



**UU of SCV**

# The Flame

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Santa Clarita's Unitarian Universalist Congregation

March, 2023

**Soul Matters Theme for this Month is:**

## Vulnerability



Welcome  
to the Path of  
Vulnerability

*It may be that when we no longer know what to do  
we have come to our real work,  
and that when we no longer know which way to go  
we have come to our real journey.*

*The mind that is not baffled is not employed.  
The impeded stream is the one that sings.*

~ Wendell Berry

This month is a tricky one for us UUs. Let's be honest. Wendell Berry's celebration of vulnerability and limits is just not our thing. We are, after all, the religion of human potential, goodness and power! We don't sing at impeded streams; we break through them. We don't put up with confused minds; we keep at it until we become un-baffled. When we no longer know what to do, we just turn to each other and figure it out together.

There is something deeply inspiring about viewing ourselves as capable and strong. But there's a shadow side too. In pursuit of being our best and most powerful selves, we often fear leaning into vulnerability.

It becomes a problem. The thing we need to protect ourselves from.

But it is a protection that betrays.

The theologian, C.S. Lewis, gets at this in his reflection on the vulnerability of love:

*"To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to keep it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable."*

In other words, there's a big difference between breaking and being broken open. Yes, leaning into vulnerability is frightening. But often, it also unlocks a door, allowing grace to drift in.

For instance, a loved one dies and, to our surprise, our hearts aren't just crushed, they are cracked open, illuminating beauty just a little more clearly. The absence we thought would haunt us, actually unveils how deeply we loved, and how lucky we are to have loved.

Or what about when we're finally honest about the fears and burdens we hide? In that leap of courage, we discover that telling our truths doesn't just make us feel weak or exposed; it opens our eyes. We become able to see that others hide their pain and fear too. And with that, the faceless crowd becomes a sea of fellow travelers. All of us connected. All of us aware how much kindness is needed, even when the other's pain is not easy to see.

It's all about understanding that vulnerability isn't weakness but a softer form of strength.

Remembering that isn't easy. But it is necessary. It's maybe our *most real* work, as our friend Wendell Berry would say.

# Sunday Services

March 5<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 am

## “We Are All Vulnerable”

Rev. Jo Green  
(she/her/hers)



In our culture, vulnerability is seen differently in women and men. International Women's Day is this Wednesday March 8<sup>th</sup> where we embrace equity between genders. Let's explore how creating equity can also increase vulnerability in male genders as it seems to be in female genders. Boys will be boys does not have to be in our conversation any longer. We can replace it with it's okay to be sad. Period.

*The Rev. Jo Green came to ministry as a third career after years teaching art to 7<sup>th</sup> Graders and working in the corporate world later on.*

In Person and on Normal UU of SCV Zoom.  
([www.tinyurl.com/zoomuuscv](http://www.tinyurl.com/zoomuuscv))

March 12<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 am

## “Three ‘Dark Night of the Soul’ Journeys in Vulnerability”

Rev. Dr. Megan Visser



This Sunday we explore the Soul Matters theme for the month of March: Vulnerability. Join Rev. Megan as she presents three individual stories of dark nights of the soul, times in which people feared that “no one would understand” and experienced being broken open along the journey of living and loving.

*Note: please note that this service will touch upon experiences of mental health crisis. If you or a loved one are in crisis, help is available. Dial 988 or visit [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org) for 24/7 free and confidential support.*

In Person and on Normal UU of SCV Zoom.  
([www.tinyurl.com/zoomuuscv](http://www.tinyurl.com/zoomuuscv))

March 19<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 am

## **“Growing UU via Yet More Holidays!”**

Rick Kamlet



The religions that are around, in the form that they're in today, are here because by some method or other, they have been able to propagate themselves into the next generation throughout the years. So, how well does UU'ism do at propagating ourselves into the next generation?

Rick will present some methods in which other religions have been successful in growing (many of which we would not want to do), and will propose a positive new initiative for our congregation to create yet another UU holiday, with the purpose of helping *our* religion grow so that we can be effective at, as the UUA states as one of our goals, “for advancing UU principles to the world.”

*The recipient of our Third Sunday collection (selected by the UUSCV Board this month) will be The Fund for Global Human Rights' Turkey Earthquake Relief Campaign. This fund is recommended by the UU Service Committee and Charity Navigator gives them a 95% score.*

**In Person and on Normal UU of SCV Zoom.**

[www.tinyurl.com/zoomuuscv](http://www.tinyurl.com/zoomuuscv)

March 26<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 am

## **“Questioning the Courage Culture”**

Rev. Dr. Megan Visser



Self-help communities and media figures, such as Brene Brown, promote “courage and vulnerability culture,” by boosting the message that if we lean into challenge, such difficult experiences will make us stronger. Rev. Megan explores the dangers of this message and the systems that abuse rather than help people dealing with adversity.

