



Mt Diablo UU Beacon

Transforming Ourselves and Our World

Volume 70, No. 7

February 2023

**SUNDAY SERVICES - 10:15 a.m. PT
9:00 A.M. MEDITATION - ON ZOOM**

**We are worshipping on campus and virtually.
ALL SERVICES ARE LIVESTREAMED!**

Three ways to view:
Live or Recorded on our website:
<https://mduuc.org/service-stream>
Facebook Live: <https://facebook.com/mduuc/>

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5

“Centering Love” - Please join Rev. Rodney, Michael and the worship team for a service exploring the ways in which our faith movement centers the embrace and expression Love as its core foundation.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12

“Everywhere and Nowhere, All at Once”: Join intern minister, Michael Macias, and the worship team as we reflect on the “tugs” and “pulls” of life and why it is important to balance these demands with self-care.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Guest Preacher: We welcome to our pulpit the Rev. Aija Simpson! Stay tuned and look for details on this exciting opportunity to hear form a powerful voice in our movement.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26

“Blessed & Worthy”: Every single day we encounter messages that we are not enough. Lies that tell us some of our bodies are less valuable because of how they look or move. Violence built on beliefs that some lives are inherently less worthy. Our faith knows and does different. Join Rev. Ranwa Hammamy for a service of ritual and healing rooted in the essential truth that all are blessed and worthy.

Vespers

Vespers is a simple circle service of music, meditation and connection led by intern minister, Michael Macias and featuring the music of Jo Gelinias and others. Join us for our midweek Vespers services. February’s theme is “Love” and together, we will reflect on how this powerful source of energy moves within and around us.

Upcoming Services:

- Wednesday, February 1st at 6:30 pm in the Sanctuary and on Zoom
- Wednesday, February 15th at 6:30 pm in the Sanctuary and on Zoom

TAPAS SERVICE

FEBRUARY:
Featuring voices
& perspectives
of LGBTQIA+
members and friends



**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2023
1:00 - 2:00 PM | SANCTUARY**

This spring we will be experimenting with “small bites” afternoon services which will feature services that present different voices for worship.

February’s Service: “Living Outside the Box”

Please join Rev. Rodney, Michael, and the LGBTQ+ members and friends of the congregation for a wonderful celebration of the community from a Queer perspective! This is part of our new Tapas worship offering! The service will also be live-streamed! Please join us as we reflect on the power of the Trans community and their ability to help us all “Live Outside of the Box”! This service will include:

- Spoken Word “Outside the Binary Box” performances by Payton Yochelson and Casey Gardner
- Personal & Historical Witnesses by Michelle Paquette and others
- Communal Candle Ritual and Bubble Blessing by Rev. Rodney
- “True Colors” Musical Performances by Laura Zucker
- And more!

This service welcomes all members and friends!

Leslie's Logos

Expect the unexpected is a truism I think might make many of us roll our eyes these days.

As we move out of a month of extreme weather and more infectious illness, I know I for one am tired of these kinds of expectations—negative, unwanted surprises.

Yet another kind of “unexpected” has also been part of our lives and that is the unexpected joys and the ways that we have risen to occasions when we might not have. As we enter this fourth year affected by the global pandemic, this year of extreme winter weather, this year when more around us are affected by the inflated costs of our area, we actually have a lot to celebrate.

I see those raised eyebrows.

Yes. The way this community has continued to care for its members despite impacted health care, more health threats, more loss and less mobility. The ways we have found to worship, some of which actually suit our contemporary lifestyles better than the ways we were worshipping before.

The continued generosity of this community, in life and after death which has allowed us to continue to thrive. The expansion of our religious education program which continues under new leadership and with the commitment of our members and friends. The legacies which have lasted despite change. The people who keep stepping up to serve. The adaptability of my staff colleagues who keep going the extra miles.

I think all of this positions us well for the future. Even though what that future is remains a little hazy and hard to focus on with all this...unexpectedness. So I am grateful that I will be taking sabbatical in February to both rest from these truly demanding years and also to focus on what is before us. In addition to providing some fodder for our strategic direction process, I think it will be an excellent chance to realize how much “unexpected good” has come our way.

I look forward to my return in March and our continued journey together.

In faith and perseverance,

Leslie

Rev. Leslie Takahashi serves as the Lead Minister of the congregation. She is now using the email leslie@mduuc.org or you can call her at (925)-914-7373 ext. 112



Rev. Leslie Takahashi serves as the Lead Minister of the congregation. At the time of this writing, it is planned that she will be on sabbatical in February.

Marena McGregor, DRE

Happy February!

I was chatting with a friend recently and they asked me what aspect of church was most important to me. My answer was our multigenerational



community. Multigenerational programming and activities play such a crucial role in building and strengthening a church community. They provide opportunities for people of all ages to come together, share their talents and interests, and learn from one another.

