



UU of SCV

The Flame

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PO Box 800028, Santa Clarita, CA 91380. 661-254-7866

Santa Clarita's Unitarian Universalist Congregation

January, 2024

January's Theme: Liberating Love

This year's overarching frame is *The Gifts of Our Faith*. During the year, we will focus on ten beloved UU values and explore them through their potential to shape us and in turn, shape the world. We will get at such questions as: How do these values offer us both challenge and comfort? What might it mean to place them at the center of our living and loving? What promise do they hold for us individually as well as collectively?

UUA's proposed new Article II values and inspirations statements place love at the center of our faith and hold up the idea that we draw from our heritages of freedom, reason, hope, and courage, building on the foundation of love.

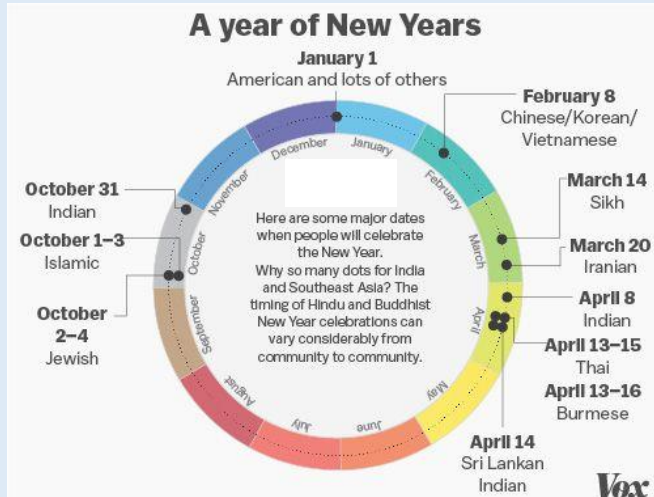
Adapted from Soul Matters

Sunday Services

January 7th, 10:30 am

“In the Beginning”

Rev. Rebecca Benefiel Bijur



Amidst the rich cultural diversity of Southern California, you can celebrate the New Year in almost any season: a winter Lunar New Year for many Asian cultures, a Spring New Year for Persian communities, or a fall turning of the year for Jewish and Ethiopian cultures. No matter when you observe it, how can the New Year offer us an opportunity for renewal, restoration, and reflection on our guiding values?

Rev. Rebecca Benefiel Bijur is raising three children with her husband in Santa Monica, CA. She serves as Community Minister for the Emerson UU Church of Canoga Park and works with St. Joseph Center in Venice to provide housing, hope, and help to people experiencing homelessness. She will be preaching at UU of SCV on the first Sunday of the month through June 2024.

January 14th, 10:00 am

Earlier 10:00 am Start Time

We will Zoom into the UUFKC Service from Vibe.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Niala Terrell-Mason



Niala Terrell-Mason returns to UUFKC, via the miracle of Zoom, to speak on topics related to Martin Luther King, Jr.

Niala Terrell-Mason is a Christian UU born and raised in Southern California. She has a BA in sociology and women's studies from Scripps College and an M.Div in interfaith chaplaincy from Claremont School of Theology, both in Claremont, CA. She was a member of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Riverside for 10 years and served the congregation in many ways, including stints on the board, heading up various committees, and acting as worship leader.

<https://zoom.us/j/93220880199?pwd=MVdDZUpXdFYzSHdrbXV6NXRtdERVdz09>

Meeting ID: 932 2088 0199

Passcode: 7654321

January 21st, 10:30 am

“The Best Thing to Say to a Friend

Rev. Anne Hines



We Americans have been living in very challenging times, with distrust and anger at levels rarely seen before in this country — at least in my lifetime; sometimes this even affects relationships with people we love. St. Francis of Assisi had a practice that might lower the intensity of these painful tensions.

Rev. Hines is Minister Emerita of Emerson UU Church in Canoga Park. She retired after over 30 years of UU parish ministry, all within our Pacific Southwest District. Since retiring in 2014 she has served several other congregations as Interim, Sabbatical, or Contract minister. She also serves on the Board of the San Fernando Chapter of the ACLU, is active with Brady United to End Gun Violence, and volunteers with Ten Thousand Villages — a Fair Trade store in Pasadena.

Congregational Meeting Following the Service – The Annual Mid-Year Congregational Update Meeting will be held after the service, from 11:45 to 12:30 – both in-person and via Zoom (see article).

January 28th, 10:30 am

“Love Is Saying Yes to What Is”

Rev. Joshua Berg



Many traditions instruct some variation of the idea of non-attachment leading to perception of truth. However, if there is no desire at all, that must also include that very desire for understanding. The lesson is (spoiler alert) that the path is the truth. Unitarian Universalism's principles and shared values lay out a love-filled path into the inescapable mystery of life.

