



CHALICE

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
FELLOWSHIP OF THE CONEJO VALLEY

**Today and Tomorrow:
A Vision for our Future**

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CHALICE is an extraordinary spiritual community.
Our Mission: We nurture spiritually courageous people
who transform the world through justice and
compassion.

We are an open-minded and inclusive community, dedicated to providing a loving space for people regardless of race, religion, culture, gender, or economics. We put love into action, supporting our neighbors and local community, while helping people grow their personal and spiritual awareness.

Chalice has a sixty-year record of action on social justice issues, support for democratic institutions, and environmental activism.



"Thank you again for coming together and supporting our mission. We couldn't fight hunger and food insecurity in Ventura County without our community partners like you!"
~ Meghan Cipolla, Ventura County Foodshare

VISION - We've outgrown our current space. Our immediate goal is to secure a new campus in the Thousand Oaks, California area to better serve the expanding Chalice community. We seek to provide a hub for collaborative work with other aligned nonprofits throughout Ventura County.

Chalice has expanded its community partnerships and is seeking grants from foundations as well as individual donations to help acquire a suitable property in an area of high real estate values and costs. In addition to current assets, primarily real estate worth approximately \$2.7 million, we aim to raise another \$3 million to enable the purchase of a campus commensurate with Chalice's needs.

Our vision includes space appropriate for a pre-school/childcare and play area, a community vegetable garden, places to walk and a meditation labyrinth, as well as meeting space for community organizations and events.



Join us as we work together to create a space to live our values and inspire the same in the community for generations to come. Your generous donation or grant will make a lasting impact. Together, we can make a difference and leave behind a legacy of love and empowerment to change our world for the better.

Who We Are

As Unitarian Universalists, we strive to put love into action, to walk our talk and live with integrity. We are a spiritual community that welcomes all people of goodwill, all seekers of meaning and purpose. We are women, men and non-binary people of all ages and backgrounds, children and elders, gay and straight, and everyone in between. We are a mix of spiritual and non-religious folk. Bound by no dogma or creed, we gather to support one another in community, to accompany each other on our spiritual paths, and to impact the wider world by working toward justice. Our groups actively support racial, cultural, climate, and economic justice efforts.

Above all, Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values. The values we share include the following, from the Unitarian Universalist Association's work in 2024, which we hold as inseparable and deeply interconnected:



What is Unitarian Universalism?



The primary symbol of the Unitarian Universalist faith tradition is a flame within a chalice (a cup with a stem and foot). We kindle a flaming chalice at all our gatherings and worship services as a symbol of the light within all of us, the warmth of community and the fire of commitment.

We are an autonomous fellowship and are also connected to over one thousand other UU congregations under the umbrella of the Unitarian Universalist Association. The UUA grew from the union of two theologically liberal and inclusive Christian groups: the Universalists, who organized in 1793, believed that salvation was open to all; and the Unitarians, who organized in 1825, believed in one loving God. Both groups were always at the forefront of social justice movements and, with the inclusion of many Humanists, combined in 1961 to create a single organization.

What We Do

Over the last decade, the Chalice spiritual community has made significant impacts not only on the lives of those who are active members but has also been a powerful force for galvanizing good works in the surrounding community.

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members"

Coretta Scott King

Chalice has been a beacon to light the way for people with progressive values to come together for spiritual growth and to provide safety and acceptance for marginalized populations. Chalice provides fellowship for seekers of spiritual development in a context that requires no belief in dogma, but rather a direction centered on love as a central life value. For example, Chalice provides opportunities to study world religions and philosophies of peace; and promotes non-religious practices of meditation and cultivation of gratitude. Members are encouraged to explore and question; to cultivate curiosity, and to pursue personal and spiritual growth in the company of others who are also seeking to develop and live into their best selves.



The work we do in fellowship also creates a village to counter the loneliness epidemic. Chalice offers deep connections through small group ministries, where members and friends are able to connect over matters close to their hearts. We have men's and women's groups, book and movie discussion groups, as well as spiritual and personal growth exploration circles. Additionally, volunteers offer a care team that ministers to shut-ins, people who need rides, or need meal-trains after illness.

"What matters is that should difference enter the world of beloved community, it can find a place of welcome, a place to belong"

bell hooks

Not to be forgotten is the value Chalice places on the creative arts and musical expression. Chalice offers impactful theater experiences, such as The Vagina Monologues and the Laramie Project. Musical expression, from beginning ukulele classes and open mic sessions to cabarets and large scale choral productions, supports individuals and groups in exploring the creative expression of their talents, bringing joy to audiences and participants alike.