## **Need Help Decorating the Altar**

People are needed to decorate the altar this month, and in the months ahead. Please sign up for a date on the clipboard at the Membership Table in the foyer. Altar cloths are available. A simple vase of flowers would add a decorative touch to the altar. Consider decorating the altar as your once-a-month ministry or choose a date that has special meaning to you.

# Remembering Elinor McGrew



***Elinor McGrew presenting a service  
about Henrik Ibsen***

Dear UU of SCV Members and Friends,

Beloved member Elinor McGrew died peacefully early this morning in the assisted living center where she lived for the past few years while receiving hospice care. We share our grief and deepest condolences with her family, including her daughters, Rebecca and Kate, Becky and the circle of care surrounding Elinor.

Elinor was a member of UU of SCV since 2009. Elinor had been ill and away from our regular activities for some time, but our connection to her was not far from our hearts. Elinor will also be remembered for her leadership in activities ranging from excursions in the local community, the Senior Section, and the membership committee, among others. Perhaps, most of all, members of our community recall the spark of life in Elinor that

ignited their own light, even leading some to find Unitarian Universalism or join our congregation.

Elinor's presence among us will be deeply missed. Information about honoring Elinor's life will be shared as details become available.

Pastoral care and support are available to each of you during times of loss and mourning. As always, you may also call upon Rev. Megan (978-305-0361 and RevMegan@uuofscv.org).

With love,  
Rev. Megan



**Elinor recognizing volunteers on behalf of our membership committee.**



**Elinor (center), Sara McDaniels, and Chris Hankla leading a dedication ceremony in worship.**

## Mark Your Calendar

### Spring Fling

Rev. Ken Brown



Now you have a chance to have a fun evening and help us raise money for the congregation. For many years we held a fall event and helped raise money for the congregation. With the pandemic preventing us from moving forward we decided to try a similar event this Spring.

So on **April 29<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm**, we will have a Spring Fling, a wonderful party to celebrate our congregation. Like the Fall event we will have dinner and hold a silent auction.

Each family is asked to bring some food to share. You are asked to let Louise and Eric Klatt at [louisepell@yahoo.com](mailto:louisepell@yahoo.com) or [ericck01@yahoo.com](mailto:ericck01@yahoo.com) know what you would like to bring. My wife, Tommie and I will collect whatever you have for the Silent Auction, you can reach us at [tommieup@aol.com](mailto:tommieup@aol.com) or [uurev@aol.com](mailto:uurev@aol.com). We will also have a team to decorate and get things ready for a happy evening. You can join Ingrid Van Dorn at [armo591@aol.com](mailto:armo591@aol.com) and Glenda Nowakowski at [Glenda.nowakowski@gmail.com](mailto:Glenda.nowakowski@gmail.com). We also want to give a great thanks to Suzie Rizzo for hosting the event at her community's club house.

Clubhouse, 25051 Avenida Rotella, Valencia, CA

This is also a time to bring friends or family for a great social evening. If you have questions give me a call.

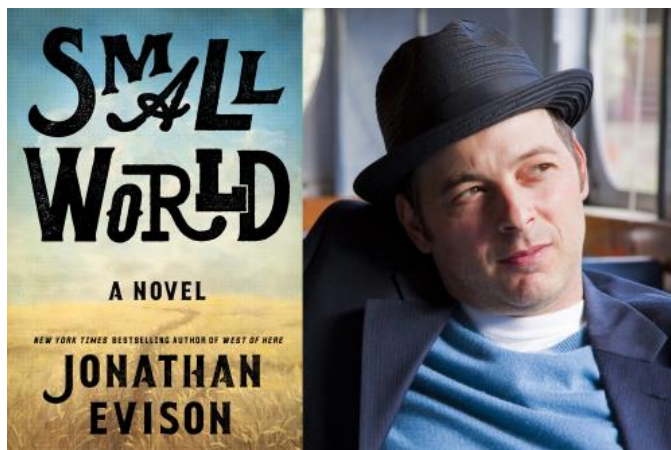
## This Month's Activities



### Book Club

Suzie Rizzo

This is a welcoming and joyful group of readers who love to share their thoughts on the selections chosen. Everyone's presence is encouraged. This group meets the second Wednesday of each month. We will meet at **6:00 pm** at the home of Lois Linnert. Please bring a dish to share and a beverage of your choice, as well as your thoughts and your critique. UUSCV's Covid Policy is followed.