One of the biggest benefits of multigenerational programming is that it helps to break down barriers between different age groups and promote connection. Children and teenagers learn to see older adults as valuable role models, and older adults have the chance to learn new skills and new ways of thinking from younger generations.

Speaking from personal experience, I have learned so much from the adults and elders in this community throughout my youth that has extended beyond the church walls. A memorable example that stands out to me are the driving lessons Jo Gelinis gave me as a teen. Her kind, calm and patient guidance helped support and reframe the same lessons I was simultaneously learning from my parents, grandparents, and driver's education courses. To this day, I hear her advice in my head when I start to brake or notice cars pulling into my blindspots. So much of her advice about taking things slow and being aware of my surroundings has applied to other areas of my life and I will be forever grateful for her teachings.

I hope you all will join us for more multigenerational programming at MDUUC. I am so excited about our upcoming All Ages Valentine's Ball on Saturday, February 11 at 6pm where we will have the opportunity to come together as a community and celebrate the spirit of love and connection.

Sincerely,

Marena McGregor

Open Womens' Group

The Open Womens' Group will meet virtually on Thursday, February 2 at 10:30 am via Zoom. This is our annual February book review where we receive recommendations for the coming year. Please be on time and have a book ready to talk about, even if you didn't read it in the past year. The Zoom link is on the church calendar. For more information, please call Terry McNally.

Rev. Rodney Lemery

A Perspective On Covid

As a minister who has an over 20 year previous experience in the field of epidemiology, the COVID-19 pandemic has been a enlightening experience for me. On one hand, I have been proud of our collective efforts to protect one another, even when the rest of the world may have given up. This has been a powerful representation of living our Unitarian Universalist values as a community. Unfortunately, on the other, I have been so disappointed in the world-wide response that from my vantage point sacrifices community care for individualism without considering the concept of consent.

When discussing sexual health for example, we emphasize the concept of enthusiastic consent frequently. This is the idea that one should look for the presence of a YES rather than the absence of a NO. It is the idea that sexual risk can be mitigated through open and affirming dialog between all involved with said activity only occurring after complete and enthusiastic consensus is reached. This might look like a discussion about what contraception will be used, what is the current Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) status of the parties involved, or what activities will or will not be agreed-upon. These kinds of consent discussions can be instrumental in navigating the changing landscape of sexual health.

As a queer man who grew up during the AIDS pandemic, I can't help but see parallels between the HIV pandemic and COVID-19. For example, we know that condom use is an effective risk mitigation technique for STIs, including HIV, but we also knew that it is not always possible, not always accommodated and not always desired.

Similarly, In the realm of COVID-19 pandemic, the use of face masks is one of the most effective strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19. According to a systematic review and meta-analysis published in The Lancet, the use of face masks can reduce the risk of transmission by 85%. However, we also know that this mitigation strategy is not always desired, not always possible and certainly in this age, is not always accommodated.

The idea of enthusiastic consensual discussions is nuanced further with the the advent of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) treatments for HIV like Descovy, which allows us to broaden our focus on risk mitigation beyond just condom use. Similarly, with the advent of COVID-19 vaccines and rapid antigen testing, our focus on risk mitigation has now expanded beyond just the face masking and isolation requirements of 2020.

Even with these improved health care strategies, one thing that hasn't changed is the importance of making informed

decisions in a consensual ways. I have been referring to this as "spending risk dollars" in responsible ways. The process of spending our risk dollars, begins with "knowing your status"!

In the realm of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, risk mitigation begins with knowing your status and getting tested regularly. Similarly, in the realm of COVID-19 pandemic, risk mitigation begins with knowing your COVID-19 status and getting tested regularly. This informs one aspect of how you may choose to spend your risk dollars. Knowing my HIV status allows me to take precautions to protect not only my own health, but also the health of my sexual partners. Similarly, Knowing my COVID-19 status allows me to take precautions to protect not only my own health, but also the health of my community. This can be seen in practice during our Sunday worship services. Every member who chooses to unmask during the service is asked to take a rapid test beforehand. This is done because it is not always possible to ask every member, friend, or visitor present in the space on a given Sunday for enthusiastic consent. While rapid tests are not perfect, research shows that when used in this manner, they are an effective risk mitigation strategy.

As congregants, we all have the choice of how to spend our risk-dollars, but we do not have the right to spend the risk dollars of others; especially when the risks go beyond a simple and easily cleared respiratory virus. We now know this is not the case of the SARS-CoV-2 virus (the virus that causes COVID-19). There can be real long-lasting effects from even a mild case of COVID-19. Additionally, COVID-19 remains a leading cause of death in the United States; third only to Heart disease and Cancers respectively.

