



"WE SEEK SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN A WELCOMING AND CARING COMMUNITY"

KALEIDOSCOPE

May 1–15, 2010

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara

Editor: Bruce Hanna

Sunday Morning Services 9:30 AM and 11:30 AM

May 2

Call Forth a Blessing Ken Ralph, Pulpit Host

A volcano erupts in Iceland. A young American traveler, who arrived in London on her way to Sri Lanka, learned that her flight had been cancelled. "There's nothing you can do," she said. "You can either smile or cry, and I've decided to smile." We each face similar decisions every day of our lives. You can see blessings or you can see curses. As the Stoic philosophers would say, "Events do not define our experience, our interpretation does." No person or deity can interpret these experiences for you. Ultimately, to be "blessed" is entirely your responsibility. Join us as we explore the true source of blessings in our lives.

May 9

Let It Be a Blessing, Not a Curse Reverend Aaron McEmrys

Life can be awful sometimes. So can people. So can we. In this world of ours, so full of invective, lies and greed, there is a lot of pressure on us to play along, living only for ourselves, taking an eye for an eye, meeting curse with curse. But there is another way. We are free beings, no matter how powerless we sometimes feel, and we can choose how we respond to life. What can happen, what can become possible when we break the cycle and respond to life, and even curses—with blessings?

This will also be a New Member Welcoming Sunday, so please come and celebrate with us! We will formally welcome our newest members in each of our morning Worship services. Everyone please plan to join in this important recognition in the life of our congregation. If you are a new member, mark your calendar and watch for an e-vite detailing the specifics of your participation in the service and a special reception.

Vision 2012 Campaign Starts Strongly

We Need Everyone's Help to Finish Strongly

April was Pledge Month and the response from the congregation was a resounding YES to the 2012 vision. At press time, 70% of pledgers responded to the call to step up their giving to another level and did so by an average of nearly 30%! Twelve pledging events were held and attended by nearly 200 members and friends. If you see this before Sunday, April 25, you may join one of two final pledging events held in Jefferson Hall, 10:45 and 12:45!

Why such a strong response, even from some that had traditionally not increased their pledge? In short, the reason is a shared compelling vision for the Society's future. A future with even deeper experiences for the congregation and the opportunity to impact our community and the world in a much more profound way.

Here are just a few examples of the incredible generosity that has come from the congregation:

- Many long-time Full Share contributors increased their percentage of giving even though they were already giving very generously
- Some moved up to the \$1,500 cost of membership from much lower levels
- A number of people who were previously unable to give at all or give at very low levels were able to give at the dollar a day or \$365 level

If you have not pledged, please join your fellow congregants and pledge now. Campaign follow-up by volunteers via email, phone, and home visits is very time consuming.

This pledge is for July 2010–June 2011 and everyone needs to pledge for the new fiscal year. Pledge forms will be available April 26 at www.ussb.org or you can contact the office. Completed pledge forms should be forwarded to Nancy Edmundson's attention.

It is an exciting time. We have all shared in picturing what our bright future can be. Let's be sure that the efforts required to achieve that future are shared by everyone in the congregation. We will all be so very glad that we did!

KATHLEEN BOEHM, KEN SAXON & GLENN BACHELLER

Path to Membership Class

Path to Membership is offered once per month—a class we think you might enjoy even if you are already a member, but especially if you are considering membership.

The class is led by Reverend Aaron McEmrys. It is an educational, informational and communal time to discover more about the history and theology of Unitarianism and about the programs and services offered at USSB.

Do you know anyone who is interested in becoming involved with the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara? Invite them to the Path to Membership Class!

The next *Path to Membership* is Thursday, April 29, from 6:30-9PM. The May class will be held Saturday, May 15, from 9AM to 12:30PM. For more info or to register for the class, please contact USSB Membership Coordinator, Jennifer Stroh. 965-4583 ext 221. Also, check out our website: www.ussb.org

Welcome to our Newest Members!

