CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES at
The Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara

5:00 PM  Joy to the World: A Family Christmas
Lots of love will light up the sanctuary as we tell stories and sing our favorite carols. All ages are welcome at this fun and festive service. Featuring selections from “The Ceremony of Carols” by Benjamin Britten. Treble Choir will sing.

7:00 PM  Heaven and Nature Sing: Lessons & Carols
Come and hear the words of the Christmas story accompanied by beautiful music from the choir and Christmas carols for everyone. We will reflect together on what it means to make room for joy in a heartbreaking world. Chancel Choir will sing.

9:00 PM  A Joyful Jazz Christmas
A jazz combo will provide the music for us we put a little swing into our carols and reflect on the spirit of peace, love, and joy that is at the heart of Christmas. Featuring music by the USSB Music Ministry.
Sunday, December 1
Rev. Dr. Colin Bossen
“Take Courage”

Courage is lifted up as one of the central virtues. Without courage it is difficult to do the work of self and social transformation necessary to change ourselves and our society for the better. This Sunday we’ll ask: What does it mean to live a courageous life? How can we be courageous together?

Guest minister the Rev. Dr. Colin Bossen is interim senior minister of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston. He gave the spring 2019 Minns lectures on “Unitarian Universalism and American Populism.” He keeps a blog at www.colinbossen.com.

Sunday, December 8
Rev. Julia Hamilton
“Natural Disasters and Other Myths”

Two years ago, the Thomas Fire and Debris Flow woke us up to the awe-inspiring power of nature and our own vulnerabilities. Fire, flood, hurricane, heat - these are the new normal. Yet nature is not the source of our suffering; the real disaster is the way we humans have contributed to the situation. We must reclaim a sense of awe, wonder and humility for the powerful forces that surround us in order to get clear about what we do (and don’t) have control over.

Sunday, December 15
“The Star of Bethlehem”

Let’s wonder, laugh, sing, and maybe even cry together at our holiday pageant! We will discover if we have room in our hearts and in the stable for one more. Children will be performing and singing as we re-enact the story of Christmas together.

Chancel Choir will sing.

Sunday, December 22
Student Minister Nic Filzen
“Calling upon the Four Directions”

This morning is all about the Winter Solstice! Once more the earth is turning toward the sun; once more the light is increasing. Join us for a chance to reflect on this moment, when the balance shifts and the days begin to grow long.

Women’s Chorale will sing.

Sunday, December 29
*One service only at 10:00 AM
Rev. Lora Young
“Praise What Comes”

As we pause in this space between the years, it’s common to reflect on what’s come in and through our lives in preparation for the year to come. Some experiences were surely easier to bear than others, but when the going gets tough, we know in this community that turning to wonder can often be the key to new insight, resilience and even a bit of wisdom. Join our affiliated community minister, Rev. Lora Young for a morning of reflection in poetry, stillness and song dedicated to the practice of welcoming everything with a spirit of praise.
There are so many occasions when we have a desire to say “Thank You” or “Bless You” for some kindness, or a wish to acknowledge a birth or the passing of a loved one.

At this time of year, Thanksgiving and the holidays invite expressions of gratitude. Birthday party invitations often say “NO gifts please!” And yet a desire may linger to acknowledge the event, or do something.

Personal Blessings are a unique way to honor an individual or a special event, a way to celebrate the season, or a “Just because...” while at the same time providing important financial support to our cherished community at USSB.

Donation envelopes are available in the USSB reception office and in the narthex on Sundays, or you can use our online form at www.ussb.org/personalblessing.

**Filling out the gift portion of the envelope or online Personal Blessing form**

- Check one of the boxes that describes your gift.
- If you want to provide more information about your gift, add your message on the envelope or online form, or provide a separate slip with the information to include in your envelope.
- If you want your gift to be anonymous, please let us know.
- If you have specific information about where the acknowledgment card should go, please add it—particularly for memorial gifts.
- Mail or hand deliver your and donation envelope to the USSB office.

**On receipt of your gift**

- USSB will contact you and confirm that the gift has been received and clarify with you anything that may be needed for acknowledging your gift. For online submissions, you will receive a confirmation email.
- You will receive a thank you card from USSB confirming your gift.
- Your honoree will receive a card from a Personal Blessing volunteer announcing your gift.
- All gifts are fully tax-deductible.

**Public Recognition**

- Personal Blessings will be featured in the monthly *Kaleidoscope* and in the Order of Service on the first Sunday of the month.

