



UU of SCV

The Flame

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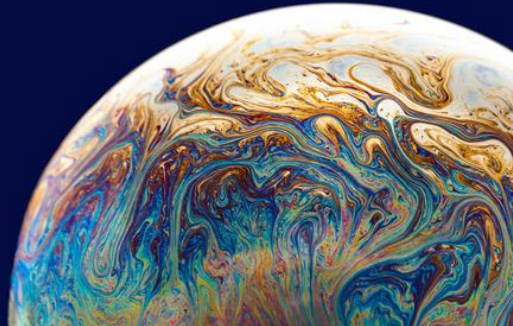
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Santa Clarita's Unitarian Universalist Congregation

May, 2023

Theme for this Month is: Creativity

Welcome to the Path of
Creativity



Dreaming things up. We're all familiar with that part of the quote. Who doesn't love conjuring up new ideas and images? Who isn't impressed when someone takes pieces of *what is* and - almost magically - presents us with *what could be*?

However, the same can't be said about the second half of the quote, the part about "making those dreams happen." That side of the creativity equation gets short shrift. We celebrate the fun piece about dreaming and leave off the hard piece of making our imaginings real.

And it's not just the hard part; it's the scary part too. Maybe that's why we avoid it. Putting something new into the world takes bravery, whether that's a piece of art or the art that is you. Being creatively unique can cause the crowd to cheer and swoon, but it can also lead to being laughed at and left out. Yes, there is joy, beauty and play in creativity, but there is insecurity, loneliness and self-doubt as well. Which means that this month is not just about imagination, artistry and self-expression, but also courage.

[Credit: Soul Matters]

Let it Be a Dance! Let it Be a Dance! Let it Be a Dance!

Rev. Dr. Megan Visser



As you know, the joint ministerial search team composed of members of UU of Santa Clarita Valley and the UU Fellowship of Kern County (UUFKC) has been hard at work these past few months to identify your next minister. I know many of you have asked them directly how it is going or for an update. I hope you'll join me in extending to Sara McDaniels, Rick Kamlet, and Beth Jenkins, your words of thanks for their time, effort, and poise, as they navigate the challenging dance moves of the search process. I also want to share with you a little more detail about my departure time. My normal contract ends in June with the fiscal year, but after discussion with the Board, my contract will be extended until mid-August. I am pleased to have the gift of a little more time with you to ensure a well-supported hand-off to your Board, and to your new minister.

I want to share a little more about what this additional leave-taking time means to me personally. This congregational year has been a stand-out year in my time with you. I've witnessed you regain your footing coming back to in-person worship. I've seen your resilience as you experienced membership changes and now, really resurging more and more each Sunday. I've observed the impact of a deepening small group ministry program on your relationships and shared faith

formation. I've seen you care for one another as we've mourned the passing of long-time members and the illness of others. I've noticed the leadership growth as we've moved toward relationship building with another congregation in the area. I am sure you can name your own highlights of our time together as a community.

May also marks the 4th Anniversary of my ordination into Unitarian Universalist ministry. I also learned I was hired to be your minister on that very day! During my ordination service in Beverly, Mass., everyone in attendance collectively twirled ribbon-dancers in the aisles. (see picture of the clergy at the service with ribbons dancing). In the past few weeks of self-reflection on my ministry here, I've come to identify my desire to "leave it all on the dance floor" -- to keep showing up, to preach everything that's in my heart, to care for you as a pastor, and at the end of the summer, depart knowing that I've given everything I've got to the calling to serve you. Later on, the Board and I will share more about the process and activities that will create a good ending for us, but for now, I must say: it is a tremendous joy to be dancing with you in this powerful calling known as ministry.

*♪ Let it be a dance we do! Let it be a dance!
Let it be a dance! ♪*

Curious about the Path to Membership?

Rev. Megan Visser



Are you interested in learning more about becoming a member of our congregation?

Are you ready to deepen your connection to your spirituality and to community?

E-mail or call Rev. Megan to talk about joining UU of SCV as a member.

Sunday Services

May 7th, 10:30 am

"Improvising as an Art of Living"

Rev. Dr. Megan Visser



"Art is the act of balancing: knowing what to prepare, what to leave to the moment, and the wisdom to know the difference." Stephen Nachmanovitch wrote these words to describe his love of improvising as a violinist, but also as a way of moving through life. How can play be an expression of your being?

May 14th, 10:30 am

“All Music Sunday!”