Joshua Berg is an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister. He lives in Southern California with his wife and two daughters and works as a chaplain at Children's Hospital, Los Angeles. Joshua is a published author, an active life-cycle celebrant, and frequent preacher at congregations around the United States.

Join us, live at our Sunday services ...

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

... and streaming on Zoom (except for services streamed from UU Fellowship of Kern County)

<https://tinyurl.com/ZoomUUSCV>

Or via phone at:

(669) 900-9128

Meeting ID: 3098843973 (use for password also)

"#" for personal ID

For Our Once-a-Month Service Streamed from UUFKC:

Services that are streamed from our partner congregation, UU Fellowship of Kern County, begin at 10:00 am. We gather at Vibe Performing Arts Studio to light our own chalice and watch the sermon together. We intend to be adding our own in-person sections of the service – let us know what you would like to have included in-person.

For those watching from home, a special streaming URL is provided (which changes for each service) – see service write-up above for the special URL.

This Month's Activities

Drum Circle

Beth Jenkins



Our meditative Drum Circle is continuing to meet on the first Friday evening every month, at **7 pm** –so this month that will be on **January 5th**.

No experience necessary, and our Drum Circle leader Burl Bolerjack brings a great deal of drums and other percussion instruments from which to choose.

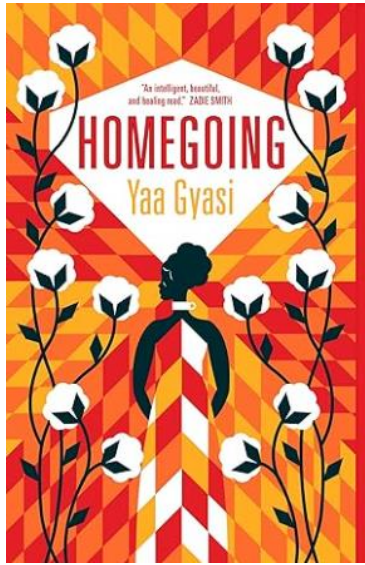
This Drum Circle includes a brief "check-in" followed by our first of three or four sets of drumming started by Burl providing a basic beat. It is a wonderful experience and newcomers are very welcome! This Drum Circle is at the home of Beth Jenkins. If you will be attending, it is very helpful to RSVP by Thursday night the night before to Beth at newbethj@yahoo.com, or text to 661-478-2036.

Note: a donation to support Burl's transportation cost is much appreciated but not required. All donations are shared with UU of SCV.

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.

January 10th - Our selection for January is *Homecoming* by the acclaimed author Yaa Gyasi. She was born in Ghana and raised in Alabama.

Her novel concerns the open wound slavery. The tale begins in the late 18th century on a part of the Gold Coast which eventually became Ghana. Sections of the review by Diana Evans, in essence, states..." a young girl is sold by her father to a British slave trader as a bride, not as a slave, and is taken to live with him in Cape Coast Castle, a fort overlooking the sea. The slaves are in dungeons underneath the castle, awaiting transit to the Americas and the Caribbean...

...The saga continues through multiple generations. Each narrative is well researched and shows that there is a powerless sense as each generation is challenged with their history..."

Yaa Gyasi, a new writer, undertakes an enormous task to reveal what had transpired to all the slaves. The writing is filled with compassion and empathy for these suffering souls that pass beneath the Castle, and for those whose lives are lived far from their home.

Please join us for a lively discussion.

The book for February 14 is "Demon Copperhead" by Barbara Kingsolver.

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

Annual Mid-Year Congregational Business Update Meeting

The Board of Trustees

UU of SCV will hold our Mid-Year Congregational Meeting following the worship service on **January 21st from 11:45 am to approximately 12:30 pm**. The meeting will be rich with information and open to your questions. Topics will include how the congregation is doing financially so far this church year, an update about what is happening ministerially for the congregation, news from the Worship Team, and about a minute for each group activity to let us know what's happening with that group. Members and non-members are welcome to attend. No voting will be held at this meeting.

Join us in person at Vibe or by Zoom on our regular UUSCV Zoom site.

Movie Night

SEJ Team,
Submitted by Suzie Rizzo



SEJ is having movie night.

Documentaries, biographies, novels, and more will be shown at the home of Suzie Rizzo on the second Friday of each month. Please join us at **6:00 pm for conversation and food. The film will start at 7:00 pm.** Please bring finger foods to share, vegan and vegetarian preferred. You may contact Suzie at baroness1@sbcglobal.net if you have any questions.