These facts coupled with our UU values, calls us each to be enthusiastically consensual in our interactions. This means that including people at a gathering where a meal is going to be served, unmasked singing is going to happen or other higher risk activities might occur should be done consensually where if one or more people do not agree to the norms of the space, then the space is adjusted to accommodate. In a sense, our individualism is sacrificed for the greater love of our fellow congregant.

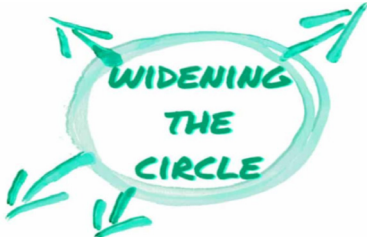
The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of risk mitigation strategies such as face mask use, rapid testing, and vaccines, as well as the importance of making informed and consensual decisions about risk. By loving one another enthusiastically and following our UU principles we can ensure that we are living our UU values of caring for one another while we effectively protect ourselves and our communities.

Living into love,

Rev. Dr. Rodney Lemery

(References available upon request - rodney@mduuc.org)

Widening the Circle



Widening the Circle of Concern:

What's the Connection Between the Widening the Circle of Concern (WCC) Report Recommendations and the 8th Principle Implementation?

In summary, it is the right and left hand staying **connected**.

The WCC Report provides recommendations to guide our process of dismantling organizational systemic racism and other forms of oppression in our church. It calls us to look at the ways we operate as an organization. MDUUC operates in a national culture that is anchored in white supremacy and MDUUC is not immune to internal systems, policies and processes that have unintended consequences and oppressive impacts. Working through a review of our **internal policies and processes is the work of the WCC**.

One of the chapters in the WCC report is entitled Living our Values in the World. The Social Justice Council and Racial Justice Team are specifically focused on supporting our individual and collective action to Live Our Values.

The 8th Principle is all about Living Our Values in the World and our external focus.

November 20, 2022, the congregation voted to approve the 8th Principle:

We covenant to affirm and promote journeying toward spiritual wholeness by building a diverse, multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

We joined 232 other congregations and groups who are now 8-Principle UU organizations.

MDUUC has been committed to and taken action to eliminate racism and other oppressive systems in our community for decades. Each week we receive invitations to live our values in our community, opportunities where we can “walk the talk.” MDUUC collaborates with community organizations with similar values led by Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). Being accountable to BIPOC-led partners includes

centering their voices, following their leadership, and providing support for their priorities. It calls on us to be intellectually humble enough to remember there is more than one way to accomplish something, our way is not the only right way, and to have faith in the process. **The 8th Principle memorializes what MDUUC is already doing. It also calls on us to expand and deepen both our own internal work of uncovering our unconscious biases and our commitment to live our values in our interpersonal actions.**

Another way we plan to keep the right and left hands connected is to **actively share the learnings from our internal WCC work with the external learnings of the Racial Justice Team**. We will succeed with **your participation**, and we need you for a wide range of activities including:

- Input on Beacon Articles
- Working with Councils on their own WCC implementation plans
- Developing mini education programs that help us all be our best as we live our values.

Are you interested in learning more? Up for spiritual and personal growth opportunities? Looking for ways to live your values that you can do from home in small doses? Please let me know at wcc@mduuc.org.

Appointed by MDUUC Board of Trustees to lead the strategic goal to implement the recommendations of the Widening the Circle of Concern report throughout the church, Lynn Baskett writes this monthly update on the process and progress.

Widening the Circle of Concern Report: For written and audio version of the Report: <https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/cic/widening>

Article II

The group commissioned to look at Article II of the Unitarian Universalist Association Board of Trustees has released their report. You can find the report and the background on the why and how of this at the Article II Commission webpage which can be found at <https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission>. We will be looking for opportunities to discuss this as a community. The Commission suggests that you read this report, especially the proposed language a couple of times before responding.

General Assembly

UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PITTSBURGH • JUNE 21 - 25, 2023

The General Assembly of the UUA is where we:

- Connect with friends and colleagues, new and old
- Conduct the business of the Association
- Explore the theological underpinnings of our faith

GA 2023 will be in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania from June 21-25. Who can attend? Any member or friend of Unitarian Universalism! You!

Register now to attend in person or virtually--\$400 for adults, \$300 for High School Youths, emergin gadults (18-24) and retired and candidate ministers; full virtual registration is \$250. And remember that rates go up on March 1 and again on May 1.

New this year? Join our First Timers Caucus! If this will be your first ever in-person GA, use the promo code WELCOME to reduce your Adult in-person registration by \$100. One hundred spots are available. Cannot be combined with other financial promo codes.

You can also be a volunteer in exchange for free registration, and financial support is also available. See GA website for full information at (uua.org/ga).