What We Do (continued)

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Our values also call us to be of service in the wider community and beyond, to join forces with many other organizations for the pursuit of positive societal change. Our special collections last year raised over \$15,000 for organizations working to ease suffering and improve lives. We participate with Feeding Hands, a food insecurity program in the area, and collect goods for the Manna food bank each week during our Sunday service. Our volunteers recently sent over 16,000 handwritten postcards to encourage voting as part of the “UU the Vote” campaign, a nonpartisan initiative that encourages participation in the democratic process. Our human sexuality classes, called Our Whole Lives, are open to families throughout the area. Our volunteers have visited immigrant detention centers and written letters to prisoners.

We serve individuals who are often facing difficult circumstances and lack the resources to rebuild their lives. Thanks to your generous hospitality and support, many in our community were given the opportunity to take an important step toward a better future.”

**~ Alma Ayala, Fresh Start Clinic
Ventura County Public Defender’s
Office**



Community Forums

Chalice established itself as a community center with the launch of their Community Forum in September, 2008, bringing vital conversations to the Conejo Valley area. To date there have been over 220 public events – talks, expert panels, concerts, plays and interactive workshops – attracting many thousands of attendees over the years. Since the beginning of the COVID pandemic, the majority of events have been presented on Zoom, allowing us to bring in speakers from all over the nation and beyond. Topics have covered climate change, ecological sustainability, mental health, safety and well being, communicating across the cultural divide, gender politics, reproductive rights and many aspects of social and racial justice, democracy, and LGBTQIA rights. The examples below highlight the themes and topics of these forums.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM CHALICE COMMUNITY FORUMS

DEMOCRACY THEMED FORUMS:

David Pepper, author of “Laboratories of Autocracy” and “Saving Democracy.” Pepper detailed the breadth and depth of assaults on our democracy and laid out a robust agenda for how everyone from elected offices to everyday citizens can fight back.”

Voting Rights 2022 – A Brief History: the current climate and where do we go from here with Ventura County League of Women Voters

CLIMATE FORUMS:

Concert – The Year to Save The Earth: Prolific composer guitarist Jim Scott, formerly a member of Paul Winter Consort, mixed powerful songs and beautiful projected images, and shared with us a positive vision for the planet.

Saving the Earth by Saving the Earth: Screening of documentary film, Kiss the Ground, with featured agronomist Ray Archuleta.

SOCIAL JUSTICE FORUMS:

Post Roe – What happens now: Sandra Fluke, Public Interest Attorney, Tami Martin, Equality California, Legislative Director and Janette Robinson-Flint , Black Women for Wellness, Reproductive Justice Manager, discussed federal, California, and around-the-country updates, disparate impacts, abortion funds, and what we can do.





Restorative Justice – Transforming Harm to Healing: Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko, Interface Children and Family Services, Ventura County Probation. Transforming Harm to Healing is a Restorative Justice Program aimed at reducing disparities in the juvenile justice system and preventing recidivism. The presentation explored how this process can allow the non-violent offender to learn how their actions caused harm and help offer empowerment and closure to the victim.

RACIAL JUSTICE FORUMS:

Being White Today – A Roadmap for a Positive Antiracist Life. Author and activist, Shelly Tochluk, addressed what a healthy, positive, antiracist white identity looks like, how to avoid conflating terms: White people, White culture, and Whiteness, as well as tips for talking with friends and family about race

Gerald C. Rogers – The Voice of Dr. King. Dramatic portrayal celebrating the enduring spirit of dissent with special music by Merlin Snider.

HEALTH AND SAFETY FORUMS:

Gun Sense in America – 2022 with representatives from The Brady Project; Women Against Gun Violence and NAACP. Topics included federal and State legislation, past and pending, as well as grassroots successes.

Mental Health – Screening of the film “What I Wish My Parents Knew” and a facilitated discussion exploring a mental wellness program to help parents better understand how to support their children’s mental health.

LGBTQIA+ RIGHTS FORUMS:

Theatrical performance of The Laramie Project: a powerful play exploring the death of Matthew Shepard who was murdered for being a gay man in Wyoming.

Screening and discussion of the film 1947. This feature documentary chronicles the discovery of evidence that casts significant doubt on any biblical basis for LGBTQIA+ prejudice.

Our Congregation

Chalice began in February of 1962 as a small, lay-led Fellowship mostly of Thousand Oaks area residents who were seeking a liberal spiritual home for their families. We were then called the Conejo Valley Unitarian Unitarian Fellowship, or CVUUF for short. In the early days it was very much Church-in-a-Box, with the longest stay in the Goebel Senior Center in Thousand Oaks.