For more information please contact Julie Lopp, Gun Dukes, or Erin Wilson

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**This Month's Personal Blessings**

**In Honor of:**

**Gun Dukes** for her work on the Personal Blessings project, *donated by Julie Lopp*

**Dana Zurzolo** for her artistic work on the Personal Blessings project, *donated by Julie Lopp*

The “luminous” **Judy Rawles**, with much gratitude from one of the many people at USSB who love you very much, *donated by Anonymous*

**In Appreciation of:**

**Pat Kruger** for “being who you are” *by Anonymous*

**In Memory of:**

**Charlie Sharpe.** “His smile and friendship that lives on in me. He was my first friend at USSB,” *Donated by Marisa Pasquini*

**Karena Ryals,** *donated by Susan Neufeldt*

**Karena Ryals,** *donated by Anne Pedersen*

**In Celebration of the Birthday of:**

**Patricia Reilly-Stark,** in appreciation, *donated by Carol Sharpe*
Here at the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara, there is an abundance of celebratory days in the winter season. As we celebrate various holy days, we also take a moment to appreciate the turning of the seasons, winter and the solstice. There are far more than 12 days to celebrate, but I want to take 12 days from our event calendar to offer a personal invitation to all of you.

But, first: remember that classic carol, “The Twelve Days of Christmas?” What are the actual 12 days of Christmas? What days of the calendar is the song referring to? According to a Wikipedia entry on the topic, the song refers to the 12 days between Christmas and the Feast of the Epiphany. As the website states, “The exact origins and the meaning of the song are unknown, but it is highly probable that it originated from a children’s memory and forfeit games.” Those 12 days, then, marked the extent of the “Christmas festivities and…a time of merrymaking.”

That makes sense. Even without understanding the exact origin of the song, it’s clear that, as the song progresses, the fun and chaos and joy are building into a giant conflagration of presents and lords and rings and more. This is a close translation to many people’s experience of the holidays: a culmination of activities, goodies and celebration. Regardless of the actual dates your family celebrates the holidays, or even what holidays they celebrate, you probably have in mind an approximate opening and closing date to the “merrymaking.” Does your family count down or add up days around the holidays, using fun tools like advent calendars, advent wreaths, or Hanukkah candles on the menorah?

At the Unitarian Society, we could re-write “The Twelve Days of Christmas” to include many faith traditions, celebrations, and feasts. There is such an abundance of joy and “merrymaking.” That’s why I look to use this time of year to reach to both you, and the larger Santa Barbara Community, for my annual campaign, retitled a little this year: The Twelve Days of Engagement. I’ll be highlighting 12 days from our holiday event calendar for you and the public. What would be your 12 days of USSB engagement? What are your favorite activities? Let me know: maureen@ussb.org.

Maureen Foley Claffey  
Director of Congregational Life  
maureen@ussb.org

USSB Twelve Days of Engagement Calendar
Just for fun, see how many of the dozen events below you can get involved with below. Enjoy!

One: Throughout December: Angels Foster Care of Santa Barbara, USSB outreach partner, www.angelsfostercare.org

Two: 12/1-7: Freedom Warming Center is On Call at USSB

Three: 12/4: 6:00 PM, Coalition Against Gun Violence Vigil, USSB Sanctuary

Four: 12/8: 10:30-11:30 AM, Holiday Craft Fair, USSB Parish Hall

Five: 12/11: 5:30-6:15 PM, Mid-Week Meditation, USSB Sanctuary

Six: 12/13: Grinch Night Family Fun, USSB Parish Hall

Seven: 12/14: 8:00 AM to noon, Christmas Holiday Pageant Rehearsal (and Pancake Breakfast, with Bouncy Castle) for Kids, USSB Parish Hall


Nine: 12/18: 7:00 PM, Solidarity & Compassion Project, USSB Parish Hall


Eleven: 12/24: 5:00, 7:00 & 9:00 PM, Christmas Eve Services, USSB Sanctuary (5:00 PM- Family Service; 7:00 PM Traditional Carols; 9:00 PM Jazz Christmas)

Twelve: 1/5: 9:15 & 11:15 AM, Burning Bowl Service, USSB Sanctuary
UU Clothing Drive for the Homeless December 8-22

From Sunday, December 8 to Sunday, December 22, USSB members Kathy Leer and Arianna Jansma will be accepting donations of winter clothing for the homeless. The donations will then be distributed by the Showers of Blessings, a nonprofit that provides weekly shower opportunities for those without homes.