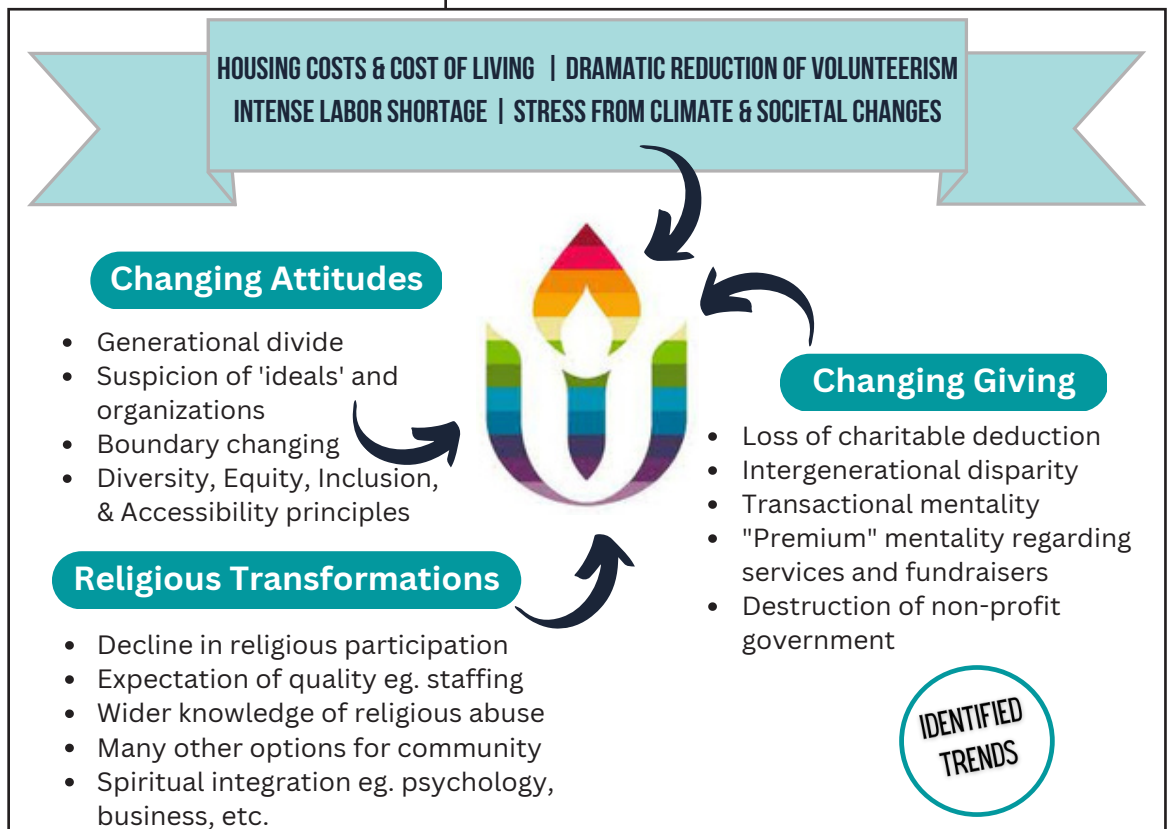
Save the Date: Fellowship Gathering

Please mark your calendars for 4 pm on Saturday, March 18 when we will have our annual Fellowship Event. This is a time to celebrate our longest-serving members AND our Legacy givers and one another. The opportunity to gather is still so precious and let's make the most of this event!

Strategic Direction

Reverend Leslie is on sabbatical this month. In addition to much needed rest, she is exploring 2023, cutting-edge spiritual and religious models as a part of a larger conversation about strategic direction.

The graphic to the right delineates current trends as identified and impacting UU congregations.





Community Circles

Searching for deeper connections and engagement with others at MDUUC? Check out our Community Circle Groups.

What are Community Circles?

Community Circles are part of the broader Small Group Ministry found in many Unitarian Universalist congregations around the country. A Community Circle comprises 4-8 friends and members of the congregation, plus two co-facilitators, who get the discussions started on a topic of the week. The discussion follows a format designed to promote mindful listening, speaking from the heart without interruption or cross talk, as members share on the topic for the meeting.

Through sharing thoughts and experiences on the topics, newcomers get to know a handful of members of the congregation, and long-time members get to know friends at a deeper level. These conversations are intended to promote community-building, rather than intellectual exercises (and there are no quizzes!)

When do Community Circles begin?

The next sessions are beginning in January and will meet once a week for 6-7 weeks. Please see below for upcoming session information (with more to come) and register on our website:

- Thursdays, in-person, beginning **February 2** in Rossmoor – 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
- Tuesdays, in-person, beginning **February 7** at MDUUC – 7:00 to 9:00 pm
- Mondays, virtual, beginning **April 3** on Zoom – 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Whether you've participated in many Circles, or this is your first time hearing about them, we welcome you. Submit your information and interest using the e-form at <https://mduuc.org/connect/community-circle/> or email michael@mduuc.org with any questions.