Chalice hired our first full-time minister in 1998, and since then, we have had several outstanding ministers lead our congregation. Music has always been an integral part of our community, as has our Religious Education program, which has inspired generations of young and teen family members. We have been lucky to have inspired leaders throughout our existence. We also have an amazing group of hard-working volunteers. In 2026, our dynamic staff includes Reverend Nica Eaton, Music Director Anthony Concepcion, Director of Wisdom Exploration Sam Dickerson, and our Administrator Ana Krista Johnson.

After much growth, determination, and building capital, CVUUF in 2008 purchased a mortgage on one, while renting the other, of the two buildings we used. In 2024 we lost access to the Sanctuary we were renting and have now had to compress our services and activities into one building. Less than ideal, we are currently located in a business park in the Newbury Park area of Thousand Oaks.

The decision was made to change our name to one more memorable. After months of introspection and votes narrowing down the possibilities, the name Chalice was chosen. Also, after years of budgetary difficulties and sometimes even having to dip into savings, Chalice had a Capital Campaign in the years 2019-21. We were able to raise over \$800,000, and purchased outright the building that we now use for our Sanctuary and all other purposes.



Our Congregation (continued)

In 2026, we have approximately 200 members. We have maintained that number for roughly ten years, unlike many other congregations in every denomination that have lost members. We know we are doing many things right. Our financial picture has also been stable. We have operating costs of about \$400,000. Our annual pledge drive, fundraisers, and assorted grants, not to mention prudent stewardship, have allowed us to operate in the black for roughly ten years now. But we seek to grow, and the space in the business park limits our visibility, the sheer number of people that we can accommodate, and the kinds of activities we might be able to offer children and their families.



Vision for the Future

With the purchase of a larger campus, Chalice will provide a loving space, open to and accepting of all people of goodwill, for both members and friends in the greater Ventura County area. Chalice will expand its collaboration with partner non-profit organizations and provide much needed meeting space for fulfilling the following vision, as designed in a congregation-wide effort in 2024-25.



Provide a spiritual center with weekly worship opportunities that honor multiple truths, including all world religions, science, reason, psychology, nature and wisdom from diverse traditions.

- Enriching and varied worship experiences every Sunday and on other important days
- Small group ministries discussing big questions of life, meaning and purpose.
- Meditation and spiritual deepening groups.
- Religious Exploration classes for all ages.
- Our commitment is to foster an environment of curiosity, wonder, spiritual development, acceptance and most importantly love.

Grow and nurture a community of love, peace, collaboration, and action.



- Be a welcoming space where all feel valued and respected, regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, socioeconomic background, religion, or lived experience.
- We are committed to fostering an environment that celebrates diversity, ensures equal access and opportunities, and supports the participation of every person in our community.
- Offer adult education, small groups, open public discourse, and community building.
- All our work is grounded in our UU Principles, Values and Covenants
- Put Love into Action in everything we do, making the world a better place

Vision for the Future (continued)

Bring our energy for good out into the community by collaborating and partnering with aligned non-profit organizations in order to achieve greater impacts. Serve as a hub-sharing space with other organizations.

- Continue to serve AA, OA, Citizens' Climate Lobby, Manna, Harbor House, Many Mansions etc.
- Widen our reach to serve other local organizations & offer space
- Explore land-sharing opportunities
- Extend invitation through social media platforms to engage in community.



Engage, lead and support justice work including climate, racial, gender, and economic justice, LGBTQ+ issues, voting rights, and reproductive freedom.

- Addressing climate change through education and lowering our impact on the planet.
- Build Beloved Community within and beyond our walls.
- Support UUtheVote, reproductive freedoms, and local elections.
- Support organizations to assist migrant workers, immigration, and housing regulations.
- Renew and grow our LGBTQ+ Welcoming Congregation program & outreach



On behalf of Buen Vecino, 805 Immigrant Coalition, and myself, I want to thank you for allowing us to use Chalice to host our Rapid Response Network training last night. Thanks to you, we were able to train 12 brand new volunteers and give refresher training to many other volunteers as well. Thank you for your support as we stand in solidarity with our neighbors, regardless of immigration status.

~Willie Lubka

How You Can Support



Be A Donor

Be an Individual or Corporate donor to our “Vision for the Future” campaign



Assist with Grants

Help to locate potential grants and assist with grant writing



Join the Team

Support the momentum by joining our Capital Fundraising Project Team

Donations are tax deductible.

- Donate by monthly pledge to the campaign
- Donate by credit card or electronic check
- Donate by check

Please contact admin@chaliceuu.org if you can help!



Thank You for Supporting Chalice!

This brochure was created by the Portfolio Team of 2025. Thanks go to all those who contributed their time and expertise to its development.

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