We welcome your decision to join us, and hope that your relationship with the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara will be spiritually, intellectually, and emotionally rewarding. In community, we have the power and strength to impact positive change in the world, while we care for one another. **New members' names follow:**

Carol Schmitz
 Nancy & Jerar Andon
 Laura Six-Stallings
 Stephanie & Larry Trager
 Susan DuPont
 Katie Brooks
 Arianna Jansma
 Lesley Grogan
 Mica & Michael Guinn
 Laura Bushnell
 Ellie Tuazon
 Brian Billings

New Member Sunday May 9th

Our Membership Committee is making every effort to update new member photos and information on new members on display Sundays. This helps us all reach out and connect with one another. **New Member Bios:**

(last names withheld in web version)

Lorraine – Lorraine was born in Pittsburg, PA and has lived in Santa Barbara for forty years. Lorraine is the mother of adult children: Paul, Lisa, and Kevin. She has three pets: two cats and a Shih tzu, Muffin.

Lorraine graduated from Santa Barbara City College, receiving the English Honors Award. She's held a range of jobs including teaching assistant, bookkeeper, chemist assistant, and massage therapist. She now works as a

continued next column

(last names withheld in web version)

Lorraine (continued) – house sitter and pet sitter.

She is most proud of becoming a more caring person over the years and at that she admits that she is a 'work in progress'. Lorraine's hobbies are related to the arts. She loves music, Shakespeare, to read and act, nature, and anything to do with family.

After attending a variety of churches and faiths she has arrived at USSB to learn and grow and do 'good works'.

Emiliano – Emiliano comes from a Mexican American family of conscious activists. He grew up in California and Oregon. At the age of nine, he moved to Santa Barbara and lived here from 1978 to 1990. Emiliano spent the next 15 years in Europe where his children Nino, Laura, and Gabriel live. Emiliano came back to Santa Barbara in 2004 and currently lives here with his partner Mary.

Emiliano is an artist, muralist, and musician. If you haven't heard him play the native American flute yet, I encourage you to do so. He received a BA from UCSB in Art Studio and studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice, Italy, as an exchange student from 1991-92. At USSB, Emiliano has found a home of compassionate, intellectual "trouble makers" and he likes it! USSB is the first 'spiritual home' he's found besides nature. As a fairly new member to USSB, he hopes to continue to connect, share, & grow.

Mary Ann – Mary Ann has lived in Santa Barbara for 32 years. Her family consists of 5 adult daughters and step-daughters and 9 grandchildren! She grew up in Minneapolis, MN, with a school psychologist mother and a father who was a professor of engineering. Mary Ann achieved a PhD and is now semi-retired. She has worked as a cell biologist and pharmacologist. Her most proud accomplishments are having worked on several novel anti-cancer drugs and raising beautiful daughters.

Her favorite hobbies are music, art, gardening, hiking, canoeing, reading, wine-making, and traveling. First acquainted with the Methodist church, Mary Ann became a Unitarian as a teenager. Later, she became a member here for many years, but with a busy family life lapsed in and out of activity. The death of Mary Ann's husband earlier this year has brought her back to USSB to re-establish a spiritual, social community.

Nan – Nan was born and grew up in Brooklyn, New York. She moved to Santa Barbara in 1976. She has one daughter, Tamara, 2 granddaughters, Helen and Robin, and one orange and white tabby male named 'Sammy' for Samuel Homer Dickens.

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Lifespan RE News

Social Justice Sundays in May

During the month of May in RE for grades K-7th, our kids will engage in social justice projects that will help relieve homelessness right here in Santa Barbara. Our kids doing their bit to bring Santa Barbara home!

Annual Coming of Age service is May 23rd

Mark your calendars so you won't miss this most important worship service and community event. At both the 9:30 and 11:30 services, our 8th Graders will share their experiences and memories of this year. Come join us as we celebrate this most important UU milestone.

Adult Religious Education (ARE) News

Wellspring Wednesdays, our adult religious education program, began its Spring Term on April 14th. We provide a dinner of soup and salad starting at 5:30 in Parish Hall. There will be a brief worship at 6:45 and classes begin at 7:00. Childcare opens at 6:30 in Starr King Preschool.

