

Unlocking the Spirit of Connection



**Installation of Rev. Dr. Rodney Lemery
Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church
(MDUUC)
Walnut Creek, CA
September 29, 2024**

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Gathering Music
Music of Dolly Parton
Julie Homi, piano

Processional
“Gather the Spirit”
Jim Scott

Gather the Spirit; Harvest the Power
Our separate fires will kindle one flame
Witness the mystery of this hour
Our trials in this light appear all the same

Gather in peace, gather in thanks
Gather in sympathy now and then
Gather in hope, compassion and strength
Gather to celebrate once again

Gather the Spirit of heart and mind
Seeds for the sowing are laid in store
Nurtured in love, and conscience refined
With body and spirit united once more

Gather in peace, gather in thanks
Gather in sympathy now and then
Gather in hope, compassion and strength
Gather to celebrate once again

Gather the Spirit growing in all
Drawn by the moon, and fed by the sun
Winter to Spring, and Summer to Fall
The chorus of life resounding as one

Gather in peace, gather in thanks
Gather in sympathy now and then
Gather in hope, compassion and strength
Gather to celebrate once again

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Welcome

Mark David Watanabe, Co-President
Linda Russell, Co-President

Greeting One Another

Rev. Leslie Takahashi

Lighting of the Chalice

Children and Youth Unison Chalice

Time for All Ages

Rev. Connie Simon

Special Presentation

Marena McGregor
Julia McLeod

Sung Blessing

May your mind be open to new learning, may your lips bring truth into the world/May you in your hearts know love and your hands do the work of justice as you go your way in peace

Honoring This Moment

Rev. Leslie Takahashi

Song

“I Hope You Dance”

Lee Ann Womack and Sons of the Desert)
Laura Zucker

Call for the Offering

Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center
Rick Sterling

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Offertory

“This Boat” (Laura Zucker)

Laura Zucker

Reading of the Ministerial Covenant

Rev. Leslie Takahashi

Rev. Rodney Lemery

Your Ministers want you to know that we have agreed to the following covenant and division of labor and this has been approved by your Board.

We the ministers of Mount Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church, we covenant to work collaboratively and compassionately in all aspects of congregational life. We commit to supporting one another in our ministries, fostering spiritual growth, and serving the congregation and the wider community with integrity, respect, and love.

- We covenant to provide compassionate pastoral care, ensuring a consistent and supportive presence to members and friends of our congregation and the wider community who request our service in times of both joy and sorrow.
- We covenant to inspire the spiritual lives of our congregants through meaningful worship experiences and rites of passage.
- We covenant to nurture the spiritual growth of the congregation by providing a nurturing environment for exploration and practice grounded in the challenges of our times and inclusive of those with traumatic experiences as much as possible.
- We covenant to engage the congregation in meaningful social justice initiatives, living our principles of equity and compassion.
- We covenant to support small group ministries as essential spaces for connection and growth and a path to community.
 - We covenant to promote lifelong faith development for all ages within the congregation.
 - We covenant to collaborate in the administration of the congregation’s affairs, ensuring transparency and efficient management.
- We pledge to continue to grow in our professional relationship with one another to ensure direct engagement with any areas of conflict and to continue to expand our collaborative ministry.

What this means is that the ministerial responsibilities of the congregation will be divided and agreed upon by the ministers annually and submitted to the Board for acceptance.

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Charge to the Minister

Rev. Will McGarvey

Song

“Blessed Assurance” (Fanny Crosby)
(Lyrics by Rodney Lemery)

Blessed assurance, our spirits are bright,
We are united, hearts in the light.
Community whispers, comfort and care,
Echoes of friendship heard everywhere.

This is our story, this is our song,
Gathered together, where we belong.
This is our story, this is our song,
Gathered together, where we belong.

Blessed assurance, warmth in our soul,
Visions of kindness making us whole.
Caring companions lifting their song,
Creating a space where we all belong.

This is our story, this is our song,
Gathered together, where we belong.
This is our story, this is our song,
Gathered together, where we belong.

Stories of friendship, whispers of grace,
We hold each other in this sacred space.
Strength in our joining, bonds that will stay,
Together we journey, guiding our way.

This is our story, this is our song,
Gathered together, where we belong.
This is our story, this is our song,
Gathered together, where we belong.

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Act of Installation

Mark David Watanabe, Co-President
Linda Russell Co-President

Mark David Watanabe: On June 2, 2024, after an internal search process the members of the Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church overwhelmingly voted to call you as an associate minister. Mindful of the history and the heritage of our denomination and of this church, and mindful of their vast promise, we look to you for leadership, vision and guidance alongside our congregation's Lead Minister Rev. Leslie Takahashi. As an associate minister, we ask you to share with us your love, guidance, leadership and vision and encourage our spiritual growth as individuals and as a community of faith in partnership with your colleague Rev. Leslie. Are you prepared to undertake the commitments of this ministry?

