UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF SANTA BARBARA

OCTOBER 2026

# KALEIDOSCOPE

*Our Monthly Newsletter*

Living With Integrity
Nurturing Wonder
Inspiring Action



## October Worship Services

Join us in-person or online at 10:00am on Sundays.

**October 4: *Ritualized Grief* with Rev. Julia Hamilton**
Every religious tradition has its own rituals around grief and loss. What can we learn from these rituals, and what is the underlying theology behind the way we as Unitarian Universalists honor the end of life? Part 2 of a 3 part series on the role of ritual in our spiritual lives.

**October 11: *Ritualized Growth* with Rev. Julia Hamilton**
Birth, Coming of Age, Marriage – Rituals marking times of growth and change are part of every religious tradition. How do Unitarian Universalists approach these transformational moments, and why are community recognitions of growth and change so important? Part 3 of a 3 part series on the role of ritual in our spiritual lives.

**October 18: *Stories* with Deb Karoff & Gary Welterlen**
As we celebrate the 150th anniversary of USSB, we've been digging through the archives for stories from our earlier years. This Sunday, we will share some of what we've found as we explore what our past can teach us about our congregation and our community.

**October 25: *The Ten Commandments are STILL RELEVANT!* with Rev. Tom Owen-Towle**
Although 3500 plus years old, this Decalogue of imperatives—examining God, Sabbath, family-life, adultery, killing, robbery, lying, and greed—furnishes a lodestar for the moral agenda and spiritual life of 21st century progressives. The Rev. Dr. Tom Owen-Towle, a member of our congregation along with his wife, Loretta Solsbery, is grateful to be preaching again at USSB and will have his latest book, Living with Purpose and Integrity: A Fresh Perspective on the Ten Commandments, available for purchase following the service, the proceeds of which will go to USSB.

# Additional October Services




**October 20:** ***Vespers: A Meditative Service***
Feeling overwhelmed by the world? Need a place to center, slow down, and refresh your spirit? Join us for a candlelit evening of easy singing, silence, and meditation. All are welcome – no singing (or meditation experience necessary). Childcare is available upon request. The service will be from **6:15-7:00pm**, Sanctuary doors will open at 6:00pm. Vespers will take place on the 3rd Tuesday of every month.



# Coat of Many Colors Fall Fundraising Auction: Saturday, October 17th




Get ready for an evening of family-friendly fun, connection, and a little friendly bidding competition! Our annual silent fundraising auction is coming up, and we hope you'll join us.

The Auction is one of our favorite community events. Members and friends donate experiences, services, meals, vacation stays, and other unique offerings. Participants make silent bids on the items, and the proceeds help support the life and mission of our congregation. The auction is about much more than raising money—it's also a wonderful way to connect with one another, share our talents, and build community.

In addition, the Auction Event itself is so much fun! Often members come dressed in costume concurrent with the Auction's theme (think Dolly!), enjoy food/beverages, dancing, and live music. The event itself is free to the congregation and community's friends/family. Children are welcome and encouraged to attend – childcare and child-friendly activities will be provided. Want to learn more about the auction? Visit www.ussb.org/auction!

**Your 2026 Auction Checklist:**

**Donate an Auction Item: Donation Deadline: Wednesday, October 7th -** donate here: www.ussb.org/auction
It's not an auction without your donation! Your donations of events, outings, and services make our Auction a success! Share something you enjoy doing or something you love to make. Need ideas? Visit our 2024 auction catalog or visit a friendly Auction volunteer at the table on Sundays.

**Pre-Register: Online Registration: Open Now – Friday, October 16th!** Register here! Or find the registration link on our Auction webpage www.ussb.org/auction
Register online before the auction helps you save time in line on Auction night and get straight to bidding! Online registration is simple, secure, and easy.

**Attend (and bring a friend!):**
**In-Person Event: Saturday, October 17th 4:30PM** Doors Open, 5:00PM Bidding!
This is an event you won't want to miss. Bring the whole family! There will be activities and childcare for children, dancing, food, live music, and - of course – wonderful items for the bidding!

# October Outreach Offering:

*Immigrant Legal Defense Center*



The Immigrant Legal Defense Center (IDLC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency promoting equal access to justice and due process by providing pro bono legal services to indigent immigrants in deportation proceedings and educating immigrants on their basic civil rights. Their mission statement is to "provide equal access to justice and due process to indigent immigrants so that no one should face immigration court alone".