Underlying Unity with Lex Crane begins May 5th. To register for any of the ARE classes, stop by the RE table in Parish Garden on Sundays during coffee hour or call LeeAnn in the RE office. This Spring we are charging a small registration fee. Courses running three sessions or fewer are \$10 members/\$12 non-members. Courses running four sessions or more are \$20 members/\$25 non-members. Scholarships are available. For more information contact LeeAnn.

Now On Sale: water bottles "*Unitarian Universalism: The Adventure Begins Here*"

Our High School Youth Group (YRUU) is now selling super cool white-on-red stainless steel water bottles for \$10 per bottle. All proceeds will support the 2011 YRUU Mission Trip. Visit the RE table on Sundays to purchase yours or stop by the RE office Monday-Thursday.

[continued next column](#)

Friday May 7 Alliance Meeting

Everyone is invited to the monthly Alliance meeting in Parish Hall on Friday May 7 at 2:00 PM. After a short general meeting, the program will feature John Warnock, retired attorney and member of the Unitarian Society.

John's topic, *Estate Planning*, will cover information especially pertinent to seniors. John will invite questions after the talk. Following the program, refreshments will be provided by Alliance members (I thru Z).

LOUISE CARTY

Lifespan RE News...

[continued](#)

May 7th Family Fun Night Pairs with Fashion Fling

Family Fun potluck is at 6:00; *Fashion Fling* 6:30-8:30

Fashion Fling is a girls' night out for a good cause! All proceeds benefit USSB, and this year Fashion Fling pairs with *Family Fun Night* so RE moms can join in the fun! The potluck at 6:00 is in the Starr King yard. Moms will have time to grab a bite to eat before heading to Jefferson Hall for some shopping and maybe a glass of wine. Dads and kids will continue to play and socialize outside at Starr King. Here's more info on how you can participate:

Donate consignment quality clothes May 1-7, 10:00-4:00. Leave on the church stage marked "Fashion Fling"; or at Sally Hamilton's house; or at Pat Mitchell's covered car port anytime

Wear a tank top and tights, to quickly try on all the wonderful bargains that will appear

Thrift Store Section and Boutique (with higher prices)

Thrift Store prices: e.g. blouses and pants \$4, knit tops \$3, dresses \$6, (brand new lingerie only)

Bring / buy purses, shoes, coats, scarves, hats, accessories, jewelry, fun socks, jewelry boxes, frames, etc.

Help set up on May 7th at 5:00 and/or bring some wine Nibble Diva finger food while admiring ourselves and each other in our new "Duds" !!

Help with mirrors, clothes hangers, bags and/or bring your own Diva bag and friends!

Please pass this invitation on to all your diva friends!!

LEEANN WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Seasoned Seekers April 27th

Homeless on the Range, a fascinating book by member Barbara Barden Margerum, sub-titled: *Life on the Road in a Model A Ford During the Great Depression*. The family, with 4-year-old daughter, packed up and left family and friends in St. Louis in 1931 to seek work. Barbara will read portions of the letters her mother, Ruth, wrote to her sister describing the time. The book has notes from her dad's daily journal as well.

Bring your friends as well to the UU Seasoned Seekers gathering Tuesday, April 27, at 3:00PM in the Sierra Madre Room, Vista del Monte Retirement Community, 3775 Modoc Rd. Barbara's mother, Ruth Barden, lived the last years of her life at Vista del Monte. Participants will be encouraged to share their own family "depression" stories. For meeting details call Ginny Crane, .



