Sundays in March

The theme for March is Faith

“Faith is taking the first step even when you can't see the whole staircase.”
— Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Sunday, March 6
Rev. Julia Hamilton
“Love Your Neighbor, Welcome the Stranger”

Christian scripture says, “Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing, some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.” Loving our neighbor and welcoming the stranger are core values of nearly every religious tradition. Not just because we want to honor the inherent worth and dignity of all people, but because a society that welcomes the stranger creates a richer, more meaningful life for everyone.

This Sunday we kick off our involvement with “Love Your Neighbor Weekend” See page 2 for a full list of events.

Sunday, March 20
Rev. Julia Hamilton
“A Heretical Faith: The Socinus Window”

Join us for the next installment of our “Window” series, this time taking a look at Faustus Socinus, the 16th-century Italian theologian who greatly influenced the development of early Unitarian thought. Socinus rejected the concept of original sin and placed more value on living a moral life than adhering to correct beliefs. His legacy prompts us to ask: What does “faith” mean if we don’t hold up “correct belief” as the goal of religion?

Sunday, March 13
Rev. Julia Hamilton
“Begin Again in Love”

Two years ago, COVID-19 emerged as an international pandemic. Two years is a long time: A long time apart, a long time to live with uncertainty and fear, a long time to wait for change. As we mark this somber anniversary, let us consider what it will take to restore our spirits, reconnect to our fellow human beings, and renew our faith in the world again.

Sunday, March 27
Guest speaker Dean LaCoe
“Good Grief”

Climate change is real, and so is climate grief. The Good Grief Network was formed four years ago with the vision of creating small, peer-to-peer groups where people can process the collective grief, eco-anxiety, and other heavy emotions that arise in response to this global crisis. They now run dozens of “Good Grief” groups on five continents.

Dean LaCoe (he/him), our speaker this Sunday, contacted the Good Grief Network looking for some “stress relief tips and tricks” after the wildfires burned through Sonoma County. Through the small group process, he found a supportive network of friends from around the world and a transformative vision. Dean is now partnering with us here at USSB to offer this work to our community.
Love Your Neighbor Week

Please join the Interfaith Sanctuary Alliance of Santa Barbara (ISA) as we spend a week recognizing our sacred duty to love our immigrant neighbors!

“Love Your Neighbor Week” Faith Services
March 3 to March 7, faith communities across Santa Barbara will offer prayers, liturgies, readings, and more related during the shared call to love our immigrant neighbors. You can learn more and register your faith community at https://loveyourneighborsb.org/pledge.

“What's New In Immigrant Rights” Webinar
On Thursday, March 10 at 5:30 pm, the ISA will host a webinar with local immigrant rights advocates and service providers to discuss updates and action items for immigrant allies on a national, state, and local level. Register at https://loveyourneighborsb.org/new.

“Love Your Neighbor” Virtual Vigil
On Sunday, March 13 at 4:30 pm, the ISA will host a virtual interfaith vigil in solidarity with our immigrant neighbors. At this vigil we will spend time in silent vigil, share prayers from different faith traditions, and provide a call to action for ways to support asylum seekers in our region. Register at https://loveyourneighborsb.org/vigil

The Art of Worship: A Workshop
Join Rev. Julia and the Worship Arts Team for a half-day, online workshop, all about the joyful work of crafting our worship services here at the Unitarian Society.

- Have you ever wondered how our Sunday services at USSB are created, or what the word “worship” means in a Unitarian Universalist context?
- Do you ever wonder why we light the chalice or what a “benediction” is?
- Are you interested in storytelling, or how to craft a reflection or a sermon?
- Do you have a creative idea for Sunday mornings?
- Are you interested in exploring the possibilities of “multi-platform” Sunday services?

This workshop is open to everyone, no prior speaking experience is necessary. All you need is a curious mind, an open heart, and an interest in finding out more about how Sunday morning happens. We will spend time talking about theology as well as practice: the “why” as well as the “how” of worship! We hope to see you there.

Date: Saturday, March 5 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Registration deadline: Wednesday, March 2.
A Zoom link and a pre-workshop packet will be sent out to all registered participants.
Register at https://tinyurl.com/USSBartofworship

Personal Blessing
In honor of: Gail Fairburn, “for all you do to keep our community connected.”
From: Patricia Reilly-Stark
To give a Personal Blessing, use our online form at www.ussb.org/personalblessing.
RE Corner
And We're Back!