The book for **March 8<sup>th</sup>** is, "Small World," by Jonathan Evison. Small World is an epic novel that is set against such iconic backdrops as the California gold rush, the development of the transcontinental railroad, and a speeding train of modern-day strangers, forced together by fate. It is a grand entertainment that asks big questions, such as whether or not our nation has made good on its promises.

Please join us for a lively discussion. Contact Suzie Rizzo ([baroness1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:baroness1@sbcglobal.net)) or Marianne Bakic ([mariannebakic@icloud.com](mailto:mariannebakic@icloud.com)) if you have any questions.

## Game Nights

Beth Jenkins



This month, we will be holding Zoom game nights on **March 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm.** If you have any questions, contact Beth Jenkins, at: [newbethj@yahoo.com](mailto:newbethj@yahoo.com).

[www.tinyurl.com/zoomuuscv](http://www.tinyurl.com/zoomuuscv)

## Bend the Arc



The next meeting is **Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>.** **Socializing 6:00 to 6:30 pm; Discussion 6:30 to 7:30 pm.** More details to follow as the date draws closer. Contact Lou Paporozzi or Glenda Nowakowski for the location and any additional information.

## Open Topics Discussion Group

Suzie Rizzo



Open Topics is a friendly, fun group of sincere people who like to learn from each other. Please feel free to gather with us and get to know other Unitarians and guests.

Open Topics meets on the fourth Monday of each month at **6:00 pm.** We meet at the home of Lois Linnert. Please bring finger foods to share and the beverage of your choice. UUSCV'S Covid Policy will be followed.

The Topic for **Monday, March 27<sup>th</sup>** will be appearing in the the Weekly Announcements. Please contact Suzie Rizzo ([baroness1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:baroness1@sbcglobal.net)) if you have any questions.

## Friday Meditations Continue on Zoom

Barbara Wampole

Taking time to pause together, being present, and resting quietly in mindful meditation, has been a soothing refuge, as we ride the waves of life through the pandemic. Gentle self-reflection sustains us through spiritual wilderness.

**Every Friday from 11 am to Noon.** If you'd like to join us, please contact Barbara Wampole. [Connect with Zoom](#)

# Social & Environmental Justice

## Social & Environmental Justice (SEJ) Team News

Louise Klatt & Glenda Nowakowski



### SCV Environmental Coalition

SCV Environmental Coalition is made up of about 13 groups in the Santa Clarita Valley area working together on environmental issues. The current project is to organize an environmentally oriented Earth Day event on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. They are currently looking for a location.

### Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL)

CCL will start in-person letter and postcard writing on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10:30 am at Mimi's Cafe on Magic Mountain Parkway.

CCL has obtained an informational table at both the Newhall and the Canyon Country Farmers Markets. They will begin tabling on March 25<sup>th</sup> at the Newhall Market from 8:30 am to 1 pm.

CCL meetings are held on the second Saturday of the month via Zoom at 10 am to noon. Contact Glenda Nowakowski or Suzie Rizzo for more information.

### Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)

PFLAG meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm at St. Stephen's Church. Contact Glenda Nowakowski for more information.

### NAACP-SCV

NAACP-SCV meets on the third Thursday of the month. They will be meeting in person for the rest of the year. Contact Ingrid Van Dorn or Suzie Rizzo for more information.

### SCV Food Pantry

Ingrid Van Dorn reports that the shelves at the Food Pantry are currently empty. Please consider donating food or cash to the Pantry.

### Grandmothers (and Others) For Peace

Grandmothers (and Others) For Peace will meet on Sunday March 5<sup>th</sup> from 3-4 pm at the corner of Valencia and McBean (near Facey building.) Bring your own peace-related sign or borrow one.

### SEJ Team Postcard Writing after the Service

The SEJ Team will host a table for postcard writing on the second Sunday in March -- March 12<sup>th</sup> at Vibe after the service from 11:30 am to 12:00 pm. Come join us and write postcards to our elected officials on any issue which concerns you. Materials will be provided.

There will be no SEJ Team meeting in March, but the team will be co-hosting the Transforming Hearts session #4 on **March 12<sup>th</sup> at 12 pm – 1:30 pm**. The next meeting will be on **April 9<sup>th</sup>** at 12 pm in person at Vibe or via Zoom.

# Poets & Writers Group

Glenda Nowakowski



The Poets and Writers group has decided to offer a sample of some of our writers' work. This month features a poem by Beth Jenkins.

Beth Jenkins has been a creative writer since childhood, published annually in her high school Writing and Artwork publication. Later, one of her short stories won the Evelyn Hamilton Award for Literature while she attended Rutgers University. She is very grateful to have the UU of SCV Poets and Writers group as a supportive and inspiring influence at this stage of her life.