The film for **January 12th** is, "Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones," parts 1 and 2. Reviewers state this series looks at the keys to living a long, healthy life. Is it diet or climate? Is it the genetic makeup of the people? Please join us for this provocative series. Parts 3 and 4 will be shown in February 2024.

Bend the Arc

Lou Paparozzi



This month's Bend the Arc meeting will be held on **January 17th**, on our usual third Wednesday of the month. It will be at Suzie Rizzo's home. **Socializing 6:00 to 6:30 pm; Discussion 6:30 to 7:30 pm.** Join us for an informed, respectful, and lively examination of some of the topics of the day for discussion of local, national and world events.

Please bring: Finger Food and Topics for Discussion

Contact Lou Paparozzi for any additional information, louisppaparozi@gmail.com.

Open Topics Discussion Group

Barbara McCoy & Lois Linnert



Our congregation has a Discussion Group that finds a great deal of satisfaction in discussing topics of our choice. We delve into many things, sharing our ideas. All are welcome - Please join us.

We meet on the 4th Monday of each month at the home of Lois Linnert in Friendly Valley.

Time: 6:00 pm.

Topic for January 22nd - What miracles have happened in your life?

Bring food to share!

Questions: Contact Barbara McCoy at bmccoy1@socal.rr.com or call Lois Linnert at 661-299-5393.

Game Nights

Beth Jenkins



ZOOM Game Night -- Our monthly Zoom Game Nights will be occurring now on one Saturday a month. This may vary each month; This month's Saturday ZOOM Game Night is on **Saturday, January 6th, 7:00 pm**

IN-PERSON Game Night -- In-person Game Nights will occur on one of the Fridays of each month, at the home of Beth Jenkins. We'd love to have you join us for a relaxing potluck followed by playing mostly word games. Our in-person Game Night for this month will be on **Friday, January 19th, 6:30 pm**. If you will be attending, please RSVP to Beth at newbethj@yahoo.com. It is helpful if you can indicate what appetizer, dessert, or other food item you will be bringing.

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.

Our friends at UU Fellowship of Kern County are welcome to join us for Meditation!

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

Poets & Writers Group Still on Hiatus (Until February)

The Poets and Writers group is on hiatus until February 2024. Please contact Beth Jenkins or Glenda Nowakowski for more information, or if you are interested in joining when we start up again.

“Harvest the Power” -- New Leadership Development Class Being Offered

Rev. Rebecca Benefiel Bijur

We are excited to announce the **Harvest the Power** Leadership Development class. This class asserts that leadership in a congregational setting can and should be a deeply spiritual experience. This program offers opportunities to enrich and deepen leadership skills as well as spiritual growth, in a way that honors the gifts that each of us brings. Harvest the Power is designed for adults of all ages and stages, young adults through elders, who currently hold or are considering accepting a congregational leadership position.

Led by **Rev. Matthew McHale & Rev. Rebecca Bijur**, Affiliated Community Minister, this program will take place **across six Sundays from 1:30 - 3:30 pm: Sunday January 14th & 28th, February 11th & 25th, March 10th** and an additional Sunday to be announced. There is no charge.

If you're interested, want to know more, or want to sign up, email Rev. Matthew at revmatthew@emersonuuc.org.

Camp News

Louise Klatt

Being at camp presents many opportunities to soften ourselves and allow ourselves to feel the sense of love and connection that is inexplicably communicated in the eyes of our fellow beings or felt in the deep breathing of plants, trees, and moss. Hope can be found in celebrating these things and in appreciating the moments of awe the earth continuously shares with us. The generative power of gratitude and hope in these things can change the way we think and act. Camp de Benneville Pines events offer collaboration, spiritual contemplation, and education that reflect those efforts in Unitarian Universalist congregations. The quality time we can spend together at Camp and at the April annual Pacific Southwest Service Area Assembly can be an integral part of rebuilding UU Congregations.

Bear Hugs from Camp Year-End Appeal

Help meet the goal of raising \$100,000 by January 31, 2024! Donate at: [Bear Hugs Campaign](#)

UU Elementary Family Winter Camp



Feb 17th through Feb 19th, for youth grades K through 6 and their families. Together we'll harness the forces of confidence, character, and creativity to discover the superpowers hidden inside us all. At Superhero Academy you can create your own secret identity*, learn about UU heroes of the past, then take your first steps toward becoming a member of the de Benneville Pines *UU Justice League* — a group that handles challenges too massive for any ordinary superhero. Join other youth and families from across our region and fly toward a better world.

**Cape and tights not included*

More information at [UU Elementary Family Winter Camp](#).