Children’s RE
We’re bringing our youngest folks back on campus and we couldn’t be happier about it! Beginning Sunday, March 6, childcare and children’s religious education for K-fourth graders will be opening up on campus again. Our wonderful CRE teachers, Christina Boardman and Janey Madlani, have been planning lessons to welcome the children back. And stay tuned for information about our colorful RE Holi celebration on March 20.

Coffee Hour is for RE Parents, Too!
Sunday childcare will be available for children under five from 9:45 to 11:30 am so parents can enjoy a cup of coffee or tea and connection with congregants. Kids over age five will be walked up to meet their parents after RE and will find games and activities on the lawn to keep busy with while parents enjoy coffee and conversation.

Fifth & Sixth Grade OWL
Thanks to the willingness and dedication of long-time RE volunteers Kelly Bedard and John Hartman, fifteen fifth and sixth graders have been participating in a six-week Our Whole Lives (OWL) program, which will wrap up on March 13. OWL is an age-appropriate sexuality program developed in partnership between the UUA and the United Church of Christ. This program—which has curricula for children and adults—can be lifesaving. USSB is proud to make OWL available to our members and friends as well as to the larger Santa Barbara community.

Coming of Age
Under the guidance of seasoned COA facilitators Kir Zecher, Chris Shorb, Nate Rich, and DRE Charla Bregante, COA is well underway with seven participants and their mentors. This year we have created a new co-facilitation model that focuses on the following themes: Soul Food Sundays (attending the USSB service and discussing UU theological issues); Wonder & Awe Sundays (connecting with nature through meditation and other activities); Fun & Games Sundays (just what it sounds like, with a little IUU history thrown in and a game day with the IUU church of Ventura); and an interfaith Social Justice project in partnership with the youth of Trinity Episcopal Church.

Beloved Conversations
It is heartwarming to see the interest in ongoing anti-racism work in our congregation. The next cohort of Beloved Conversations participants begins lessons and learning pods this month. Anti-racism work is an ongoing process. We look forward to building on this important work in our congregation and our community. Beloved Conversations is offered twice a year by Meadville Lombard Theological School. If you weren’t able to sign up this time, there’s always next time. If you need more information about this amazing program, contact Charla at charla@ussb.org.

In Faith,
Charla Bregante
Director of Religious Education
charla@ussb.org

Above: Fifth and sixth grade OWL students.
Right: Connecting with nature on Wonder & Awe Sunday.
Check Out This USSB Youth Created Podcast

Chandra and Athena Brown, former members of our congregation who now hail from Fort Worth, Texas, have created a fascinating podcast called “You Solved a Mystery.” Athena has taken old “Unsolved Mystery” episodes from the TV show popularized by Robert Stack, done copious research on how many were solved, and reveals the final chapter. She presents this research in an entertaining format, explaining with her twin sister and co-host the “who, what, and where” details of each mystery with all the twists and turns.

Athena’s background in psychology, with a BA from Evergreen College, netted her a job preparing Washington State prisoners with successful reentry skills after leaving custody. Her work piqued her interest in the seamy side of criminal behavior, and her fervor for justice makes for an interesting series. These ongoing episodes comprise a year-long body of work.

The girls were in high school when they lost both parents from cancer within a nine-month period. They are long active in the UUA’s Pacific Southwest District Young Adult program, which is where Chandra met her wonderful husband Jesse Bleichhardt, now stationed in Fort Worth in the Air Force.

Check out “You Solved a Mystery” wherever you get your podcasts. It makes for an entertaining listen!

—Donnis Galvan

March Outreach Offering

Hunt for Justice

Each year, we make our traditional Easter egg hunt, The Hunt for Justice, a “faith in action” family project. Our Outreach Offering for March will collect money to fund three local organizations selected by our children. Children will vote for their favorite charities at the beginning of April, kicking off a month long look at active democracy in Children’s RE.

The Hunt will take place on Easter Sunday, April 17. Children will be able to donate different amounts of money to the charities of their choice, based on how many eggs they find.

Parents, please have a conversation with your children about causes they care about and where they would like to donate the money collected by our congregation for the Hunt.

New Book Release from Rev. Ken Collier

Our Minister Emeritus, Rev. Ken Collier, announces the publication of his new book, Embracing Presence: An Understanding of Religion and Spirituality. It is part memoir, part philosophy, part theology, and part personal credo. You can order it from Chaucer's or Amazon (ebook only from Amazon). Plans are being made for a book signing in March.
Urgent and Immediate Call to Support Border Refugees

Please join the USSB Justice and Equity team in continuing to make a difference.