For May

- 1 Elaine (last names withheld in web version)
 - 4 Suzanne, Katie
 - 6 Emmanuelle, Martin
 - 7 Robert, Josephine, Dale
 - 10 Stefan, David, Sarah
 - 11 Benjamin, Jasmine
 - 12 Glenn, Kathleen
 - 13 Ilse, Kristine
 - 14 Donniss, Tracey, Astrid, Jules
 - 15 Adaezia
 - 16 Catherine, Carlene, Summer
 - 17 Andrew, JoAnn, Marjorie
 - 18 Emily, Jim
 - 19 Alexandra, Jack
 - 20 Anne
 - 21 Jean
 - 22 Anna, Jack
 - 24 Dylan
 - 25 Nancy, Chris
 - 26 Lora
 - 27 Greg
 - 28 Noah, Dolores, Dorothy
 - 30 Eileen
 - 31 Michelle
- (last names withheld in web version)

USSB and Live Oak Girl Friends: Fashion Fling May 7th

All Unitarian women are invited to attend the *Fashion Fling* on Friday, May 7, 6:30–8:30 in Jefferson Hall.

Bring clothing in good repair that you don't find yourself wearing and find a new look. Clothing, hats, shoes, accessories, jewelry are welcome, but you don't HAVE to bring anything. Refreshments will be served and donations of drink and desserts are welcome! Wear a leotard or tights so you can try on clothes easily. Clothing will be sold at thrift store prices to benefit USSB. It's the most fun girl friend event of the year!

See the RE invitation in the LRE news on page 3

All in the Family

Caring thoughts to choir members and friends who knew Bob R (last name withheld in web version). Bob, long time member of the choir and Society member since 1987 passed away in March

Nan (continued) – Nan received an MA in comparative literature and taught German, ESL, and English writing skills. She was also an editor, nutritionist, and writer. She authored *Nutrition for a Better Life* and has written books for Pritikin Research Institute. She has edited Environmental Impact Reports, written educational material for Simon & Schuster, and at present provides support services for the State Department of Rehabilitation.

Some of Nan's favorite hobbies include ballroom and international folk dance and docenting at the Santa Barbara Zoo. She is a member of the SB Trust for Historic Preservation, book discussion groups, and Camaradas.

Nan has decided to come back to USSB after a period of absence from the SB fold. She is a long-standing Unitarian / Humanist who hopes to create a voice for rationalism, make friends, have satisfying encounters, find intellectual stimulation and challenge, and to have some fun and good times.

Concerts in May!

On May 2nd, at 3:00PM in the Sanctuary, the Pacifica Chamber Ensemble will perform music of Haydn, Paganini, Schumann, Weber, Pleyel and Liebermann. The performers are Laura Hackstein, violin, Suzanne Duffy, flute, Ervin Klinkon, cello and Allen Bishop, piano. General Admission is \$15; seniors and students are \$10.

On May 23rd, at 3:00PM, Natasha Kislenco returns to the Sanctuary for a concert featuring classic four handed piano pieces! On May 30th, violist Helen Callus returns for a second session of Bach Suites. More detail later!

JOHN WARNOCK, CHAIR, CONCERT SERIES

May 15th potluck at USSB

Join us for a fun potluck dinner in Parish Hall on May 15th! We all set-up at 5:30PM and eat at 6:00PM. Everyone is welcome - friends, families and neighbors. Please bring your own table settings: plates, cups, flatware and cloth napkins. If you have questions, or need transportation, call Catherine Birtalan, (# withheld in web version).

Prop 15: Getting Big Money Out of Elections

How about a system that frees candidates from begging corporations and special interest groups for campaign money? Proposition 15 (the CA Fair Elections Act), on the June 8th ballot, is a great start. Join Mike Hackett and Robin Gilbert of Californians for Fair Elections on Thursday, May 6 at 7PM in Parish Hall to discuss this innovative approach to campaign financing. Supported by the California Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry, the League of Women Voters, and many others, Prop 15 could truly revolutionize our democratic process. Attend and find out how.

Sketches . . . by Aaron

Great Spirit?

Last week one of you asked a very interesting question that no one had ever asked me before:

“Every week when we enter meditation you always begin by saying, ‘Great Spirit.’ Who or what is this Great Spirit? To whom are we talking?”

A very good question! But in that moment all I could think of to say is, “Well, I’m not entirely sure—but I’m pretty sure it isn’t me.”

Even that isn’t quite right. Sigh. Words are so inadequate sometimes.