DEVIL MOUNTAIN COFFEE HOUSE PRESENTS

'Lifeline'
CD RELEASE

SPECIAL PERFORMANCE



LAURA ZUCKER

Friday, February 17, 2023
MDUUC | 8:00 - 10:00 pm
Tickets available at dmch.mduuc.org.



Devil Mountain Coffee House

Friday, February 17 at 8:00 pm in Bortin Hall (in person)

Songs born of a hard-won perspective and a positive spin, MDUUC's very own Laura Zucker writes songs with powerful yet sensitive lyrics, evocative, infectious melodies and arrangements that cut straight to the heart.

Swing by Bortin Hall on Friday, February 17 at 8 pm for great music, great company, and to celebrate the release of her new album, *Lifeline*. Visit dmch.mduuc.org to reserve your tickets!

Laura is a 3-time Kerrville NewFolk finalist, 5-time West Coast Songwriters Association Best Song of the Year, FalconRidge Emerging Artist, SWRFA Official Artist. She is also the author of the #1 best-selling book "SongC.R.A.F.T., Writing Songs In Your Authentic Voice." For more information, visit <http://laurazucker.com>.

Connections 102 - You, Covenants and Caring for Community

Saturday, February 18 at 1:00 pm in Bortin Hall (in person)

Please join lead minister Reverend Leslie and Justice minister Reverend Rodney as they share with you some Unitarian Universalist history and our principles. This class is designed for visitors and people who may not have a strong foundation of the UU faith or who may want to know more about our long history and tradition.

Note: This class is for those who have taken Connections 101.

HATs OFF! Honors, Accolades, Thanks!



We encourage gratitude and appreciation throughout MDUUC. Send “short and sweet” admissions to thanks@mduuc.org.

- To Jim Lincoln, Place Council convener, and Doug Tamo, Chair of the Facilities Committee, for guiding the long awaited and now completed, ADA compliant shower in the Gilmartin Building. And, of course, to all those who supported the project financially.
- To all of our drivers who helped others during the extreme weather in January.
- To the Board of Trustees for all their work on the forums and congregational meeting in January.
- To Doug Tamo for his amazing leadership and dedication of time to repairing a leak our campus.
- To Emily De Falla, Chris Carter, and the other members of the Financial Stewardship Task Force.
- To all who have been assisting members in ill health or suffering a loss at the beginning of this year.
- To Worship Associates Sharon Sobatta and Les Polgar who are ending their time of service.
- To Coming of Age mentors and all the families supporting our Coming of Age families.
- To Kate Newkirk, Kevin Hsieh, and the Middle School group for their work on the snack table.
- For all those who helped with our first Justice Book Sale.

In Memoriam

- Cards for the Family of Betty Bates can be sent to Cynthia Bates, 301 Merganser Pl., Davis CA 95616. Betty's obituary and an email for writing messages can be found here: <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/eastbaytimes/name/betty-bates-obituary?id=38327549>.



Message from Your Board of Trustees

Call - “Tell me what democracy looks like!”

Response - “This is what democracy looks like!”

Thus was the chant at Civic Park on Monday, 11/16/2023, when 40+ of us showed up for the traditional witness, in celebration of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. We were from MDUUC, Interfaith Council, members of the community, joined by Congressman Mark DeSaulnier. We have been told ours was the only public witness for MLK in Contra Costa County that day!

At the time of this writing, we are not sure how the vote will come out on our revision to the Bylaws. But what we do know is that our tradition of democratic engagement has continued throughout this process. The Board named the revision as a goal two years ago. Due to the pandemic, the efforts slowed down, as our focus went to other things, but the work never stopped. We have given periodic updates. There was written notice with specifics in December, and there has been plenty of opportunity for people to ask questions, to engage in discourse, through Forums, for members to share their questions and concerns with each other and the Board. This is what democracy looks like!

Together We Rise is another opportunity for us to raise our collective voices in a process that will be unfolding this spring. We are going to be rolling out ways in which we will share ideas and thoughts about how we define the values important to us and then, how we express them. This will be a process we roll out over the next 18 months or so. And we want to hear from as many as possible, because we need know what makes you stay in this church community, what makes this your church home, how does this community reflect you and the values most important to you? This is what democracy look like!

General Assembly 2023 – our annual national conference for Unitarian Universalists, June 21 -25, in Pittsburgh, PA, is another opportunity to engage, in person or virtually. This year the theme is **Faithfully Becoming...** One of the key discussions that will occur during GA is a robust discussion on changes to Article II, the covenant of our principles and purposes that are the foundation of our faith. This has been a two year study that began with theological panel discussions, moving to attendee focus groups at GA in 2021, then drafting language that was put forth for input during sessions at GA 2022. Please join us for our continued discussions on the proposed changes. This is what democracy looks like!