Scott Roewe & Ingrid Van Dorn



On All Music Sunday we celebrate the creativity of the choir and our guest musicians. Please come and celebrate the joy of music with us.

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

May 21st, 10:30 am

“Work in Progress”

Rev. Dr. Megan Visser



“Being a work in progress is diametrically opposed to being perfect. Being perfect is rigid, unyielding. It offers no flexibility, no wiggle room. It puts people in neat little boxes with labels that often times do not fit. Perfect does not allow for diversity of opinion. Perfect doesn’t care about the process, only the product. Perfect stifles creativity and impedes understanding. Perfect is judgmental and closed off. One size does not fit all, especially when it comes to matters of religion and faith. Unitarian Universalism understands this and offers an alternative...” - Stephanie Trudel.

The recipient of our Third Sunday collection (selected by the Social & Environmental Justice Team) will be
MentalHealthHookup.org

May 28th, 10:30 am

“Is It Time for a Revival?”

Bob Maitino



Change is in the air at UU of Santa Clarita Valley and everywhere we look. On Memorial Day Weekend we acknowledge the past but also recognize the new opportunities up ahead. Let us consider starting again, welcoming the new that could be hiding in plain sight. Let renewal be a choice for the willing. not a gift for the few.

Help Needed

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.

Looking Forward to Next Year's Themes

The overarching frame for 2023-24's themes is **“The Gifts of Our Faith”**. With that as a framework, here are this coming year's themes:

The Gift of...

September: **Welcome**

October: **Heritage**

November: **Generosity**

December: **Mystery**

January: **Liberating Love**

February: **Justice & Equity**

March: **Transformation**

April: **Interdependence**

May: **Pluralism**

June: **Renewal**

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 **May 10th** is, “Transcendent Kingdom,” by Yaa Gyasi. This book by Yaa Gyasi is a powerful, raw, intimate, deeply layered novel about a Ghanaian family in Alabama.

Gifty is a six-year PhD candidate in neuroscience at the Stanford University School of Medicine, studying reward-seeking behavior in mice and the neural circuits of depression and addiction.

Her brother, Nana, was a gifted high school athlete who died of a heroin overdose after an ankle injury left him hooked on OxyContin. Her suicidal mother

is living in her bed. Gifty is determined to discover the scientific basis for the suffering she sees all around her. But even as she turns to the hard sciences to unlock the mystery of her family's loss, she finds herself hungering for her childhood faith and grappling with the evangelical church in which she was raised, whose promise of salvation remains as tantalizing as it is elusive.

Transcendent Kingdom is a deeply moving portrait of a family of Ghanaian immigrants ravaged by depression and addiction and grief. It is exquisitely written, emotionally searing and a very powerful book.

Book Club has run out of books! Please bring two suggestions to the May meeting for consideration as we select our next group of exciting words!

Please join us for a lively discussion.

Contact Suzie Rizzo (baroness1@sbcglobal.net) or Marianne Bakic (mariannebakic@icloud.com) if you have any questions.



One Zoom and One IN-PERSON Game Night

Beth Jenkins



The first Game Night this month is via Zoom: We will be holding Zoom Game Night on **May 6th at 7:00 pm.**

The second Game Night this month is IN PERSON:

Beth is excited to resume the first monthly Game Night in person at her house on **Friday May 26th**. Folks are requested to RSVP in advance, including letting us know what potluck item they will be bringing. The evening will start at **6:30 pm** with food, laughter, and great conversation. Then we will start the games at **7:00 pm**. BYOB. Please RSVP to newbethj@yahoo.com.

www.tinyurl.com/zoomuuscv

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, May 22, 2023 is, "What is your idea of a perfect day?"

Please contact Suzie Rizzo (baroness1@sbcglobal.net) if you have any questions.

Friday Meditations on Zoom

Barbara Wampole

Please feel free to just drop in. No experience is necessary. It's simple. If you'd like to join us to share simple sitting meditation and mindfulness practices, we continue to have a unique opportunity to use Zoom since we began sheltering at home.

"So, when we take our seat in meditation and remind ourselves to sit with dignity, we are coming back to our original worthiness. That in itself is quite a statement."

*Jon Kabat-Zinn,
American professor emeritus of medicine & creator
of the Stress Reduction Clinic and the Center for
Mindfulness in Medicine at the University of
Massachusetts Medical School.*

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

Pledge Drive

***BE*COUNTED PLEDGE DRIVE 2023**

Lucy Bates

Have you been counted? Your annual pledge gift is received with deep gratitude.