Most days I’m a pantheistic (or maybe panatheistic) humanist. Which is really just a fancy way of saying that for me, the totality of existence in all its constituent parts (+ consciousness) is where I find divinity. The sacred. It’s where I find god.

I cannot prove this belief to be true, nor do I feel any need to do so. I am content with simply living as if it is so, and treating the rest of creation accordingly. Similarly I cannot prove that every human being is born with inherent worth and dignity—and yet I choose to live my life as if we are.

So when I invoke a “Great Spirit”, “Source of Love”, “Boundless Universe”, “Holy Creation” or any of the many names that stumble from my lips as I struggle to name that which is beyond names, indeed beyond all words—I do not really know who or what I am addressing. Maybe it’s a kind of cosmic “to whom it may concern.”

I do know that whatever it is I am reaching for—it is more than me. It is more than me and yet I am part of it. It’s whatever I am responsible to, accountable to—my home base, a flag on a mountain, an ancient spring, a distant star, a forgotten song...it is that which is beyond me and yet paradoxically at my core. It is whatever calls me always a little further than I thought I could go, whatever I cry out to when my heart breaks and the song my heart sings when I hear a new baby laugh.

Call it what you will: Higher Power, True Self, Animus, Highest Values, Universe, Mother, Father, Ancestors, Truth, Silence, Mystery, Spirit, God, god, gd...

I don’t know who or what I am addressing on Sunday mornings, but I know it’s not me—and I know it’s not you—and yet in some ways it is I and Thou and more than that.

Maybe I don’t need to know, definitively, what it is I am reaching for, what it is in this life that fills me with wonder and awe. Maybe I don’t need to know definitively, what it is I am searching for—or even if it is “real” in the way carbon, iron or shrink-wrap is real.

Maybe I don’t need to name it. I know I don’t need to prove it. But I do need to do it—to reflect, to still, to meditate, to pray—to practice.

As for you, call it whatever you will, translate however you want—just do it. Sit quietly, still the tinkle and roar of your Self—and listen.

REVEREND AARON McEMRYS, PARISH MINISTER

Program Council Introduces Exciting New Programs

Young Adult Game Night Friday May 7th

Sarah Bennett and Eliza McEmrys held their first *Young Adult Game Night* in the Parsonage in April. It meets on first Friday nights of each month. For more, e.g. to see if you’re a young adult, please contact Sarah at be....@gmail.com, or join the *USSB Young Adults* group on Facebook.

USSB Theater Group auditions 5:30PM May 5th

Paul Freeman will direct a variation of Ionesco’s *The Rhinoceros*, with production planned for early July. Paul’s experience includes directing at Dos Pueblos high school. If you are interested in participating as an actor or production staff member, contact Paul at pan@...om (**personal email addresses withheld in web version**)

Prayer: An Exploration Starts in June

Diana Cecala, with Aaron’s enthusiastic support, will begin an inquiry class on prayer in June. Diana is a long-time teacher with a serious interest in the meaning and experience of prayer. The class will be held in a small group setting on campus. If you are interested, contact Diana at dcecala@net.

Program Council encourages all members to develop new programs to meet our congregation’s strategic priorities. You can request an online application from Nancy Edmundson at director@ussb.org. More programs will be described in future issues of Kaleidoscope.

SUSAN NEUFELDT, CHAIR, PROGRAM COUNCIL

Calendar

Saturday, May 1

7:00 AM Early Morning Exercise, with Linda, Parish Hall

Sunday, May 2

Worship Services 9:30 & 11:30 AM
 9:00 AM Childcare, Starr King
 9:30 AM Coming of Age, Blake Lounge
 9:30 AM Children's RE Classes, Classrooms
 10:30 AM Brunch Break, Jefferson Courtyard
 4:00 PM YRUU, Blake Meeting Room

Monday, May 3

6:00 AM Early Morning Exercise, with Linda, Parish Hall
 5:30 PM Lark Yoga Class (free for members) Jefferson Hall