Your participation, your engagement, is what makes ours a unique faith and MDUUC our community. As your Board, we look forward to creating the next direction with you – members and friends - because together we rise!

-Your Board

Just-In-Time for Volunteering

Volunteering is essential to the long term survival of this beloved community. Please consider how you can donate your gifts of time and talent if you have not yet been able to do so.

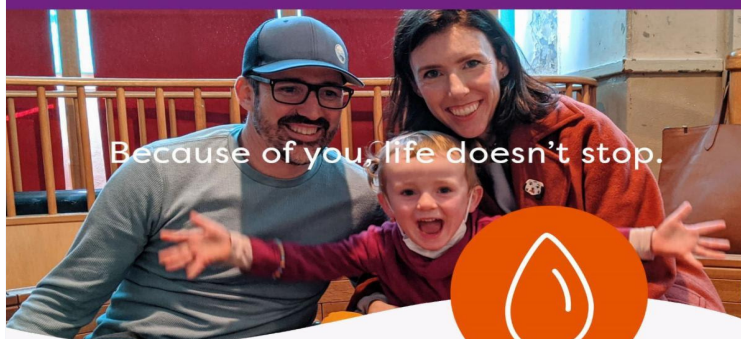
We are also revising our Council system. If you have an interest in a particular area of MDUUC, consider attending one of the upcoming Council meetings to be part of the conversation. We will be thinking about different ways we can structure volunteerism at MDUUC.

Please visit our bulletin board in Bortin Hall, or email just-in-time@mduuc.org to get started!

Just In Time for Volunteering 1-hour & 1-time Opportunities

- Dance helpers! The Youth and Young Adults are having a dance on Valentine's Day and we need you to help spread the love.
- Party planners wanted for our Fellowship Event in March!
- Knitters unite! We are looking to rekindle our post-service knitting ministry to make prayer shawls and warm caps for members and new babies in our midst!
- Want an easy way to support our incredible youth and families? Volunteer to bring snacks for our weekly youth and Middle School gatherings!
- Chalice lighters—are you itching to light the chalice? Let us know!

BLOOD DRIVE



Red Cross Blood Drives at MDUUC
First and Third Mondays
Time 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
By appointment only at [Bloodhero.com](https://www.bloodhero.com)

Justice Lunch

Sunday, Feb. 26 from 12 Noon to 1 pm in Bortin Hall (in person)

Please join Rev. Rodney and DRE Marena McGregor as we gather together to reflect on helping each other, create hygiene kits for our upcoming community shower program, and share a meal outdoors. Lunch will be provided by our Economic, Food and Housing team.

If justice activities surrounding economics, food or housing are a passion of yours, please consider joining others of like mind and heart. We welcome you to our next at our next Economic, Food and Housing team meeting at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, February 28 on Zoom!



Save the Date: MDUUC Camping Weekend Bothe Napa State Park in Napa Valley, April 1 and 2 (Saturday night only).

We've reserved the group site at Bothe Napa State Park, which is nestled in the live oak woodland between Calistoga and Napa. The group campground has drinking water, tent sites and restrooms. The site can accommodate up to 30 people and 10 cars or smaller RVs (in parking area).

Activities include walking, hiking, enjoying good company, relishing good food, reading, sky and star gazing. Nearby activities include open space exploring, historical interpretation, biking and wine tasting.

For more info on Bothe Napa State Park: <https://napaoutdoors.org/parks/bothe-napa-valley-state-park/>

To sign-up or for more info on camp weekend contact Peter Morse: petermorse@gmail.com.

Note that the park does have nearby single family and RV campsites as well as cabins and yurts though weekend reservations are very competitive. To check availability: <https://www.reservecalifornia.com>

Work for Justice



American Indian Two Spirit Powwow

Saturday, Feb. 4 from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm (in person)

The Queer affinity group at MDUUC, Joyfully Ourselves, and the Racial Justice Ministry Team are sponsoring a ride/share/meet-up for the Bay Area American Indian Two-Spirit Powwow on Saturday, Feb. 4! Powwows are all-day events but we will be meeting at MDUUC at 10:30 am and carpooling into San Francisco where we will enjoy and celebrate Native food and culture until 2:30 pm before heading back to MDUUC! If you wish to join us, please register here: <https://mymduuc.breezechms.com/>

UU Justice Ministry of California Tijuana Trip

UUJM will be partnering with 2 other UU organizations, Casas de Luz and UU Rise (UU Refugee & Immigration Services and Education), in a homebuilding trip to Tijuana. This is a volunteer-led trip where we will be building a home over the course of 2 days in Tijuana, Mexico alongside the family that will occupy it. Then, we will wrap up the experience with a visit to the border and Friendship Park. No construction experience is necessary, there will be craftsmen onsite guiding the building process and all ages are welcome.