Board of Trustees makes plans for the year ahead based on members' timely commitment of financial support. Pledge income is our largest source of income. Confirmed pledges provide the Board with the information they need to make major decisions informed decisions.

We rely on each other in so many ways. Your offerings of time and talent are the beating heart of our community. Planning, hosting, sharing tech expertise, providing a meal, singing in the choir, speaking from the pulpit, hosting an affinity group, leading a committee, or taking a seat on the Board are some of the priceless gifts you give to UU of SCV.

Thank you for all you have done and continue to provide.

Thank you for standing up and being counted.

Social & Environmental Justice

Social & Environmental Justice (SEJ) Team News

Louise Klatt & Glenda Nowakowski



Mirna Sawyer, Christine Andress, Louise Klatt, Ingrid Van Dorn



Suzie Rizzo, Ingrid Van Dorn & Louise Klatt

The proposed 8th Principle of Unitarian Universalism calls for us to actively work to dismantle racism in society.

Members of our congregation's SEJ team are doing that by becoming aware of, and attending events that help us to learn about the issues facing people of color. Ingrid Van Dorn and Suzie Rizzo of our SEJ team are members of the Santa Clarita chapter of the NAACP. Five women from our congregation attended a private screening at the Laemmle Theater, Newhall on Tuesday, April 18th to watch a powerful screening of the documentary "Birthing Justice" which was followed by a Director's Q & A panel discussion. Of all developed countries, the U.S. ranks highest in maternal mortality of developed nations and black women are 3 times more likely to die from pregnancy related complications than the rest of the population. The event raised funds to benefit four local expecting mothers and the nonprofit Black Women for Wellness.

Our local Santa Clarita Food Pantry needs donations of food, the need is great, and the supply is low at this time. Ingrid Van Dorn is currently a volunteer and can answer any questions you may have about what is most needed at this time. You can also contact the SCV Food Pantry directly. info@scvfoodpantry.org (661)255-5001. <https://www.scvfoodpantry.org/>

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. You may want to go to the annual “Stop the Stigma SCV event as Santa Clarita Takes Action” event on Saturday, May 20th from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. There will be a speaker, food, prizes. The event is being held at Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital Campus, 23803, McBean Parkway, Valencia 91355.

Postcard Writing After Services The SEJ team is setting up a table after the service on the second Sunday of the month for writing postcards to our elected officials. The table will be up between the end of the service and noon, when the SEJT meeting begins. Materials will be provided, as well as addresses of elected officials and a list of possible issues. You are free to choose an issue that concerns you. Be a part of democracy in action!

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY, MAY 20TH

STOP THE STIGMA

SCV TAKES ACTION

WHERE: HENRY MAYO HOSPITAL CAMPUS
23803 MCBEAN PKWY

WHEN: 10 - 2 PM

In association with COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS

MENTAL HEALTH HOOKUP

Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
hope. recovery. wellbeing.

Santa Clarita Veteran Services COLLABORATIVE

MIHA Mental Health America

KHTS AM 1220 FM 98.1 HOMETOWNSTATION.COM

Note: The 3rd Sunday Collection will be given to MentalHealthHookup.org

The next meeting is on **May 14th at noon**, in person at Vibe and also on Zoom.

Poets & Writers Group



On April 16, 2023, the Poets and Writers group hosted a Poetry Service, on the theme of Resistance. John Cooper, Glenda Nowakowski, Emily Larbaoui, Beth Jenkins, and Barbara Cogswell read some of their original poems. We thank Beth for also acting as worship host. Poets and Writers gave Barbara Cogswell a plaque commemorating her years of dedication to the group.

The Poets and Writers group has decided to offer a sample of some of our writers' work. This month we offer a poem from Barbara Cogswell.

Barbara is a 20-year member of this congregation. For many years, she has been a much-appreciated leader of our Poetry affiliation group. Barbara led us and fed us during our pre-COVID monthly meetings, nourishing our minds, souls, and bodies. She has remained a valuable contributor as we have continued our meetings on ZOOM. Barbara's contributions to this affiliation group as well as to our congregation as a whole are much appreciated!