*Men can use:*
- Fleece jackets and vests, sweatshirts and hoodies – LG and XL
- T-shirts – LG and XL
- Jeans – waist sizes 32, 34, 36, 38
- Packages of new, unworn socks and underwear

*Women need:*
- Basic winter clothing in all sizes
- Bras and sports bras
- Lip balm, body lotion, sunscreen
- Packages of new, unworn socks and underwear

Good quality used clothing can be purchased from any local thrift store and laundered prior to drop-off.

**Please note:** Donations will be accepted on Sundays at Middle Hour, during choir practice on Thursday evenings, and before meditation on Wednesdays. The donations received will be distributed by Showers of Blessing, a nonprofit that provides weekly shower opportunities for those without homes. For more information on what is needed and times/days of donation drop-off please visit: www.ussb.org/clothingdrive.

*Call Arianna if you have any questions:* (805) 699-1730.

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LIVE FROM THE HEART ❤ WINTER TALES
A very special opportunity to learn about fellow UUs in the congregation as a dozen members will share personal stories told live in front of the audience. Hear these stories of personal expression and learn about the people behind the faces you see assembled each week. Feel Free to bring friends and family, tickets will be available at the door. Sunday, December 1 at 7:00 PM in Parish Hall. Tickets are $20.

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Women’s Empowerment Project Gears Up for 2020

The Women’s Empowerment Project is resting on its laurels after the screening of the film “Dolores: Rebel, Activist, Feminist, Mother” on November 17, and the Speaker Series on October 6 featuring Dr. Helen Rhee on the topic, “The Christian Roots of Feminism,” followed by an interfaith panel discussion.

Our next scheduled event is a film showing of “Equal Means Equal” on Sunday, January 26. Please mark your calendars for this date and plan to attend.

We will soon be introducing the grant selection committee for 2020, with photos to be taken by Janeya Filzen. The month of February will be devoted to applications for the 2020 Women’s Empowerment Fund grant. Now is the time to start thinking of how you can turn your interests and talents into a project that could be funded by this grant.

Lastly, we are forming a committee to rename a street in Santa Barbara after Dolores Huerta. If you are interested in helping with this project, please let us know. Everyone is welcome to join us.

Looking back, 2019 has been a great year for the Women’s Empowerment Project. We look forward to another great year in 2020. We always welcome participation from those who identify as women in our UU community on whatever level that meets your schedule and fits your life.

And since this will be the last Kaleidoscope of the year, we want to extend the very best wishes to all of you for the holiday season and the New Year from the Women’s Empowerment Project.

May you be filled with peace and love.

Rachel Aarons, chair
Women’s Empowerment Project
Why We Dream: The Transformative Power of Our Nightly Journey by Alice Robb

This book called to me because I have an interesting and vivid dream life and have been in several classes here through Life Long Learning at City College where we discussed our dreams. While on a research trip in Peru, science journalist Alice Robb became hooked on lucid dreaming—the uncanny phenomenon in which a sleeping person can realize that they are dreaming and even control the dreamed experience. Why We Dream has two interwoven strands. The first is a useful summary of the latest thinking and research in neuroscience on the importance of sleep, and of dreaming in particular. The second discusses how we can use dreams to gain insight and make changes to our lives through methods including interpretation and lucid dreaming. There are ten chapters, and I found it fine to skip around, and also to skip some of the numerous sleep and dream studies. There are many interesting stories, including nightmares, which are insightful. The study of dreams is not always an accepted field, and Robb creates a strong argument for the benefits of recognizing and practicing the study. Most interesting are the ways she describes her lucid dreaming, and how you, too, can become a lucid dreamer.

Review by Ellie Tuazon

Auction News & Thank Yous

Big giant thanks yous to everyone who helped make the 2019 USSB auction a success! We did it again! We raised over $37,000. It wouldn’t have happened without the generous donations and endless volunteer hours that went into making this year’s auction a fantastic fundraiser.