The trip is scheduled for Thursday, April 13th through Sunday, April 16th, 2023. UUJM will be holding a virtual organizational meeting on Saturday, January 28th from 10 am to 3 pm. This meeting will also include a detailed presentation on the history of immigration and its current state today. Details may be found on the UUJM CA website: <https://uujmca.org/learningcenter/pilgrimagestotheborder/> Please plan to join us for the organizational meeting.

First Friday Film Series

1st film screening on Friday, February 3 at 6:30 pm in the Children's Chapel (in person)

With a focus on climate justice, please join us for an upcoming series of movies, called **PERSPECTIVES**. It will be the first Friday of each month 6:30 pm. The goals of this discussion are many: to invite us into discussion and reflection on not only the impact of the climate on us but on the impact, we can have on our world. Our hope is to encourage us to widen our understanding of the impact of our actions, actions that we can change. This is an issue for all of us.

PERSPECTIVES will look at these issues of climate through multigenerational and multicultural lenses. The series will continue through the spring, first Fridays, and we hope you will join us. Let's talk. Let's share. Let's learn.

February 3: "Being the Change"

This documentary follows a scientist from the personal recognition of climate issues, through active involvement and investment of himself and his family, interacting as part of community, and the journey of the self in using the power we have as individuals to heal our planet.

March 3: "Beasts of the Southern Wild"

This is the story of six-year-old Hushpuppy, a Black child growing up with her mentally and physically ill father in her bayou community. The Bayou is isolated from the rest of the Delta since the levee was built upstream, catastrophically impacted by melting ice caps. We see the world through her eyes – watching her father's health decline, the ferocity of community, driven in search of the mother, the experience of invisibility.

Register for both of these great offerings online at <https://md-uuc.org/mduuc-calendar/>.



Ongoing Programming

Remember the best way to connect to virtual events is to go to our calendar at <https://mduuc.org/mduuc-calendar/> where you can find locations and links for on-going events and registration for those events which require it.

Friday Meditation

2nd & 4th Fridays at 10:00 am. Please join us for this practice which is led by Rev. Leslie Takahashi and involves a guided meditation, a time for quiet reflection and a chance to state an intention for the day. All in 30 minutes to launch you into your day. The meditations are also available under the Meditation section of the website. Friday morning meditation are live and archived!

Elder Journey

Elder Journey is a spirited conversation about life issues and the perspectives of older folks. Please join Rev. Leslie and the Elder Journey Community. Elder Journey meets on Wednesdays at 10:30 am. Elder Journey meets virtually on the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays, is hybrid (in person or virtual) on the 2nd & 4th Wednesdays

Vespers

Vespers is a mid-week recharge for the spirit and a chance to connect to community - 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 6:30 pm. You can join via Zoom for our Livestream or in Person on the 1st and 3rd weeks of the month. (register via the calendar for in-person). This is a great place to check in with your spirit and some friendly community members.

Yoga

Mondays at 7:00 pm. (currently virtual). The session begins with gentle integrated yoga asanas and stretches, breath work exercises, relaxation techniques and opportunities to set neural pathways for happiness that include laughter yoga. A 20-minute guided relaxation meditation follows.

YRUU, High School Youth Group

YRUU, High School Youth Group Sundays, from 12:00-1:30 pm. Please check the Children & Youth pages at <https://mduuc.org/children-and-youth/> for the calendar of events. Can also email Marena@mduuc.org for more information.

QiGong

Would you like to experience increased vitality, less stress, and to explore meditation through movement? Join facilitator Elaine Bush on the patio each Saturday at 10:30 am. Drops ins are welcome!

Writer's Room

Thursdays, 3:15 to 4:15 pm in the Oak Room (in-person only) Do you enjoy writing? Want a space to hone your practice, stretch your creativity, and set aside intentional time to write in community with others? Then grab your writing tools of choice and come join the MDUUC Writer's Room! This is a space to work on your current creative endeavors- sharing optional. Hosted by Laura Zucker and Penny Hackett-Evans. Questions? Contact laurazucker212@gmail.com.

Middle School Youth Group

MSYG, Middle School Youth Group, meets on the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays, from 6:00 - 7:00 pm. Please check the Children & Youth pages at <https://mduuc.org/children-and-youth/> for the calendar of events. Can also email Marena@mduuc.org for more information.

WomenTalk

2nd Wednesdays at 6:30 pm on Zoom (virtual). WomenTalk is a space for women interested in exploring their identity as female-identified people. This is a supportive space in which we deal with matters of the spirit and heart and create a place to ask deep questions of one another.

