel free to contact me for more information at lindaspery@gmail.com

HONORING OUR PAST..
BUILDING OUR FUTURE



DECEMBER PLATE SHARE



American Family Housing (AFH) is a non-profit organization that was established in 1985 and provides an array of services and support to homeless and low-income families and individuals, as well as those at-risk of homelessness. In 2019, AFH served over 1,200 families and individuals across their affordable and supportive housing programs.

AFH's programs have the overall goal of providing families and individuals with tools they need to secure a stable home, become an active part of their community, and to achieve a fulfilling life. AFH provides case management, job skills and life skills training, food and transportation assistance, benefits enrollment, and child-care assistance.

Visit afhusa.org or call (714) 897-3221 to find out more about AFH.

UU Seven Principles

We covenant to affirm and promote:

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
4. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
5. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
6. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

UU Six Sources...

...upon which current practice is based:

1. Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
2. Words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
3. Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
4. Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
5. Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
6. Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Be safe, be well,
You mean the world to me.
Be safe, be well,
You mean the world to me.

- Words by Dan Berggren