Here’s a big shout out to those who volunteered their time:
Auction Acquisitions and Catalog Creation—Judy Farris
Big Board—Peter Hale and his Big Board team
Flower Donations—Anthony Vollering
Wine Donation—Maryann Jordan
Sign Design—Ken Ralph
Acquisitions—Donnis Galvan
Registration—Kate Mead and her Registration team
Auction Table Energy Booster—Julie Lopp
Decorations—Michelle Bednash and her decorating team
Table Monitors—Kir Zecher, Nic Filzen, Maureen Foley-Claffey, Julie Lopp, and team
Distribution—Kathleen Boehm
Big Board Design—Gun Dukes
Setup and teardown—Wade Volk and his teardown team
Accounting — Cindy Young, Astrid Nelson, Patricia Reilly-Stark, Kathy Leer, and the data team
Food—Mike Gorodezky and his food team
Dishes—Max Neufeldt
Seamstress—Mindy Nelson
Bar—Charlie Stelzer
USSB’s own staff members—Eden, Erin, Jon, Rob, Kathleen, Greg, and Maureen for holding us all together.

Here’s to another year of fun-filled events, community building, and getting to know each other better.

AND—Mark your calendar, the USSB 2020 auction will be on Saturday, October 17!

AND—Please remember to take a few photos during your auction events throughout the year, it will be fun for us all to see what’s happening out there. You can send them to maureen@ussb.org or share them on Twitter and Instagram by tagging @sbunitarians, or post them on the Unitarian Society’s Facebook page.

Enjoy each other’s company, Tammy Shorb, Auction Chair
Awe and Ahhh!

Last month I talked about attention. This month I would like to talk about awe. You really cannot experience awe in your life unless you pay attention, so there lies the connection.

Awe: noun, a feeling of reverential respect mixed with fear or wonder.

When have you experienced awe? Do you experience moments of awe when you see the sunset over the ocean? Do you have moments of awe when you are listening to music or meditating? Those are the expected moments of awe . . . the kind we seek out. But for the unexpected moments of awe we really must pay attention.

We need to cultivate our awe awareness. We need to practice recognizing it. I suggest that you continue your spiritual practices that I mentioned last month. They included prayer, meditation, nature, and art. Dr. Wayne Dyer says, “Give yourself a gift of five minutes of contemplation in awe of everything you see around you. Go outside and turn your attention to the many miracles around you. This five-minute-a-day regimen of appreciation and gratitude will help you to focus your life in awe.”

Gratitude awareness is the best place to start.

When I was fifteen years old my Uncle Todd suffered a stroke and was paralyzed, and I came to help out. One day, feeling a bit overwhelmed, I took a walk. After a short distance down a dirt road (they were all dirt roads) I looked out over a fence and saw thousands of yellow dots in the oh so green Tennessee grass. My obvious blindness led me to investigate so I ducked under the fence and ran as fast as I could to discover what those dots were. There in front of me lay acres of beautiful wild yellow daffodils. In the center of this field was a willow tree with the daffodils growing all around.

“I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o’er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.”

William Wordsworth

No one had planted them (at least not intentionally). No one had nurtured them, there was no reason for them to survive, grow, or thrive, yet there they were. For me, this was a moment when it was not just awe. It was an “Ahhhh” moment! I was consumed with gratitude on that day. I lay down in that field for an hour before returning to my responsibilities. I went there every day after that until again my life took another turn. But that memory has stayed with me and sustains me to this day.

“Gratitude bestows reverence, allowing us to encounter everyday epiphanies, those transcendent moments of awe that change forever how we experience life and the world.”

John Milton

I now recognize the moments of “Ahhhh!” I see it in the usual places like the beach, the park, and in the starry night sky, but I also see it in the good that is being done at the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara. It is there with our involvement in social justice. I see it when we are blessed with the birth of a new child in our congregation. I see it when members come together for social events and classes and make real connections with one another. I even see it when we come together to celebrate the life of a dear one who has passed.

I hope you will continue to practice and cultivate moments of awe with me at USSB. Come to a Family Fun Night. Join a class or workshop such as Spirit in Practice or Courage to Search. Sign up to help with the Warming Centers. Whatever you do, in each moment, look for the “Ahhhh!”

Kathleen Hogue
DIRECTOR OF LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
kathleen@ussb.org
Throughout Santa Barbara County, very young children are in need of a soft place to land after experiencing abuse or neglect. Angels Foster Care places infants and toddlers with carefully screened and trained local foster families, and helps those families provide loving care until the court decides their permanency paths.

Angels Foster Care is a private agency that operates independently, but in cooperation with the Santa Barbara County Department of Social Services. Angels serves children from birth to age three, and siblings to age five, all of whom are Santa Barbara County residents. Angels Foster Care was founded in 2006 and has since placed over 230 children in stable, loving foster homes.

As a non-profit 501c(3) organization, Angels Foster Care of Santa Barbara is completely funded by private donations from philanthropic individuals, companies, and foundations. All funding received is used to recruit, train, and support Angels families and their foster children.