Immigrants in immigration court do not have a right to government-appointed counsel which has a profound impact on immigrants' outcomes in removal proceedings. To bridge this gap, the ILDC provides a number of services including:

- Removal defense
- Counseling & case management
- Opening pathways to legal permanent residency for youth
- Community education, policy, & advocacy

This innovative program serves as a critical safeguard against unlawful detention, reunites families, and ensures that constitutional protections apply to all people regardless of immigration status.




More information is available at the website: sbimmigrantdefense.org. To have 100% of your donation go directly to this month's project, make out your check to USSB and write "SB Immigrant Justice Fund" in the memo line.

Please give as generously as you are able.

# Religious Exploration for *Children & Youth:*

## *The Rings of Love*

This fall, our children's and youth RE programs will center around five conversations about Love. The Rings of Love curriculum, by Rev. Michelle Collins, shows how Love's call moves through every part of our lives.

At its core, the model imagines our relational lives as four nested rings on a spiral: the Love within me of inner spiritual life, the Love between us of interpersonal relationships, the Love among us of congregational systems and culture, and the Love beyond us of our public presence and justice work in the wider world. All four rings exist at once, and are all within the Love holding us, that is known by many names and by no name fully known. The spiral image suggests that experience travels inward and outward over time, so that what happens in one ring continually shapes and is shaped by what happens in the others. (UUA.org) *YoUUth group began their Love exploration on August 23. Children's RE classes began Sunday, September 27th. Click HERE for a full fall calendar for children, youth, and families.*

## A Good Time was had by all at the Fall CRE Family Campout!

A small but hearty crew of CRE families enjoyed a fun weekend at Lopez Lake with UU San Luis Obispo families. This was our third camping trip together, and it is quickly becoming a beloved tradition.



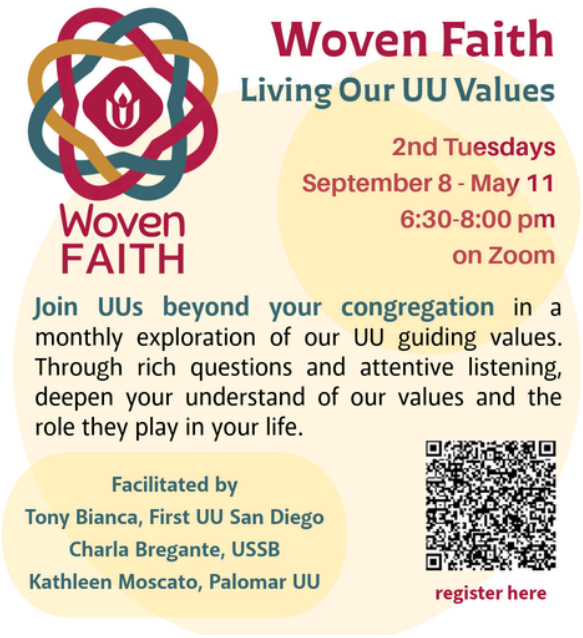

## RE Family Pizza Church

*Friday, October 30 in Parish Hall from 5:30-7:30. Pizza church is open to all RE families.* Our first Pizza Church of the fall is coming up this month. In addition to pizza, conversation, and play time, we'll create an RE family altar together in honor of All Souls Day. This is a time to gather and share stories about our beloved dead, including pets. And, because it is the day before Halloween, everyone is invited to wear a costume. I wouldn't be surprised if there were a special treat too.

Pizza Church is an opportunity for families to get to know each other outside of Sunday mornings. USSB provides the pizza. Families are invited to bring something to share (a salad, dessert, finger food, even a bag of chips) and beverages for their family. Don't have time to pick something up? No worries. This is a shame free zone! Dinner is whatever shows up! Families are encouraged to bring their own plates and utensils to help keep us green. We've got paper if you forget. Remember, this is a shame free zone. Just come!

# Religious Exploration for *Adults:*

Our Fall Adult RE programs are up and running. All programs are free. Please register ahead for the workshops you're interested in. Here's a printable Adult RE Fall 2026 schedule to hang on your fridge!




## Woven Faith: Living Our UU Values

*2nd Tuesday of the month, 6:30-8:00 pm via Zoom. Next meeting is on October 13.* Did you miss the September Woven Faith workshop? No problem. Registration is still open, and you only need to register once to attend as many workshops as you're able. Register for Woven Faith HERE.

Woven Faith is a new curriculum created by the UUA to explore what it means to live our UU Shared Values: Justice, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Interdependence, and Generosity. DREs from the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara, First UU San Diego, and Palomar UU are partnering to offer monthly on-line sessions to consider each value individually, plus a couple of other related topics. Meet folks in and outside our congregation and enjoy monthly conversations that will deepen your understanding of our UU values and how they show up in your life. All workshops are enjoyed from the comfort of your own home on Zoom.

