



# CVUUF May 2018

Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Our mission is to nurture spiritually courageous people who transform the world through justice and compassion.

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This newsletter is published monthly. View this copy on our website at [www.cvuuf.org](http://www.cvuuf.org).

Deadline for articles or photos is the 25th day of each month at 6:00pm. Be sure to **email**

**submissions to:**  
[news@cvuuf.org](mailto:news@cvuuf.org)

Content is placed, and may be edited by, Jill Lewis, Newsletter Editor

### Weekly News & Notes

(Sunday handouts/ weekly email)  
Email submissions to:  
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## Theme: Creativity



### May 6 – Sparking Your Creative Spirit – Reverend Nica Eaton-Guinn

"What you paint, write, sing, dance, cook, sew, compose, construct, draw, or act, can change this moment in life into something magical, meaningful, purposeful, or real." (Steph Cowling) Creativity is not something to be left to the professionals alone or the few deemed 'talented'. Creativity is everyone's birthright. Join us to explore ways for you to spark your creative spirit and enjoy the spiritual and psychological fruits of creative expression.

### May 13 – The Mother in us All – Reverend Nica Eaton-Guinn

Mothering is so much more than birthing and raising children. Mothering is the nurturing instinct in us all, the drive to care for, protect and nurture others. That is something most of us can claim in some form or another. On this Mother's Day, join us to honor and celebrate the Mother in us All, and witness the many ways we care for one another and our planet.

### May 20 – Necessity is the Mother of Invention – Rev. Nica Eaton-Guinn

Wendell Berry says that: "The mind that is not baffled is not employed." Life's most challenging and puzzling times often give rise to the most creative solutions. Uncertainty, struggle and stuckness require us to find creative responses, which we may not have considered before. This Sunday we will explore the ingenuity and creativity of the human spirit, showing that hurdles and challenge may be necessary for us to evolve.

### May 27 – Creativity As Spiritual Practice – Carol Flanagan, Paul Chavez

Human creativity appears across a wide range of experiences, transcending any one specific means of expression. It applies to every area of human endeavor. Creativity is a disposition, a habit of mind we can cultivate to respond to life's joys and challenges in an open and curious way. Join us for an exploration of the creative process and how it has been the primary spiritual practice of our lives.



# Minister's Message

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Reverend Nica Eaton-Guinn, Minister  
[minister@cvuuf.org](mailto:minister@cvuuf.org)

## Theme—Creativity

"I'm not creative," said the woman sitting next to me on the plane on my way to the UUA Western Regional Conference. Then she proceeded to tell me about how she designs computer applications for lawyers and that she has just redesigned her kitchen and bathroom. Creativity, which is our theme for the month of May, is not just about being 'good' at art or music or writing. It's about how we express our innermost being; how we share who we are. It's also about how we innovate, repurpose, and design things in our daily lives and work. It's how we construct our thoughts, choose our words and initiate our actions.

Creativity, I believe, is the natural state of the Universe. Everything changes and evolves constantly, whether by design or by accident. This idea is expressed in Process Theology or Panentheism. Process theology explains that the Universe and all of us are in a constant state of evolution, flux and transformation. In this theology, 'God' (translate this word to 'life force' if it triggers you) is described as an ever changing, ever evolving energy that never stays the same. In this theology, 'God' is not omnipotent or omniscient, but rather the creative life force that's a part of each of us, and lies within and beyond every living thing in existence.

So I invite us this month to throw away the shackles of a limited definition of creativity. Play with the idea of being a creative being, no matter whether you produce something that is traditionally considered creative or not. Young children are endlessly creative and free, because they have not yet shut down their creative impulse when society's messages tell them they are not 'good' at art or singing or dancing. They are creative, because they are free of mental limitations and love to play and explore. Indeed, the very act of being alive is creative. You get up every day and create your new day as only you can. Explore where your passions lead you. Discover where your energy is drawn. More than likely that which inspires and interests you will lead to some form of creative expression.

On May 6, our service will focus on how we spark our own creative spirit. On May 13, for Mother's Day, we will explore one of the ultimate creative acts of birthing and raising children, while also looking at a wider definition of 'mothering' as the nurturing, creative impulse in us all. Then on May 20, we examine how challenges and difficult life circumstances demand creative solutions. Finally this month, on Memorial Day weekend, we will explore creativity as spiritual practice. I hope you can join us for as many of these services as possible, while you also explore creativity in your own life and in our Chalice Circles, Religious Education and Social Justice work. Don't forget, this community and this faith wouldn't exist if it weren't for the creative impulses of those visionary souls who got together to create this for us. Enjoy exploring your creativity!