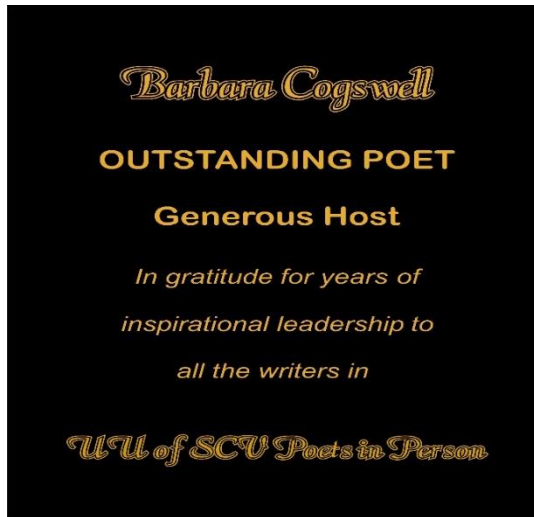
The Latest From My Muse

My muse tells me she is stuck in the mud,
On a road somewhere off the map
Where she often wanders, now
I remind her not to spin her wheels,
as that simply digs her in deeper,
That I was happy to hear from her,
And find that her situation
if not a metaphor
At least a darn good simile
Which I will put to use at once
in this poem about

the gentle rain that fell
Sweetening the air
While I slept soundly
In my warm bed

Our next meeting will be on **Monday, May 1 at 6:00 pm** via Zoom. Beginners and non-writers are welcome, too. If you've always wondered what it would be like to share your own work, THIS is the place to start.

Barbara Cogswell Honored



Regional & National

PSWSA Pacific Southwest Service Area Assembly

Louise Klatt

On the weekend of April 21 - 24th, in the spirit of our beloved District Assembly, [Camp de Benneville Pines](#) sponsored a traditional assembly to bring members of our 50 churches together to enjoy an engaging keynote speaker, UU-themed workshops, music, worship, and the camp's annual business meeting with updates. The assembly took place at the [Unitarian Universalists San Luis Obispo](#). This was created to serve the former district, which the Camp de Benneville Board is calling the Pacific Southwest Service Area (PSWSA) because those are the congregations who are served by the camp. Camp de Benneville Pines is our place, our congregation's "own camp". The event was well attended with over 80 people attending in person and there were also people who joined virtually.



Rev. Rod Richards and Pat Gordon, Camp Board
President

While the assembly was happening for adults the teens had the opportunity to participate in a YoUth Con.

Three of the teens also had a "Bridging" ceremony which was incorporated into the Sunday Morning Worship Service. For those of you wondering what a Bridging is, it is when a youth is getting ready to graduate from High School (basically around age 18) and moving into young adulthood. Two of the youth bridging were from the Chalice congregation in Conejo Valley and one was from UUSLO.



YoUth Bridging at PSWSA Assembly



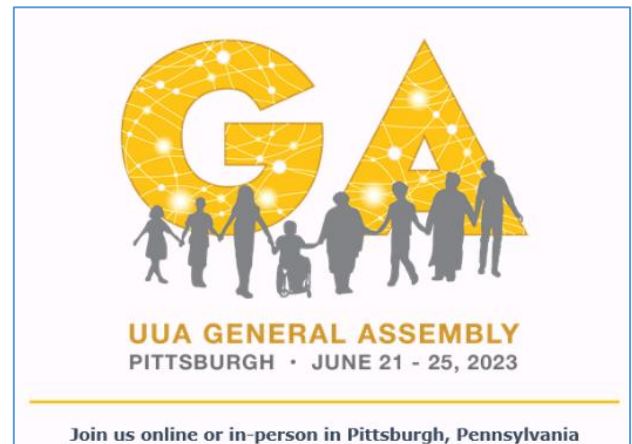
PSWSA Choir



PSWSA Booths

And yes, there are also many opportunities to go to camp! There are kids' camps, family camps and adult camps this Spring and Summer season! For info go to <https://www.uucamp.org/camp-calendar/>

UUA General Assembly 2023



**Come to
General Assembly 2023!**
Rev. Megan Visser

General Assembly is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists, where we conduct business of the Association, explore the theological underpinnings of our faith, and lean fully into our mission and principles. Join General Assembly (or GA) from June 21 to 25 online or in-person in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Our congregation may send 2 delegates to vote in the regular business meetings of the Unitarian Universalist

Association (UUA). This year includes some big business -- electing a new UUA President and discussing changes to Article 2, the principles, purposes and sources of our tradition. Please talk to Rev. Megan or Rev. Ken if you're interested or have questions.