## Lunch & Learn Series: Embodied Spiritual Practices

*Sundays, 12:00-2:00 pm, La Paz Hall (lunch included)*

**Song Circle, October 4** - facilitated by Heather Stevenson. This one-time song circle is open to singers of all abilities. Beginners are more than welcome. Join Heather S. for an afternoon of joyful music making and community building. SONG CIRCLE REGISTRATION HERE!

**Guided Group Meditation, October 18** - facilitated by Heather Green. If you have never meditated before or have years of practice, you are welcome to this group meditation workshop. Join Heather G. for an afternoon of learning and meditation. MEDITATION REGISTRATION HERE!

**Drum Circle, November 1** - facilitated by Maurice Wada, Buzz Moran, & Nathan Whitcomb. Open to beginners and experienced drummer alike. Maurice, Buzz, and Nathan will guide you through the rhythms and meditative practice of drumming together. DRUM CIRCLE REGISTRATION HERE!

**Solstice Walk, December 20** - facilitated by Keir Zecher. If you love a good walk, join Keir for an afternoon walk to welcome the winter solstice. Stay tuned for location details. Lunch will be provided. SOLSTICE WALK REGISTRATION HERE!

# Bridge to the Future: The Vision Is Becoming Real

When we launched Bridge to the Future, we imagined a campus that is more accessible, more resilient, and better equipped to build community for generations to come. That vision is becoming real!

BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE
150th Anniversary
CAMPAIGN FOR A RESILIENT COMMUNITY

Over the past several months, there has been a tremendous amount of work happening behind the scenes. Some of it is visible— like our Sanctuary's refinished stained glass windows! Some of it less visible— construction drawings, bids, engineering, permitting, coordination and problem-solving. All of it is moving us closer to the future we envisioned together.



**Resilience Hub Update**

One of the most exciting—and complex—parts of Bridge to the Future is our Resilience Hub. Our installer, SunSource, has completed the design of the system, which includes a large-capacity battery storage system, solar generation and EV chargers. The USSB Resilience Team has been meeting weekly with SunSource to coordinate the project and work through the many details involved.

And there are a lot of details! Installing a 21st-century Resilience Hub on a nearly 100-year-old campus is not quite as simple as putting some solar panels on the roof!

Installing this sort of infrastructure means coordinating with Building officials, Historic Landmarks, Southern California Edison, the Fire Marshal, electrical and structural engineers, equipment manufacturers, our architect and others. Sometimes their requirements intersect in complicated ways, and resolving those issues takes time.

Our USSB Resilience Team is working hard to navigate those challenges while making sure we get this project right. By October, we expect to have a much clearer picture of the remaining steps and timeline.

Meanwhile, you can watch the Resilience Hub take shape! Scott Kipp has been documenting the project and is creating a series of short videos about its progress. Be sure to check out the first episode here: RESILIENCE Episode 1

We also spent part of the summer pursuing outside funding. We applied for grant support that could help offset the cost of the EV chargers as well as some of the solar and electrical work. We expect to hear about that funding in late fall.

**La Paz Hall Remodel Update**

Things are moving forward on La Paz Hall as well. Our architect has finalized construction drawings and submitted to the City of Santa Barbara. We've already received the City's first round of comments, and we are currently on track for construction to begin in summer 2027.

We also took advantage of some necessary work this summer to prepare for our new restroom. While making major repairs to the sewer serving the Blake building, we excavated the area where the new La Paz restroom will eventually connect. Doing that work now means the restroom will be much easier to service when La Paz construction begins next summer.

It's a good example of the way this campaign is working: we're not just thinking about the individual projects—we're thinking about how the pieces of our campus fit together for the long term.

**Upper Campus Update**

There is plenty happening on the upper campus, too! We've received a great bid for a new, easy-to-use AV system in Parish Hall, and this will be one of the next visible projects to take shape. The new system will provide exceptional sound and, importantly, make it possible to livestream Town Halls and other meetings held in the hall with clear, reliable audio, increasing accessibility for people who can't be in the room—and a better experience for those who can.



*Photo of our arborist meeting with Building Team Members, Architect, & Staff*

We're also getting bids for painting Parish Hall, with the goal of completing that work this winter and working on formalizing our plan for the switch to chairs in the Sanctuary. And we're making progress on creating an accessible entrance to the upper campus from Santa Barbara Street. Our architect and an arborist are working together to ensure the new courtyard opening provides accessibility while protecting our beloved trees. Because the project does not require full Building Department approval, we hope to complete it soon after the final design is approved.