For more information, please visit www.angelsfostercare.org.
**Alliance in December & January**

**Quantum Field Theory & Consciousness**

**Monday, December 16 at 7:15 pm in Blake Lounge**
Beginners QFT&C meets the third Monday of the month, and gathers at 7:00 pm to start at 7:15 in Blake Lounge.

**Book Discussion Group**

**Tuesday, December 17 at 7:00 pm in La Paz Lounge.**
Contact Al Melkonian for more information.

**Monthly Vegan Potluck**

**Sunday, December 15 at 5:00 pm in Blake Lounge**
Our USSB monthly vegan potlucks are a safe space in which to explore the pleasures of a completely plant-based meal. People with all eating styles are warmly welcomed. The commitment for participation is to contribute food that is totally plant-based, i.e., totally vegan. You are invited to share a vegan community meal and exchange ideas about plant-based eating. Please bring a plant-based, vegan dish that serves 10-12 people, and bring utensils, dishes, cups, and napkins. Email Cathy Albanese to RSVP, and for more information visit www.ussb.org/community-life/monthly-vegan-potluck.

**Solidarity and Compassion Project**

**Wed., December 11 at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary**
Radhule Wieninger and Michael Kearney will be hosting together with Barbara Finch from Santa Barbara’s Social Service Agency, presenting a World Café Solidarity & Compassion evening with the theme “Care for our Children.” Join us every second Wednesday of the month when we come together to discuss ways of community healing during traumatic times and to spend time in meditation and reflection. All are welcome—no meditation experience necessary.

**USSB Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting**

**Tuesday, December 17 at 6:00 pm in Jefferson Hall**
All USSB members are invited to attend our monthly Board of Trustees meeting. It begins at 6:00 p.m. in Jefferson Hall. To view a draft agenda for the meeting, visit www.ussb.org/board-of-trustees.

**Weekly Meditation**

**Every Wednesday at 5:30 pm in the Sanctuary**
Find more mindfulness, or just a brief midweek timeout. After a brief introduction, we’ll have two 15-minute sitting meditation periods, with a break for people to stretch, come in, or leave. Bring your own cushion or other sitting tool, or chairs and cushions will be provided. The group is led, on a rotating basis, by Arianna Jansma, Rev. Julia Hamilton, Rev. Ken Collier, Maureen Claffey, and Nic Filzen.

**Yoga Classes with Monica**

**Monday & Wednesday, 5:30 to 6:30 pm in Jefferson Hall**
Open to all! This yoga is a gentle, restorative, healing experience. Focus is on holding poses, core movement, and breathing meditation, with care to protect the low back and neck. Drop in and give it a try! Cost is $13.00 a session or $65.00 for the month.

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**Sojourner Kincaid Rolle**

In January, Steve Ortiz, President and CEO of United Way of Santa Barbara County, and Melinda Cabrera, Director of Strategic Partnerships, will summarize the United Way programs for the USSB Alliance on **January 10, 2020 at 2:00 pm in Parish Hall.** Steve Ortiz is a dedicated 14-year executive of United Way. Melinda Cabrera has been overseeing United Way’s community impact programs for six years.

The Mission of United Way is to improve the lives of children, families and seniors with a focus on Education, Financial Stability and Health. Please come to listen and learn about the United Way programs in Santa Barbara County in 2019 and beyond on Friday, January 10.
Rev. Julia Hamilton, Lead Minister, julia@ussb.org
Erin Wilson, Director of Administration, erin@ussb.org
Ken Ryals, Choral Director, ken@ussb.org
Maureen Foley Claffey, Director of Congregational Life, maureen@ussb.org
Kathleen Hogue, Director of Lifespan Religious Education, kathleen@ussb.org
Nic Filzen, Ministerial Intern, nic@ussb.org
Greg Otero, Facilities Use Coordinator, greg@ussb.org
Eden Kennedy, Office Manager, eden@ussb.org
Rob Brown, Building Manager, rob@ussb.org
Jon Diaz, Sexton, jon@ussb.org
Heather Levin, Accompanist
Rev. Kenneth Collier, Minister Emeritus

Sunday Worship Services are at 9:15 and 11:15 AM
Sunday Nursery & Children’s Care: 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM in Starr King
The office is open Sunday mornings and Monday to Thursday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Deadline for the January issue: Monday, December 16
Email: Kaleidoscope@ussb.org