Social & Environmental Justice

Social & Environmental Justice (SEJ) Team News

Louise Klatt & Glenda Nowakowski

As always, members of the SEJ team have been engaging with the local community. We'd like to share the following information with you all:

NAACP Santa Clarita had an exclusive screening of "The Color Purple 2023" at the Laemmle in Newhall on Christmas. There was a pre-movie reception.

The NAACP general meeting is on the third Thursday of every month. The PAC meeting (focusing on voter registration) is on the second Tuesday of the month. Contact Suzie or Ingrid for more information.

Santa Clarita Food Pantry -- Our team member, Ingrid, volunteers at the food pantry weekly, and has reported that they are in need of food donations and that they also gladly accept and distribute pet food for people who have pets to feed. They do collect personal care items such as soap, shampoo, toothpaste, however they cannot accept any over the counter medications or ointments. If you have any questions, you can contact the SCV Food Pantry at info@scvfoodpantry.org or call (661) 255-5001 <https://www.scvfoodpantry.org/>

Grandmothers for Peace will be holding a vigil on Sunday, January 7th from 3:00 pm. to 4:00 pm. at the corner of Valencia Blvd. & McBean Parkway (on the FACEY side). Come join members of our SEJ team as

we stand united for peace (you don't have to be a grandmother to be at this monthly event).

It is so very important to show our neighbors here in Santa Clarita that we advocate for peace, especially now with wars raging in the Ukraine and Gaza.

Movie Night – see the article about the January 12th Movie that we will be watching.

Hart District Parental Notification (Forced Outing)

Proposed Policy – The Hart District is considering a parental notification policy, where teachers would be required to notify parents if a student was using pronouns different than their birth sex, or if they are showing other signs of social transitioning. Doing this would be highly detrimental to transgender and questioning students. School may be the only place where they feel safe. The school board held a meeting on November 15th to discuss the matter. Our team member, Glenda, attended the meeting. Rev. Ken Brown and Sara McDaniels spoke eloquently against the proposed policy. If you wish to express your opinions, you can email the members of the school board. Their emails are at:

<https://www.hartdistrict.org/apps/pages/governingboard-members>

Post Card Writing to help us all express our thoughts to our elected officials happens after the service on the 2nd Sunday of the month. Postcards with postage, addresses & information on local and national issues is provided. Please join us at the table set up in the annex near the coffee, tea & snacks.

The next meeting of the SEJ Team will be on January 14th at 12:00 pm (noon) at Vibe Performing Arts Center and also via UUSCV Zoom. Everyone is welcome to attend!

Gift Card Collection a Huge Success!

Rick Kamlet



We are so glad to have been able to deliver thirty-six \$25 gift cards to brighten the lives of SCV teens who have been affected by domestic violence. That's \$900 worth of gift cards!!!

The Domestic Violence Center (the previous organization that worked with SCV domestic violence victims) told us that often teens get overlooked for the holidays because toys collected for families tend to be for smaller children. So, since 2016, we have been collecting gift cards for teens who have been affected by domestic violence.

And you came through!!! We would like to thank the wonderful generosity of the members of the congregation.



Rick Kamlet had the honor of delivering gift cards to the Child & Family Center

Church Workings

Board of Trustees

Highlights

Carmela Camp

- We are continuing to explore resources for resuming outreach efforts.
- We are arranging for one service each month to be led by Rev. Rebecca Benefiel Bijur and one service each month to be led by Rev. Jo Green.
- A committee is being formed to plan a “Spring Fling” event, possibly to be held in early May.
- The next Board meeting will be on **Sunday, January 21st at 5:00 pm** via Zoom.

Board Officers

President - *unfilled*

Vice President - Rev. Dr. Ken Brown

Co-Treasurer - Eric Klatt

Co-Treasurer – Chris Hankla

Secretary - Carmela Camp

Member-at-Large - Rick Kamlet

Member-at-Large - Gordon Uppman

Member-at-Large – Diane Lin

Pastoral Care

Your UU of SCV

Pastoral Care Team

The Pastoral Care Team serves those in our congregation needing support. Current team members are Lucy Bates, Diane Lin, Barbara McCoy, and Ingrid Van Dorn. If you are interested in joining us, we can always use the help. Or maybe you could be one of our “helping hands people” for those occasions when we need extra help.

Mission Statement:

The Pastoral Care Team is an extension of the Minister’s own pastoral care presence. This care is offered with strict confidentiality. Pastoral care is available to those experiencing illness, injury, grief, loneliness, or an unexpected emergency. Team members may provide help with meals, transportation, phone calls, visits, and errands.