**This Is What Building the Future Looks Like**

Capital campaigns can sometimes seem like they're all about fundraising. But the real work of Bridge to the Future is happening right now—in drawings and plans, in meetings with engineers and city officials, in construction sites and equipment rooms, and in the many small decisions that will shape our campus for decades to come. We're taking an almost-100-year-old campus and thoughtfully preparing it for the next 100 years. It's a big job.

Thank you to the many members, volunteers, staff, Building Team members, Resilience Team members, consultants, architects, contractors and others who are helping turn our shared vision into reality. And we could not have done this without you!

Your capital campaign pledges are already making a remarkable amount possible. They are helping us create a more accessible campus, develop our Resilience Hub, improve our gathering spaces and prepare USSB to serve our congregation and wider community well into the future. If you have already made a pledge or gift to Bridge to the Future, thank you. Your generosity helps turn a shared vision into something tangible.






## Poetry and Song: Open Mic at Parish Hall!

Here we go again! Come to Parish Hall and bring your friends to UU Open Mic on Sunday, Oct. 18th, for a Poetry and Song Open Mic.

All styles of music and poetry are welcome! Sign up at 3:30PM. Music starts at 4:00. $2 per person. Come play or just listen! Bring your own instrument, a PA and soundman provided. Two songs or five minutes maximum. Refreshments are available.

Let's have some fun!

## Laurie Potter Memorial

We invite you to join us in honoring and celebrating the lives of a beloved member of our community, Laurie Potter. The memorial will take place on Saturday, October 3 at 2:00 PM. Click here to join the Livestream. We welcome all who wish to come together in remembrance.

## The First Fall Alliance Meeting

Alliance strives to provide a joyful and caring gathering nine months a year. All are invited, including your non-congregational friends. We aim to provide an oasis of good works and learning. Mark your calendar for the first Friday of the month, beginning with our fall season on October 2, 2026 featuring a Q&A with Rev. Julia Hamilton!

## Library Reminder

*The library is open every Sunday from 11:00-12:30AM.* The books were donated by USSB members to share with the congregation. The library is full of great books! We would like to remind everyone who borrowed a book from August or September that we would like to see them returned or you may come to us for a renewal. If you have a question or want to request a book, contact Suzanne Fairly or Amber Asher. We hope to see you soon!

# The Nominating Committee Needs You!



It's Fall and that means USSB committees are regrouping for the year to come. This includes your Nominating Committee.

And it's another significant year! USSB members continue to join together in connection and purposeful action. Our Capital Campaign is moving forward as an example of resistance. The active selection of future leadership within our congregation is another.

The Nominating Committee's task is identifying those of you who are willing and able to serve on our Board of Trustees and to serve on the Nominating Committee.

For the Board, we're specifically looking for members who can:

- Represent different perspectives,
- Engage and learn,
- Speak up and share their thoughts, and Listen.

We want Board candidates who are:

- Interested in the business of the USSB.
- Curious and willing to ask questions.
- Supportive of the group consensus once a decision has been made.
- Team players.

For the Nominating Committee, we are seeking individuals who:

- Are deeply integrated into the life of our congregation.
- Understand the importance of governance.
- Enjoy getting to know the members of our congregation.

Your six Nominating Committee members collectively have been members for 127 years so we've had time to know a lot of you, but there are many in our congregation we don't yet know. That is why we need your help. If you can think of someone who meets the criteria above or if you yourself are interested, please let us know.

This year's chair is Jack Rief who can be reached at jack.rief@gmail.com but you can reach out to any of us and we hope you will.

The 2026-2027 Nominating Committee,
Jack Rief, Kathleen Boehm, Mike Ristow, Tammy Shorb, Linda Beers, and Charles Hamilton


A QUARTER CENTURY AGO

25 Years Ago
October 27, 1926

The congregation of the Unitarian Church is being entertained this evening in the home of Mrs. William S. Day on Palm Drive in Montecito with a Halloween celebration which women of the Church have arranged under the chairmanship of Mrs. Lewis C. Carson.

She is assisted by Miss Helen Sears, Miss Mary and Miss Anna Peckham, Mrs. Edwin Markthaler, Miss Anne Hill, Miss Betty Weeks and Miss Deborah Maxwell.

There will be music by a group of singers: Mrs. James Briscoe, Mrs. William C. Paul, Messrs. L. B. Jackson and T. E. Davis.