In creativity and joy,  
Reverend Nica

# President's Message

Tom Wolf  
[president@cvuuf.org](mailto:president@cvuuf.org)

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Our theme for May this year is Creativity. There are lots of great quotes about creativity, but perhaps my favorite is by the male director David Lynch- "Negativity is the enemy of Creativity". There are many more wonderful and inspirational quotes you can find, and I highly recommend a quick search. Or, even better, a little quick creativity of your own. Do it, you know that you can.

The theme for May year after year though, is centered around Mothers Day. I honestly don't know if there is supposed to be an apostrophe in the word for that holiday, but I do know enough about language and grammar to say that I like the inference better withOUT the apostrophe. It is more inclusive and less about ownership. So I choose to be intentional, and perhaps creative, about my use of language.

Mothers, and not just human ones, are often associated with the nurturing spirit of love. It is an unavoidable association, even though we know that not all people show or share an equal amount of love. But it is a real association nonetheless, even if it is aspirational as well. And for this huge source of love, and for every person of every gender that exemplifies it, we are all better for it. Love quite obviously binds us, guides us to be the best person we can be. We need it like we need water. So please, be a fountain for those you care about, and a model for those who could learn from you. Kids soak up things like a sponge, whether it is how to sound out a word or how to be a compassionate person. Let us hope, especially in these difficult times, that they soak up all the love that they need.

And now, my other favorite quote about creativity, this one by the female director Ava DuVernay – "Creativity is an energy. It's a precious energy, and something to be protected." So, at the risk of sounding like a certain athletic shoe company, Just Do.

# Social Justice News

Grace DiTommaso, Director of Social Justice  
[59gracie@gmail.com](mailto:59gracie@gmail.com)



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In our Fellowship, there are as many ways to support social justice as there are members! We have the Environmental Justice group, the Community Forum, and so many other interests.

For now, the Fellowship is focusing on three areas of ministry that, naturally, overlap and intersect with each other (which is why "intersectionality" is the big word this year!). Those three areas are:

## **Gender Equality and Justice Ministry**

The Gender Equality and Justice Ministry, and Reverend Nica will present the film, "Birthright" on Movie Night, May 8 at 7:00pm.

On July 7, we have scheduled a discussion with Stacy Dragoset, author of "pink is for girls...and other silly things people say" on raising and supporting transgender youth. Keep a lookout for more information!

Conejo Valley Pride is working on putting on the first annual Thousand Oaks Pride Festival this fall. Any Fellowship members who want to participate, please talk to Robin Lindsey as we figure out how CVUUF will participate and assist.

Our OWL program is finished for the year. Thanks to all who made it a success! We had positive feedback from the parents of the kids. We hope to offer all ages next year and are still looking into offering a training for facilitators of the Young Adult and Adult OWL at our Fellowship in the fall.

## **CVUUF Economic Justice Ministry**

The Economic Justice Ministry team seeks to increase the basic needs security of no-income and low-income people in our neighborhoods, our county, our state, our nation, and the world.

Please contact Michael Teasdale if you are interested in being involved as we:

- Work towards expanded healthcare insurance for citizens of California
- Work with the Conejo Valley Interfaith Council on expanding services to the homeless and the food insecure
- Work with Habitat for Humanity.

*Meetings are scheduled every 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month from 7 PM to 9 PM at CVUUF*

## **CVUUF Racial and Cultural Justice Ministry**

Special Report!!!

Six members of our Racial & Cultural Justice Ministry Team traveled to Montgomery, Alabama for a week of activities surrounding the opening of the National Museum for Peace and Justice, our nation's first major memorial to the victims of lynching during the era of Jim Crow. The Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) accurately describes our racist history as a racist terror campaign that lasted for some 70 years and, for 30 years, averaged two to three lynchings a week. 4,400 names of victims of such atrocities have been memorialized, with thousands more whose names may never be known.

Nearby, EJI's Legacy Museum tells more of the story. Other Civil Rights memorials abound in Montgomery, and we will talk about all of this in more detail at future ministry team meetings and CVUUF gathering.

*Our next RCJ Ministry team meeting is May 6<sup>th</sup>, Sunday, 12:15 to 2:15pm.*

# Community Life News

Nancy Cooper, Community Life Director  
[ngrbm@aol.com](mailto:ngrbm@aol.com)



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This is a really busy time of year for our Membership Committee. We will have a Path to Membership class on Sunday, May 6 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. for visitors who plan to become members of CVUUF or who just want to know more about our fellowship and Unitarian Universalism. We expect a number of new people to join the Fellowship, and they will be honored at both services on May 20. As has become our tradition, at 12:30 that day, we will celebrate them with a potluck luncheon, brought by the Board, Council, Committee on Shared Ministry, and the Membership Committee. New members' interests and Fellowship opportunities will be shared by all who attend the luncheon and brief meeting that follows. The Membership Committee wishes to express a big 'thank-you' to all congregants who have been welcoming and friendly to our visitors.