Check it out - www.uua.org/ga

Church Workings

Board of Trustees

Highlights

Carmela Camp

- Rev, Megan and the Board invite you to consider attending General Assembly 2023 (June 21-25) and representing our congregation in Pittsburgh at the annual business meeting (either in-person or on Zoom). See the ad on this page.
- The Board agreed to accept Reverend Jo Green as an affiliated Community Minister. The Congregation will have the opportunity to welcome and affirm Rev. Jo as our Affiliated Community Minister in an upcoming worship service.
- A welcoming ceremony for new members is being planned.
- The week after the meeting, the Board held an email vote and approved extending Rev. Megan's time with us through mid-August.
- The May Board meeting will be on Sunday, **May 21 at 5:00 pm.**

Board Officers

President - *unfilled*

Vice President - Rev. Dr. Ken Brown

Co-Treasurer - Eric Klatt

Co-Treasurer - Diane Tamburello

Secretary - Carmela Camp

Member-at-Large - Rick Kamlet

Member-at-Large - Gordon Uppman

Member-at-Large - Dru Hiller

Membership

Membership Team

Birthdays

Romi Glad	05/02
Lou Paparozzi	05/25
Pete Tassone	05/29
Barbara McCoy	05/30

Membership Anniversaries

Lucy Bates	05/22/2005
Glenda Nowakowski	05/03/2009
Bruce Glad	05/01/2011
Romi Glad	05/01/2011
Barbara McCoy	05/06/2012
Beth Jenkins	05/20/2012
Bob Maitino	05/31/2015
Eric Klatt	05/22/2016
Louise Klatt	05/22/2016

Need to Speak to the Minister?

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

Note: Rev. Megan will be on vacation from May 8-14 and May 22-29.

Gratitudes

Membership Team



To **Chris** ... for presenting a faith message on the topic of resistance in April.

To **Lynne** ... for presenting a faith message on the topic of spiritual helpers in April.

To **Beth** and **Louise** ... for serving as Worship Hosts in April.

To **John, Glenda, Barbara C., Emily, and Beth** ...for sharing their poetry related to the topic of resistance.

To **Kevin** ... for completing and submitting documentation for consideration of a Welcoming Congregation Renewal!

To **Chris** and **Diane** ... for locating the large UU of SCV banner for better signage.

To **Ken** and **Tommie** ... for spearheading the Spring Fling event.

To **Suzie** ... for arranging the use of her association's clubhouse for the Spring Fling.

To **Everyone** ... for donating auction items and helping to make the Spring Fling event a success!

To **Lucy, Rev. Megan, and Rev. Ken** ... for initiating the pledge campaign for 2023-24.

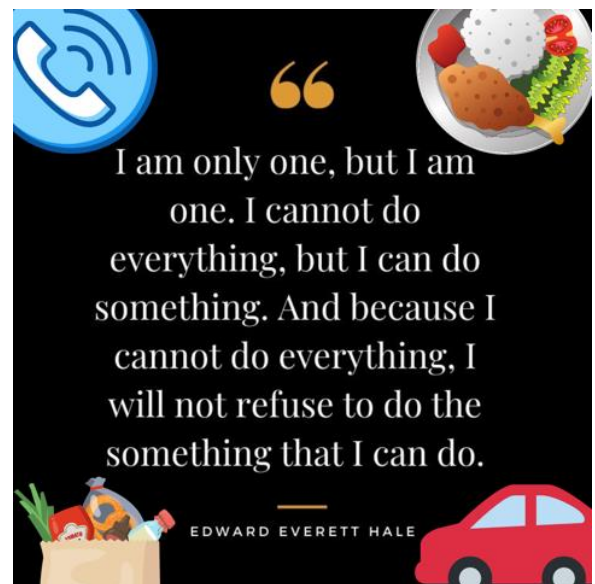
To **Suzie** ... for hosting Elinor's memorial service.

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.

Practical Support is Pastoral Care: Can You Offer a Hand?



There are times when our congregational community members need a little practical support. Whether it's a ride home from a doctor's office, a ride to Sunday Services, a meal when we're sick, or a phone call if our spirits are low, our Pastoral Care team is here to offer practical and friendly support. Are you available to serve others in one of these ways?

Please go to this form and send us your contact information, along with how you are available to offer a hand to members of your community. We're hoping to have a full list by May 15th.