Tuesday, May 4

7:00 AM Toastmasters Club #5, Parish Hall
 5:30 PM USSB Executive Committee, Blake Lounge
 6:00 PM RE Council Meeting, Classroom 1

Wednesday, May 5

6:00 AM Early Morning Exercise, with Linda, Parish Hall
 10:00 AM Women's Choral Group, Sanctuary
 12:15 PM Long Range Planning, Blake Lounge
 5:00 PM Welcome Committee Meeting, LaPaz Lounge
 5:30 PM Lark Yoga Class (free for members) Jefferson Hall
 6:00 PM Wellspring Wednesday Spring, Parish Hall
 7:00 PM Building Your Own Theology, Blake Lounge
 7:00 PM Wellspring Wed. Childcare, Blake Meeting Room
 7:00 PM Caring for Aging Parents, Classroom I
 7:00 PM Underlying Unity, Sanctuary
 7:00 PM Wednesday Book Discussion, Classroom B

Thursday, May 6

7:00 PM USSB Choir, Sanctuary
 7:00 PM Prop 15 Public Forum, Parish Hall

Friday, May 7

6:00 AM Early Morning Exercise, with Linda, Parish Hall
 2:00 PM Alliance General Meeting, Parish Hall
 6:00 PM DanceAway Committee, Jefferson Hall
 6:00 PM Family Fun Night, Starr King
 6:30 PM Fashion Fling, Jefferson Hall
 7:30 PM DanceAway, Parish Hall

Saturday, May 8

7:00 AM Early Morning Exercise, with Linda, Parish Hall
 2:30 PM Esperanto Circle, Blake Lounge

Sunday, May 9 *Mother's Day* Worship Services 9:30 & 11:30

9:00 AM Childcare, Starr King
 9:30 AM Coming of Age, Blake Lounge
 9:30 AM Children's Social Justice Sundays, Jefferson Hall
 10:30 AM Community Social Hour, Jefferson Courtyard
 10:40 AM UU Inquiry, Reception Office
 4:00 PM YRUU, Blake Meeting Room
 7:00 PM USSB Women's Group, LaPaz Lounge

Monday, May 10

6:00 AM Early Morning Exercise, with Linda, Parish Hall
 5:30 PM Lark Yoga Class (free for members) Jefferson Hall
 7:00 PM Open Men's Circle, Blake Lounge

Tuesday, May 11

7:00 AM Toastmasters Club #5, Parish Hall
 5:30 PM Program Council, Blake Lounge

Wednesday, May 12

6:00 AM Early Morning Exercise, with Linda, Parish Hall
 4:00 PM Finance Committee, Blake Lounge
 5:30 PM Lark Yoga Class (free for members) Jefferson Hall
 5:30 PM Wellspring Wednesday Spring, Parish Hall
 7:00 PM Wellspring Wed. Childcare, Blake Meeting Room
 7:00 PM Building Your Own Theology, Blake Lounge
 7:00 PM Caring for Aging Parents, Classroom I
 7:00 PM Wednesday Book Discussion, Classroom B
 7:00 PM Underlying Unity, Sanctuary

Thursday, May 13

7:00 PM USSB Choir, Sanctuary

Friday, May 14

6:00 AM Early Morning Exercise, with Linda, Parish Hall
 7:30 PM DanceAway, Jefferson Hall

Saturday, May 15

7:00 AM Early Morning Exercise, with Linda, Parish Hall
 9:00 AM Path to Membership, Blake Lounge
 6:00 PM Congregational Potluck, Parish Hall

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
 May 1 for material covering
 May 15-30, 2010
 E-mail: kaleidoscope@ussb.org

Aaron McEmrys, Parish Minister
 LeAnn Williams, Director of Lifespan Religious Education
 John Alexie Crane, Minister Emeritus
 Nancy Edmondson, Director of Administration
 Sunday Worship Services: 9:30 & 11:30 AM; Children's Program: 9:30 AM
 Nursery & Children's Care: Sunday, 9:00 AM-12:45 PM, Starr King
 Office Hours: Mon-Fri: 9 AM-4 PM; SUN: 10:00 AM-NOON



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