Our next meeting will be on **March 13<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm** via Zoom. We encourage you to check us out. Contact Beth Jenkins or Glenda Nowakowski for more information.

## “Faith”

I had always thought  
perhaps always hoped  
that fighting what I disliked,  
was uncomfortable with,  
wanted to move past--  
was the way to peace and fulfillment.

I strived to be *more* beautiful  
*More* intelligent  
*More* affectionate  
*More* needed.  
How else could I possibly be wanted?  
How might I fit into this world?

How embarrassing  
How graceless  
How foolish

It's hard to admit that my efforts were naive  
What I would see as success  
was quite often an alienation  
from others and from Life.

Probably all along I was teaching others  
to not trust my love  
I fostered others doubting  
their own worth and meaning in this Life.

I wish all those years ago  
before I was even married  
that therapist hadn't said  
“It doesn't have to hurt to be loved”.  
She had good intentions  
She didn't want to see me in pain any longer.  
But she was wrong.

I want my goal to no longer be  
to avoid pain  
or  
to hold on to others  
no matter what the cost to them or to me.

I choose to honor my strength  
my hard-won wisdom  
and instead believe that when it does hurt  
as inevitably this Life does  
I am joined with myself in Faith.



## Hospitality

Rev. Megan Visser

APRIL WORKSHOP OPPORTUNITY

### Sprucing Up Our Spiritual Hospitality



How wide and warm is our congregation's welcome? Let's take a fresh look at the impact of our hospitality and learn some new skills.

Interested in this workshop? E-mail Rev. Megan (RevMegan@uuofscv.org) for scheduling details.

## District & Camp

Louise Klatt

**Join Friends and Colleagues  
from Throughout the Pacific  
Southwest Service Area  
(PSWD)**

**April 21 – 23, 2023  
San Luis Obispo**

Think local to affect influence in the wider world.  
Become more adaptive and resilient.

Join friends and colleagues from throughout the Pacific Southwest Service Area (PSWD) in San Luis Obispo for a chance to share what's going on in your congregation and to enjoy keynote speakers, workshops, activities, worship, meals, and more!

This year's local UU assembly is being held April 21 to April 23, 2023, at the beautiful congregational facility, Unitarian Universalists San Luis Obispo, and is themed Living in Harmony with Each Other and Our Earth.

<https://www.uucamp.org/camps-retreats/family-camps/2023-pacific-southwest-service-area-assembly/>

Upcoming men's retreat!

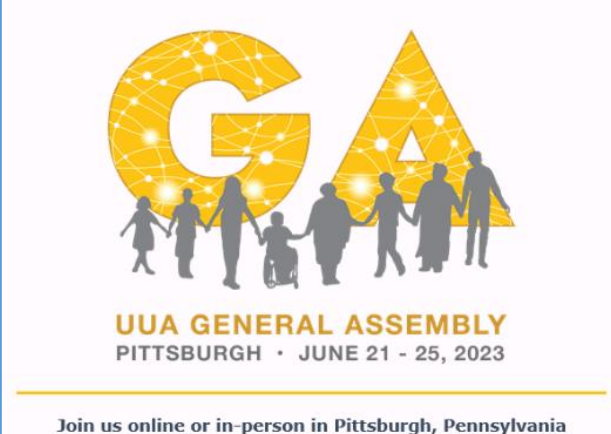
<https://www.firstuusandiego.org/mens-fellowship.html>

25th Annual Women's Retreat May 5-7th

<https://www.uucamp.org/camps-retreats/adult-camps/2023-womens-retreat/>

## General Assembly

**Mark Your Calendars for  
UUA General Assembly 2023**



**UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
PITTSBURGH • JUNE 21 - 25, 2023**

Join us online or in-person in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The theme for General Assembly 2023 is "Faithfully Becoming." We continue to live in times of transition and change; so much is in flux. The COVID-19 pandemic

upended our lives, our communities, and the world. It made clear the devastating and deadly impacts of longstanding racial and economic disparities. The ongoing losses and threats from climate change (of which the pandemic is not unrelated), growing authoritarian movements and the rolling back of fundamental human rights – these all-present tremendous challenges for our lives, our children, and our future.

Many feel worn out and overwhelmed. But times of significant change can also be moments of opportunity and possibility. Major shifts are happening. Our theology and our values as Unitarian Universalists are needed.

This General Assembly will be an exciting moment demonstrating the ways we are called into Faithfully Becoming.