12 Step for UUs

Tuesdays at 5:30 pm. see the calendar for the Zoom link. Join us as we share our experience, strength, and hope with one another at MDUUC. No matter what addiction you have, you are welcome to join us as we engage in recovery as Unitarian Universalists.

Grief Group

1st Friday of the month at 12:00 pm. Monthly grief group in a drop-in format available in-person and virtual. This is a way that those who have suffered a loss can continue to gather support.

Transitions and Loss Group

3rd Saturday of the month at 11:00 am on Zoom (virtual). This is a group for those who are either grieving the loss of a loved one or experiencing a major unsettling life transition. .

Loving Ourselves as We Dismantle Our Biases

4th Wednesdays at 7:30 pm on Zoom (virtual). Members and Friends of MDUUC who identify as white* are invited to this gathering to create a sacred space where we can engage in what decentering whiteness means especially in a culture whiteness is almost always the center. This year we take inspiration from the newly published workbook "Do the Work " by W. Kamau Bell and Kate Schatz. We will use this workbook and a variety of social media content to explore what it means to know our own biases and how we might love ourselves more so that we better embrace and celebrate the diversity of others.

* This space is specifically for people who identify as white.

Black, Indigenous and People of Color Caucus*

3rd Saturdays at 4:00 pm in the Oak Room and on Zoom (hybrid)

Members and friends of MDUUC who identify as People of Color are invited to join this gathering where we will create a sacred space of sharing and power. Each month, we will come together to reflect on our experiences as people of color in Unitarian Universalism and in our larger world. Using our stories, our wisdom and our truths as our guide, we will collaborate on a vision of what it means to be “exuberantly multicultural” - within and beyond MDUUC’s walls. This gathering will be facilitated by Rev. Leslie Takahashi. We meet monthly with alternating times- please email michael@mduuc.org to be apprised of our scheduled meeting times. Get in touch and learn more!

**This space is specifically for people who identify as People of Color.

Emerging Adults

MDUUC’s Emerging Adults gather to learn new life skills, make new connections, enjoy good company, nurture their spirits and have fun! They range in age from 18-24. This group supports each other as they navigate life transitions from post high school into adulthood. Stay in touch with MDUUC’s Emerging Adult Events through our Emerging Adult email list, contact Marena@mduuc.org to be added. Whether it’s a new skill, game night, or a delicious meal, the emerging adult group is the place to be!

Young Adult Group

The Young Adult Group at MDUUC is for adults age 24 to 35. This group provides an opportunity for people to gather, meet and do fun things together. To find out about planned gatherings and to be added to the mailing lists, contact marena@mduuc.org.

MDUUC Bike Group

The MDUUC Bike Group holds a ride on the third Saturday of each month, unless other plans are communicated. All levels of ability are welcome. We meet at the church at 10:00 am. and carpool or ride to our starting location. We have an email list and communicate our plans before each ride. If you would like to be on that list, please email Jim Hughell at jhughell@hotmail.com

Social Justice Movie & Book Read

Check calendar for details.

Open Women’s Group

1st Thursdays at 10:30 am on Zoom (virtual). This monthly group gathers to hear topics and presenters and to share in community. Please see the calendar at mduuc.org or email admin@mduuc.org to be added to our mailing list.

Monthly Caregiver Support Group

1st Saturdays at 11:00 am on Zoom (virtual). Caregiving for a loved one can be challenging. Our drop-in support group meets the first Saturday from 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. monthly on Zoom. Men’s Breakfast

Men’s Breakfast

2nd Saturdays at 9:00 am in the Owl Room or on Zoom (hybrid). This is a group for those who are male-identified to gather for conversation and to share life experiences. To find out about the next meeting, please see the calendar.

Joyfully Ourselves**

3rd Thursdays at 6:30 pm on Zoom (virtual). Rev. Rodney, LGBTQ+ identified congregants and friends collectively explore some of the internalized great traits and some often problematic ones. We use social media, movies and games to spend time together in solidarity and compassion with ourselves and others.

**This is a space for LGBTQIA+ identified individuals

Tuesday and Thursday Lunch Groups

Thursdays at 12:00 on Zoom A friendly drop in virtual group.

Did you know? MDUUC now has a space for scattering the remains of beloved companion animals in the Robert deVight Legacy Garden.

March Beacon Deadline:
Beacon deadline is February 15
at 10:00 am

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ALL-AGES VALENTINE'S BALL

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11
6 - 9 PM | BORTIN HALL

GATSBY THEMED PARTY -
FORMAL ATTIRE ENCOURAGED

PAY AS YOU CAN
"LOVE" DONATION

MOCKTAILS & SNACKS
AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

EVENT WELCOMES
FRIENDS OF ALL AGES

DJ AND DANCING

VISIT [MDUUC.ORG/VALENTINEBALL-2023/](https://www.mduuc.org/valentineball-2023/) FOR MORE INFORMATION