We are still looking for Greeters to help at both services. Greeters welcome visitors, give them a name tag, and ask them to fill out our "Welcome Card." It's a fun and easy job that lets you get to know more members of the community. Please contact Nancy Cooper (805.660.2188) if you're willing to help on a regular basis (perhaps only once a month or more frequently if you have time).

Suddenly Seymour, Ten Degrees Cooler, Eastenders...which one is yours? We're talking about our Neighborhood Networks, of course. Our wonderful Katie Morgan organized these so that CVUUF members and friends who live in the same areas can look out for and help each other. One recent example occurred when a member needed a series of rides for medical treatments. His neighborhood coordinated giving him those much-needed rides and support through a rough time.

In addition, neighborhoods also schedule regular social events – and these are pure fun! Each neighborhood has a leader (or co-leaders) to disseminate information to its members. When a month happens to have five Sundays, the last Sunday of the month is reserved for "Dot Sunday" – because everyone gets a dot on their nametag to indicate their neighborhood. Neighborhood Networks meet with their designated groups between services to check in with each other and assess any needs that have occurred. This is also a time used for planning social events. This program has been working beautifully for several years, but now is looking for an overall coordinator. This important position mostly just sets up the Dot Sundays four times a year and oversees the program coordinating with leaders of each group. Finding the Neighborhood Network coordinator is a huge need right now or this vital program cannot continue. Please let Nancy know if you are interested.

The above are the main focus of Community Life right now. I wish to express a big "thank you" to all Membership Committee members and a lot of encouragement to anyone who thinks they can step up and help with Neighborhood Networks.

Nancy Cooper  
Community Life Director



**May 5th Community Day of Service**  
**COME PLANT TREES in**  
**Thousand Oaks!**

**What: We're planting 150 crepe myrtle trees**

**Where: on Reino Rd near Albertson's**

**Time: 8am-11am Saturday May 5th**



**bring gloves, hats, shovels and pick axes...**  
**holes will be pre-dug by the City of Thousand Oaks**





## Creating Community: Acceptance, Access and Inclusion of People with Disabilities



“The severity of one’s disability does not determine their level of potential. The greatest barriers that persons with disabilities have to overcome are not steps or curbs, it’s expectations.” -Karen Clay

Our speakers will explore:

Who is in the population of People with Disabilities?  
What is that population facing in terms of Housing? Work? Education? Safety?  
Healthcare?

### **Dani Anderson**

Dani is the Executive Director of the Independent Living Resource Center (ILRC) which serves Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo Counties. She has been appointed to the California State Independent Living Council by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.

### **Lee Ann Holland**

Lee Ann is an advocate and grassroots organizer. She is a co-founder of Thrive Conejo, which supports inclusive education in our area.

***With a focus on accessibility and removing barriers, our speakers advocate to create opportunities to achieve equality for individuals who are affected by disabilities.***

Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship 331 Old Conejo Road, Newbury Park (805) 498-9548

For more information: [forum@cvuuf.org](mailto:forum@cvuuf.org) <http://forum.cvuuf.org>

***Presentation is free. Donations are gratefully accepted.***

**Movie Discussion Night with Rev. Nica Eaton-Guinn  
Tuesday, May 8, 2018 at 7pm**



**This is the real life “Handmaid’s Tale”**

**This film tells the story of women who have become collateral damage in the campaign to take control of reproductive health care and to allow states, courts and religious doctrine to decide whether, when and how women will bear children.**

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**Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
In the Sanctuary  
3327 Old Conejo Rd. Newbury Park**





## 7th Parliament of the World's Religions in 2018 November 1-7

Toronto--has been chosen as the host city of the 7th Parliament of the World's Religions, to be convened in November 2018. More than 10,000 people will participate in the 2018 Parliament, which will last for seven days and comprise more than 500 programs, workshops, and dialogues, alongside music, dance, art and photography exhibitions, and related events presented by the world's religious communities and cultural institutions.

The world's oldest and most diverse global interfaith event will mark its 125-year anniversary by bringing together leaders and followers of more than 200 spiritual and secular traditions to "pursue global understanding, reconciliation, and change" in the world's most culturally diverse city.

According to organizers, the theme, *The Promise of Inclusion & the Power of Love: Pursuing Global Understanding, Reconciliation, and Change*, was chosen "because inclusion and love are what, in fact, we deeply believe are essential for realizing a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world."

Dr. Larry Greenfield, Parliament Executive Director says faiths and guiding institutions must work for economic, climate, or racial and sectarian justice. That means solving conflicts in ways that reflect the Parliament's methods: increasing the roles of the world's next generations, women and girls, indigenous communities, and minority communities, including immigrants and refugees.