Rev. Dr. Rodney Lemery: Yes, I am.

Linda Russell: Rev. Leslie, mindful of the history and the heritage of our denomination and of this church, and mindful of their vast promise, we look to you for leadership, vision and guidance alongside our congregation's Associate Minister Rev. Rodney. As the Lead Minister, we ask you to share with us your love, guidance, leadership and vision and encourage our spiritual growth as individuals and as a community of faith in partnership with your colleague Rev. Rodney. Are you prepared to undertake the commitments of this addition to our shared ministry?

Rev. Leslie Takahashi: Yes, I am.

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Mark David Wantanabe: Will the members of the Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church please rise, in body or in spirit?

[Members rise.]

Members of MDUUC: We, the members of the Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church, have chosen you, Rev. Rodney, to be our associate minister. To you we offer our resources and spiritual energy to share in the creation of a covenant of mutual respect, spiritual growth, compassion and service to others. We will support you as we support one another. We pledge to journey with you in spirit, peace, truth and love. Will you journey with us?

Rev. Dr. Rodney Lemery: I will.

Marena McGregor: Will you educate and counsel, comfort and encourage the children, youth and young adults of this congregation?

Rev. Dr. Rodney Lemery: I will strive to help all of us establish a strong spiritual foundation to guide you throughout your life.

Elsie Mills: Will you engage us in the fight for justice, dismantling systemic oppression by centering Love in our work as we strive toward the Beloved Community?

Rev. Rodney Lemery: I will strive to challenge authority with honesty, to lend my voice to the voiceless, and to champion the cause of those oppressed.

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Rose Barreto: Will you strive to join us in laughter and tears, sharing in our joys and sorrows, and commit to nurturing the well-being of this community to the best of your abilities?

Rev. Dr. Rodney Lemery: I will strive to listen and be among you with an attentive heart and loving spirit.

Will all of you recognize my humanity, care for my material and spiritual well-being as we work to transform ourselves and our world?

Members of MDUUC: We will.

Rev. Dr. Rodney Lemery: With great joy and honor, and a deep sense of responsibility, I accept the ministry to which you have called me. I promise to serve you and our Unitarian Universalist tradition to the best of my abilities. May we be a blessing to one another and to the world.

Linda Russell: I invite all those gathered here to rise in body or spirit and join the members of MDUUC in affirming this installation.

All: We, the gathered congregation of family, friends, colleagues and neighbors, recognize and affirm you, Rev. Rodney, as the Associate Minister of the Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church. We rejoice with you on this occasion and pledge our love and support. May the spirit of love guide this ministry today and all the days to come.

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Presentation of Gift

Charge to the Community

Thomas P. Bonacci C.P.

Closing Song

Go Light the World (Chris Rice)

Neysa Matt, vocals

Rev. Ranwa Hammamy, vocals

Benediction

Rev. Dr. Rodney Lemery

Recessional Hymn*

“Building a New Way” (Music and lyrics by Martha Sandefer)

We are building a new way.

We are building a new way.

We are building a new way,
feeling stronger ev’ry day.

We are building a new way.

We are working to be free.

We are working to be free.

We are working to be free,
[of] hate and greed and jealousy.

We are working to be free.

We can feed our every need.

We can feed our ev’ry need.

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We can feed our ev'ry need,
start with love, that is the seed.
We can feed our ev'ry need.

Peace and justice is our cry.
Peace and justice is our cry.
Peace and justice is our cry,
without these our world will die.
Peace and justice is our cry.

We are building a new way.
We are building a new way.
We are building a new way,
feeling stronger ev'ry day.
We are building a new way.

**All guests are invited to join us in a "singing recessional" to the
post-service reception in Bortin Fellowship Hall*

Participants

Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church

Laura Zucker, Music Leader

Rev. Leslie Takahashi, Lead Minister

Mark David Watanabe, Co-President, Board of Trustees

Linda Russell, Co-President, Board of Trustees

, Justice Council Representative

Marena McGregor: Director of Religious Education

Rev. Ranwa Hammamy, Affiliated Minister

Rev. Connie Simon

Father Thomas P. Bonacci

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Gratitude

Thanks to all our participants in today's service.

Special thanks to Rose Barreto for the artistic
inspiration for our reception decor.

Thanks to Jaynese Davis and Jen Marsh
for support of the reception.

Thanks to all who helped make flowers and
decorations and brought food!!!

Thanks to the children and youth and
our special guest artist who helped with...
—*SHHHHHH!* It's a surprise!!