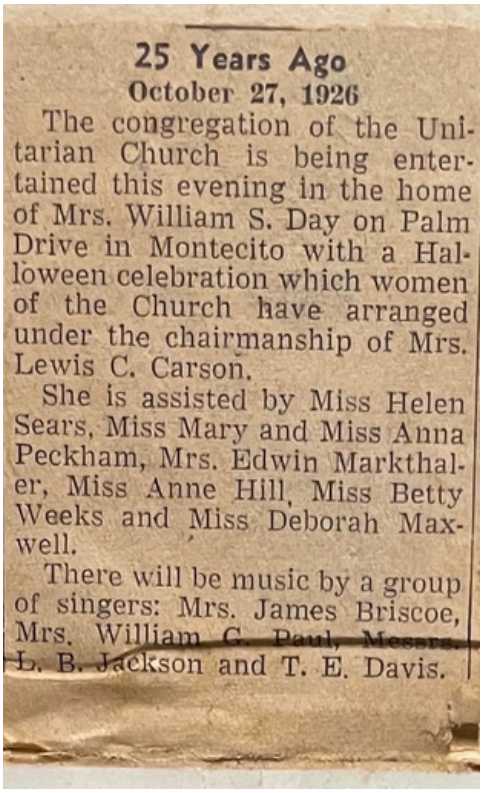
1.Miss Burnap
2 Miss Pauline Wold (?)
3 Mrs.Fulton
4 ?
5 Mr.John T. Johnston
6 Mrs.John T.Johnston
7 Miss Isabel White
8 Mrs H.F.Stambach
9 Miss Lawton
10 Mrs A.N.Edmondson
11 Miss Annie Ray
12 Mr.A.N.Edmondson
13 Mrs.H.G.Merrill
14 Mr.H.G.Merrill
15 Miss Elizabeth Rechenburg
16 ?

# USSB Fun Facts with Judy Farris

Happy Halloween… 1926!
The photo is from a scrapbook page that includes this newspaper clipping from October 27, 1951 - one of those “looking back” features often found in periodical publications (in this case, the Santa Barbara Press.)

The wee numbers inked on the individuals in the photo refer to a key on the scrapbook page partially identifying the guests (none of whom are listed in the clipping so the party was a good deal larger than shown here.) The widowed Mrs. Day - Helen - had signed the membership book along with her husband in 1888. The chairmanship of the party planning was Adele Carson, wife of the minister.





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# Santa Barbara City Council (Dis. 4) Candidate Forum

USSB and LWV of Santa Barbara are partnering to sponsor a Candidate Forum for Santa Barbara City Council (District 4) - October 7, 6:30-8:30pm Parish Hall Unitarian Society. Shane Stark will moderate. Help is needed to set up at 5:30 and take down chairs after. Please contact Joanie Jones to volunteer.

# Photo Highlights

We would love to share your community photos! If you take any photos in October that you'd like to be featured in the next Kaleidoscope, please send them to Kiarra Watson, Outreach & Membership: outreach@ussb.org.



Ingathering



Pancake Breakfast



USSB & UUSLO Families at Lopez Lake Campout



USSB Families Lake Lopez



The Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara
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www.ussb.org

**Business hours** for the USSB Office are Monday - Thursday from 9:00am to 4:00pm.

Rev. Julia Hamilton, Lead Minister julia@ussb.org
Erin Wilson, Executive Director erin@ussb.org
Charla Bregante, Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration charla@ussb.org
Christina Boardman, Youth Coordinator christina@ussb.org
Matthew Griset, Music Director matthew@ussb.org
Roberta Weighill, Office Manager roberta@ussb.org
Joanie Bear, Wedding & Events Manager joanie@ussb.org
Kiarra Watson, Outreach & Membership Manager kiarra@ussb.org
Rob Brown, Building Manager rob@ussb.org
Jon Diaz, Facilities Coordinator jon@ussb.org
Heather Levin, Accompanist
Gwendolyn Kilfoyle, Community Choir Lead communitychoir@ussb.org
Rev. Kenneth Collier, Minister Emeritus

**Deadline for the November 2026 Kaleidoscope: October 15th by 5:00pm.**
Email: kaleidoscope@ussb.org OR outreach@ussb.org

**Livestreaming on Sundays at 10:00am**
Links for livestreaming the worship service are sent out in the Friday announcement email, in the Sunday morning reminder email, and are always available on our website at https://ussb.org/worship/livestream/.

Contact our office at ussb@ussb.org if you'd like to be added to our email list.

Can’t be with us when we're live Sunday morning? View past services at https://ussb.org/worship/pastservices/.