He says, "Growing global faith-based movements that are actively transcending old barriers are giving life to the 25-year-old mission of the Parliament— they will bring extremely convincing examples of how inclusion and love are already working in a time when the stakes are highest and, in certain cases, we won't have another chance to get things right."

Choosing from 500 or more of the Parliament's unique forums, participants and invited luminaries will be able to customize an experience that satisfies and expands their interests and strengths. Programs will feature internationally renowned plenary speakers from religious, cultural, and civic institutions, moving cultural performances, artistic exhibitions, and expert trainings in movement building.

Chair of the Parliament's Board of Trustees, Dr. Robert P. Sellers, is encouraged that "the thousands of people who have attended our international gatherings have consistently commented that Parliaments are informative and inspiring, exciting and motivating, deeply moving and life-altering."

## Path to Membership Class

**Sunday, May 6, 2018 1:00-4:00 pm in the Sanctuary**

Are you ready to join CVUUF or do you want more information about Unitarian Universalism or this Fellowship? We invite you to attend our Path to Membership Class to learn more.

Light refreshments served. Child care available with advance reservation.  
R.S.V.P. Nancy Cooper (805.660.2188) or [ngrbm@aol.com](mailto:ngrbm@aol.com)



**We will be having ONE 10 am Worship Service for the summer  
Starting with our service on June 3 through Labor Day September 2**

### Capital Campaign Update!

Great Start - THANK YOU ALL! We are on our way to our goal! Visiting stewards will help us complete our campaign. Thank you for embracing their calls and visits. We are grateful for every gift and every member and friend of CVUUF. Stop by the fellowship hall to see our board of financial health grow throughout the campaign.

**For questions email [CCChair@cvuuf.org](mailto:CCChair@cvuuf.org)**

Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

# COVENANT OF GOOD RELATIONS

In order to assist us in fulfilling our mission to nurture spiritually courageous people who transform the world through justice and compassion, we the members and friends of the Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship enter into this Covenant of Good Relations.

We, the members and friends of this congregation, value:

- Opening our hearts and minds to those who have traveled journeys unlike ours and whose strengths and challenges may be different from ours.
- A welcoming space for all to speak their truth respectfully.
- The importance of deep listening and respect for each other.
- Relationships with others of all ages, and the gifts that each generation brings to our community.
- The democratic process, through which we give voice to concerns and offer our time and energy to arrive at solutions.

In the wider community, we honor our responsibilities for upholding spiritual ideals, engaging in civil discourse with those of other religious traditions, and promoting our UU values.

In my interactions with others in this congregation, I will:

- Speak honestly and directly to the person(s) with whom I have a concern, using thoughtful, compassionate language.
- Forgive the errors and shortcomings of myself and others as we contribute to our shared ministry and express gratitude for the many gifts we bring.
- Assume good intentions in those with whom I disagree and examine my own part in the disagreement.
- Listen deeply to, and actively seek resolution with those concerned before engaging the Conflict Resolution Committee, Committee on Shared Ministry, the Council or the Board of Trustees in conflict mediation.
- Expect divergent beliefs and opinions and persist in respectful dialogue—especially in times of uncertainty—remaining open to new understandings while doing my part to sustain this Covenant.
- Respect the minister and staff's professionalism, time and privacy.
- Assume responsibility for understanding the church structure and governance model.
- Assume responsibility for keeping informed of church business.

Through this Covenant of Good Relations, it is our intention to foster healthy and productive relations within our church community as we work together to achieve our mission.



## Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

3327 Old Conejo Road  
Newbury Park CA 91320 ([map](#))  
805-498-9548  
[www.cvuuf.org](http://www.cvuuf.org)

[Home](#)

***A Welcoming Community to all persons regardless of their race, nationality,  
sexual orientation or gender identity.***

### Staff

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### Board of Trustees 2017-2018

Tom Wolf, Board President, [president@cvuuf.org](mailto:president@cvuuf.org)  
David Barker, Vice President  
Kathleen Holland, Secretary  
Peter Schlaus, Treasurer  
At-Large Trustees: Dalila Sankaran, Kelly Castillo, Tim Snowber

### Additional UU resource links:

[Unitarian Universalist  
Association \(UUA\)](#) The  
UUA serves 1,000+  
congregations in the US  
and the world.

[Pacific Southwest District  
\(PSWD\)](#)

PSWD serves Pacific  
Southwest congregations  
including the States of  
California, Arizona and  
Nevada.

Sunday Services are held at 9:15 and 11:00am  
with Coffee Hour following each service.  
Children's Religious Education (RE) is held during  
the 9:15am service, and Childcare is provided.  
During the 11:00am service, our high school RE  
program (YRUU) meets.

**Visitors are always welcome.**