LINK: www.tinyurl.com/UUSCVcares

CALENDAR

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

Every Friday, Meditation at 11 am (to noon), Zoom (see article)

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

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

Sunday

7 Sunday Service, 10:30 am
Improvising as an Art of Living
Rev. Dr. Megan Visser

10 Book Club, 6 pm, Lois Linnert's home

Sunday

14 Sunday Service, 10:30 am
Music Service
Scott Roewe and Ingrid Van Dorn
Social & Environmental Justice Team 🍷
12 noon, at Vibe and on Zoom

Sunday

21 Sunday Service, 10:30 am
Work in Progress
Rev. Dr. Megan Visser

Board Meeting, 5 pm, Zoom
(first half hour jointly with Worship Team)

26 Game Night IN PERSON, 6:30 pm potluck,
at Beth Jenkins house (see article)

Sunday

28 Sunday Service, 10:30 am
Is it Time for a Revival?
Bob Maitino

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

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

June 21 – 25: General Assembly, Pittsburgh

SNAPSHOTS

Easter Service



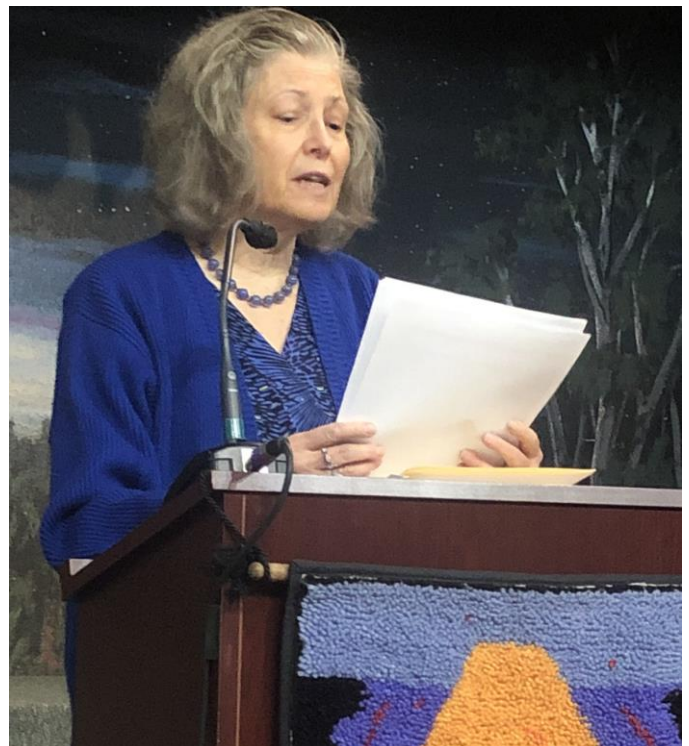
Our Choir



Altar Table

Poetry Service

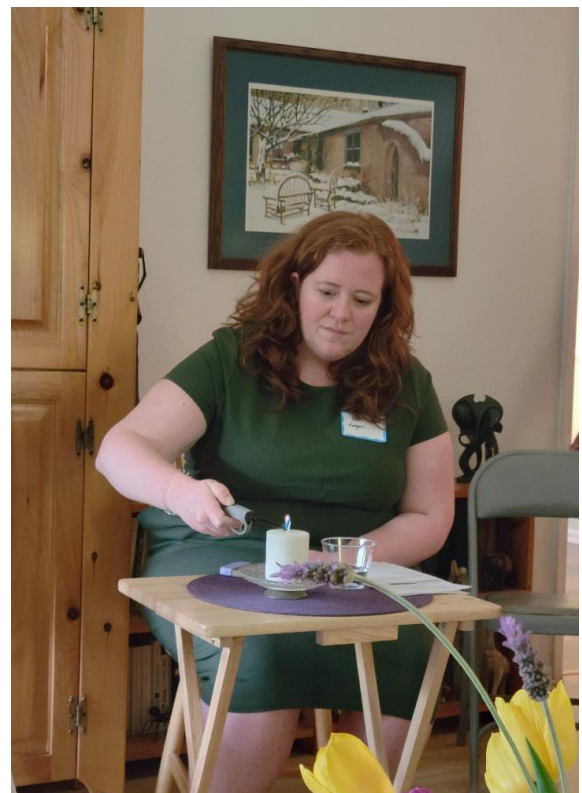
(Note: There were other poets, but these were the photos I received. Congratulations to all the poets on a wonderful service!)





Memorial for Elinor McGrew

Thank you to Suzie Rizzo for graciously offering to hold the memorial at her house and for guiding the sharing of memories of Elinor.





More Photos from PSWSA Pacific Southwest Service Area Assembly



**Janet James, Executive Director of
Camp deBenneville Pines**



Louise Klatt (UUSCV) & Jeannie Parent (UUFKC)