During this time without a minister - Remember we are here to help should you need it. And if needed we can connect you with a minister.

Primary contact is Barbara McCoy – 818 438-8351.

Membership

Membership Team

Gratitudes



Virtually everyone in our congregation helps out in some way. There are so many things that people do, that we can't possibly list them all individually. Everyone wants to be appreciated, so when you become aware of someone contributing to the life of the congregation, be sure to acknowledge them and express your personal gratitude.

Birthdays

Barbara Cogswell 01/19

Membership Anniversaries

Gordon Uppman 01/18/2015

CALENDAR

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

- 5 **Drum Circle**, 7:00 pm, rsvp to Beth Jenkins
- 6 **Zoom Game Night**, 7:00 pm

Sunday

- 7 **Sunday Service, 10:30 am**
In the Beginning
Rev. Rebecca Benefiel Bijur

- 10 **Book Club**, 6:00 pm, Lois Linnert's home
- 12 **Movie Night**, Suzie Rizzo's home, 6:00 pm for food and conversation, 7:00 pm for movie

Sunday

- 14 **Sunday Service, 10:00 am**
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Niala Terrell-Mason
↑ ↑ ↑
Zoom (at Vibe) from UUFKC
Different Start Time: 10:00 am
Different Zoom Link for On-Line (*see listing*)

Post Card Writing -- Immediately after the Service

Social & Environmental Justice Team
12 noon, at Vibe and on Zoom

Leadership Development Class,
1:30 – 3:00 pm, location tba

- 17 **Bend the Arc**, Suzie Rizzo's home, 6:00 pm for socializing, 6:30 for discussion.
- 19 **In Person Game Night**, 6:30 pm

Sunday

- 21 **Sunday Service, 10:30 am**
The Best Thing to Say to A Friend
Rev. Anne Hines

Annual Mid-Year Congregational Business Meeting, 11:45 am to approx. 12:30 pm, Live at Vibe and on Zoom
Members and Non-Members Invited

Board Meeting, 5:00 pm, Zoom

- 22 **Open Topics Discussion Group**, 6:00 pm, Lois Linnert's home

Sunday

- 28 **Sunday Service, 10:30 am**
Love is Saying Yes to What Is
Rev. Joshua Berg

Leadership Development Class,
1:30 – 3:00 pm, location tba

Meditation – Every Friday 11 am to noon, Zoom

Poets & Writers Group is taking a break this month and will be back in February.

SNAPSHOTS

Happy Luminescence Service Dec 10th



Holiday Party

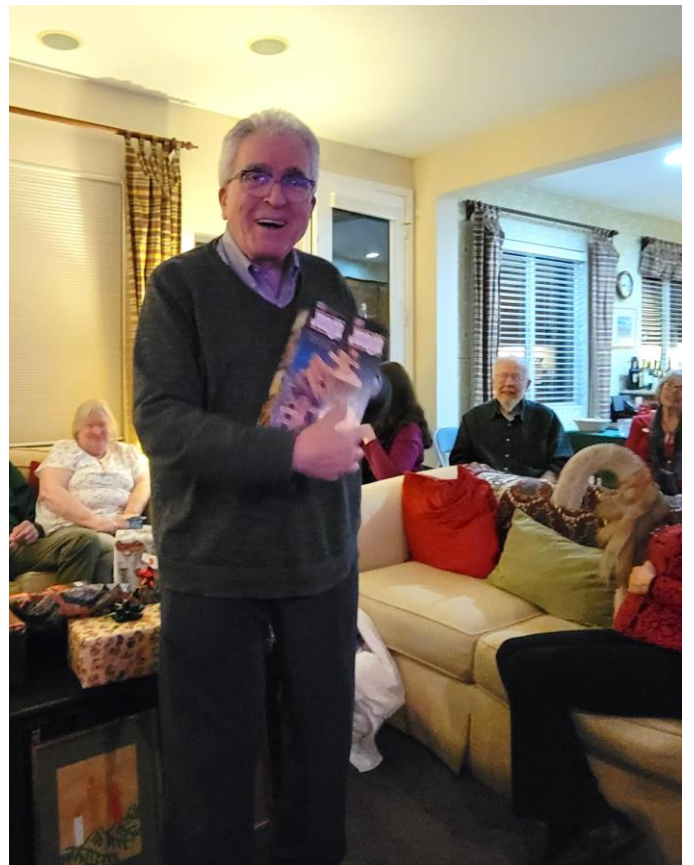
Dec 16th

At the home of Marianne Bakic and Leon Kasparian









**Seasonal Music Service – Sing in
the Light!**
Dec 17th



Holiday Celebration Service

Dec 24th