## Church Inner Workings

### How to Book Your Meeting or Event on UUSCV's Zoom

Rev. Dr. Megan Visser

**Want to use Zoom for your UU of SCV meeting/event?**

**Avoid double-booking confusion -**

Add your group's online event to the Zoom Calendar.

To gain access to the internal Zoom Calendar, e-mail Rev. Megan:

[revmegan@uuofscv.org](mailto:revmegan@uuofscv.org)

## Board of Trustees Highlights

Carmela Camp

- The next Board of Trustees meeting will be on Sunday, **March 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm** via Zoom.
- The Board continues its work to determine what will be our “safe congregation” policy in response to new California requirements, primarily regarding persons who work with children.
- The Board continues its work of evaluating alternative church management/document storage systems and “best practices” for storage of material.

## Membership

Membership Team

### Membership Anniversaries

|               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| Suzie Rizzo   | 03/20/2016 |
| Carmela Camp  | 03/27/2016 |
| Warren Eckles | 03/01/2020 |
| Karen Hatcher | 03/01/2020 |

### Birthdays

|                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| Mark Urbach      | 03/05 |
| Natalie Williams | 03/08 |
| Cole Williams    | 03/25 |

## Gratitudes

To the **Anonymous Donor** ... for your generous financial support of the congregation.

To **Scott** ... for resurrecting a Sunday choir. Yahoo!

To **Ingrid, Carmela, Chris, Paula, Mary, and Pete** ... for joining in song as a choir.

To **Chris and Diane** ... for providing an updated directory of member and staff contact information, as well as completing the UUA's 2023 Annual Congregational Inventory.

To **Rick and Glenda** ... for routinely opening and securing our blessed worship space.

To **Ingrid** ... for routinely collecting food items and delivering them to the SCV Food Pantry.

To **Gordon** ... for routinely putting out after-service snacks and providing hot and cold drinks. This is soooo appreciated!

To **Beth** ... for providing garage storage for property belonging to UU of SCV.

To the **Set up/Tear Down Crew** ... those individuals who routinely show up early to prepare our worship space, then put things away each Sunday.



## Pastoral Care

### In Times of Crisis or Need

The Pastoral Care Team and volunteers from the congregation are here to help you in times of crisis or need. We can provide meals, rides, do errands, and/or offer one-to-one support. Please contact Barbara McCoy at (818) 438-8351.

### Need to Speak to the Minister?

For Rev. Megan, please make an appointment during Rev. Megan's office hours:  
<https://calendly.com/revmeganvisser>

# CALENDAR

*(Events and activities may change. Check the Friday weekly announcement emails for updates.)*

**Fridays**, Meditation at 11 am (to noon), Zoom (see article)

## Sunday

**5** **Sunday Service, 10:30 am**  
**We Are All Vulnerable**  
Rev. Jo Green

**8** **Book Club**, 6 pm, Lois Linnert's home

**11** **Game Night**, 7:00 pm, Zoom (see article)

## Sunday

**12** **Sunday Service, 10:30 am**  
**Three 'Dark Night of the Soul' Dark Journeys in Vulnerability**  
Rev. Dr. Megan Visser  
  
SEJ Team co-hosting the **Transforming Hearts Session #4** 12 pm – 1:30 pm, at Vibe and on Zoom

**13** **Poets & Writer's Group**  
6:00 pm, Zoom (see article)

**15** **Bend the Arc Discussion Group**,  
6 pm socializing, 6:30 -7:30 pm discussion,  
Contact listed people for location (see article)

## Sunday

**19** **Sunday Service, 10:30 am**  
**Growing UU via Yet More Holidays!**  
Rick Kamlet

**Board Meeting**, 5 pm, Zoom

**25** **Game Night**, 7:00 pm, Zoom (see article)

## Sunday

**26** **Sunday Service, 10:30 am**  
**Questioning the Courage Culture**  
Rev. Dr. Megan Visser

**27** **Open Topics Discussion Group**,  
6:00 – 8:00 pm at Lois Linnert's home  
(see article)

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

April 21 – 23: Pacific Southwest Service Assembly

April 29: **UUSCV Spring Fling Party**, 5 pm, dinner, auction.

June 21 – 25: **General Assembly**, Pittsburgh

*Join us live at our Sunday services at 10:30 am ...*

**Vibe Performing Arts Studio,**  
**Valencia Plaza Shopping Center,**  
**24460 ¼ Lyons Ave**  
*(Near Vincenzo's Pizza)*

*... and streaming on Zoom*

<https://tinyurl.com/ZoomUUSCV>

*Or via phone at:*

*(669) 900-9128*

*Meeting ID: 3098843973 (use for password also)*

*"#" for personal ID*