In May 2021, our congregation joined with a number of other faith communities to contribute to a border caravan that delivered much needed supplies to help relieve human suffering at the US-Mexico border. We responded again in October, 2021 when we raised over $2,000 to sponsor another delivery of supplies. The need for these basic supplies has only increased and another trip across the border is scheduled for the end of April this year. We are confident that many in our loving community will heed this call to make a difference.

Our work continues. Since May, 2021, we have been listening to our partners at the border, learning from them how to make the best and most efficient use of our resources. In collaboration with the Santa Barbara Interfaith Sanctuary Alliance (ISA), the USSB Justice and Equity Team has once again pledged to support and promote this ongoing campaign and is developing partnerships to further this effort. Watch for more details about these partnerships in the April Kaleidoscope.

This spring, USSB is committed to raising $2,000 by mid-April to support the refugee relief effort. The funds you donate will go a long way towards helping to defray expenses for a full month. Any monetary contribution, large or small, will help us achieve this collective goal! There are easy ways to support this project and make a difference in so many lives. To pay with a credit card or bank draft, go to ussb.org/give. Mail checks to USSB at 1535 Santa Barbara St., Santa Barbara, CA, 93101 and please be sure to write “border relief” in the check memo line so we know where your contribution should go.

If you have already contributed directly through SB ACT, please notify Justice & Equity Team member Nancy Edmundson (nancyjedmundson@gmail.com) so we can acknowledge your gift.

All donations, no matter the amount, are gratefully accepted—and all are tax deductible.

All in the Family

Bertram Shaw, a longtime member of the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara, has passed away at the age of 93 in Jacksonville Florida. He moved to Jacksonville about 10 years ago from Santa Barbara. Prior to that, He was active in the Unitarian Society going back to 1970, and was involved with the library committee. The Santa Barbara Unitarian church was very special to him.

Lori Shaw-Kunz

Photo is from Bert's 90th birthday party.
Advance Care Planning Comes to USSB: Let’s Get It Done!

We are pleased to have secured a power-packed presentation series on the importance of advance healthcare planning, along with the opportunity for everyone to have their completed document notarized, free of charge. The program, developed and taught by Hospice of Santa Barbara’s Community Engagement Manager Jeanne West, is a “must attend” program.

As we have seen over the past several years, the rapid spread of COVID-19 has caused individuals young and old alike to become seriously ill. For many, there were no formal plans in place indicating their health care wishes prior to the crisis. This has spurred an increased desire locally, as well as nationally, to help individuals age 18 and over to have meaningful discussions about the care wanted or not wanted in the event of a serious or life-threatening medical emergency. Additionally, a notarized healthcare directive enables you to appoint a healthcare “agent” to be your spokesperson should you be rendered unable to communicate your healthcare wishes. As Jeanne says, “Beyond the conversation, we need to help individuals actually get the document completed.”

Hospice of Santa Barbara has taken on a leading role in our community to help further the understanding and completion of this important document. USSB will host a three-part series devoted to achieving this goal for our residents and family members, if desired. Why not make it a family event? Jeanne will distribute packets containing all needed materials for the program.

On Sunday, March 13 at 11:15 AM in Parish Hall, Jeanne West will be our guest speaker and will verbally walk us through the importance of the “conversation” and will review considerations for choosing a healthcare agent. The following Sunday, March 20 at 11:15 AM, we will have a detailed presentation on the ‘My Care’ document, a locally developed advance healthcare directive. At that time, appointments will be made for the following Sunday, March 27, beginning at 11:15 AM for those who have completed the Directive to have it reviewed for accuracy and then have it notarized, all at no charge to you. Copies of your completed document will be made and delivered to Cottage Hospital and placed in your hospital medical record.

Please sign up for the program series on Realm, or contact the office at (805) 965-4583, ussb@ussb.org.

Registration for the notary is required and a sign-up sheet will be available at the March 20 presentation.

For more information about Advance Healthcare Directives, go to www.getitdonesb.org

Let’s GET IT DONE!
Sunday services in-person and online at 10:00 AM
RSVP at https://rsvp.church/r/RRpEfokV
We also livestream on Zoom and Facebook!
Watch online or use your phone to dial in and hear the service live.
To listen to the service on your phone, call 1-669-900-6833 and then enter the Sunday services meeting ID: 960 036 8223#
You may call in starting five minutes before the service begins.
Zoom and Facebook links are sent out in the Friday email, in a special Sunday morning email, and are always available on our website, at www.ussb.org/worship/zoom.
Contact our office at ussb@ussb.org if you’d like to be added to our email list.