



# Mt Diablo UU Beacon

*Transforming Ourselves and Our World*

Volume 73, No. 4

April 2026

**SUNDAY SERVICE TIME — 10:30 A.M.**  
**SUNDAY MEDITATION — 9:00 A.M. ON ZOOM**

**ALL SERVICES ARE LIVESTREAMED!**

- <https://mduuc.org/service-stream/>
- [https://youtube.com/ — @MDUUC](https://youtube.com/@MDUUC)

**SUBSCRIBE TO OUR PODCAST!**

Search for “MDUUC Beacon Light” on Spotify

**JOIN US ON BLUE SKY — @mduuc.bsky.social**

## SUNDAY, APRIL 5

**We Rise: An Easter Celebration.** Join us for this service of joyful celebration of the ways that new life can spring from old. Just as the rich humus of that which has gone before provides the nourishment and energy for the sprig and the sapling, we celebrate the ancient traditions which we recast anew each generation. This will be a service with the gifts of music as the MDUUC Chalice Choir shares their gifts and we will also hear the voices of our children! Followed by our ever-joyful Easter Egg Hunt, this is a community tradition not to be missed.

## SUNDAY, APRIL 12

**Whose Story Is This?** During his time as a jail chaplain, Rev. Rodney sat with people the world had stopped listening to and found something unexpected: their stories were mirrors. This service explores deep listening as a spiritual practice that dissolves the wall between “us” and “them,” and asks a simple but demanding question: when did you last let someone else’s story actually change you?

## SUNDAY, APRIL 19

**75 Years of Commitment.** A congregation is like a wave-- with a certain shape which may change ever so slightly as the landscapes around shift. Some of the drops of water change and some remain the same. Along the way, the path is shaped by the individual and collective acts and commitments of all of us drops. Come and join us for this glorious day as we hear from those who have helped to map the course of this beloved community. With \*special guests!\*

## SUNDAY, APRIL 26

**When Love Looks Like Justice and Justice Looks Like Love.** Join Ron Ahnen and Rev. Leslie Takahashi for this reflection on love in a time of polycrisis. In this service, Ron Ahnen will share reflects on his observations and participation in the actions of protest and mutual aid in Minneapolis this last January. Rev. Leslie will talk about how this translates in the caring practices of a community.

**Join Us For Easter & Our Annual Egg Hunt**  
**Sunday, April 5 — Egg Hunt will start after service**



**EASTER EGG HUNT**  
Join the fun and search for hidden treasures  
laughter, adventure, and sweet surprises await in  
this joyful Easter tradition for all ages!

**SUNDAY, APRIL 5**

**We need the village to make the Easter Egg Hunt a success!**  
We welcome donations and volunteers. Could you help?  
Email [justintime@mduuc.org](mailto:justintime@mduuc.org)

- Donate stuffed eggs with toddler-friendly, allergy-free treats and bring them in by Friday, April 6, or Sunday AM.
- Help keep MDUUC green by minimizing plastic and donating items to fill the eggs we already have.
- Volunteers are needed to help supervise children, set boundaries, hide eggs, prevent early hunters, and assist with cleanup.

## Wanting Worship Later on Sundays? Save these dates—April 26 & May 31

Can’t do a morning service? Try a gathering in the afternoon! We know that times change and habits do too! We miss seeing our members and friends who have new Sunday morning obligations and schedules and we are experimenting with alternative times for a once a month service in an alternative format. Next year we hope to offer an afternoon or evening service once a month to let us connect with even more in our community! Watch for announcements of gatherings coming on April 26 and May 31 including spaces of music, contemplation and fun. Interested in helping support these services? Let Rev. Leslie Takahashi know.

### Congregational Forum

**Join us on May 17, 2026, 12:30–1:30 p.m.**

Come and join the discussion and hear important updates from the Board, the ministers, and committees.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84473196236>

**Save The Date! Sunday, June 7**

**Annual Congregational Meeting at 10:30 a.m.**

Come and exercise the democratic process! We will vote on important matters discussed

**...and Chili Cook-Off at 1:00 p.m.!**

**More details to come!**

## Leslie's Logos



I remember swimming out a bit too far when I was an older elementary kid playing off the Jersey shore and having my whole goal to get to the point where the waves would help me in. I struggled pretty hard so by the time I got there, I was glad to let the power of the waters push me in.

Why is a community like a wave? No really, this is not a joke. A community is like a wave because it is made up of drops of water and has some properties. For example, a wave moves and often it has the power to carry people and other things because of that power. A wave is also a shape of beauty—dancing as it does with the shore and the sky. A wave can cause fear if out of control and many, many people have been soothed by the sound and the sight of the waves for at most times they are predictable, regular and soothing.

The shape of the wave might fluctuate—some waves are tall and some are squat, some have that textbook C-curve and some look more like chocolate kisses left in the sun. Yet what they have in common is that they travel and they have carrying power and they are made up of drops of water which combined are much more powerful than they would be alone.

Some of us are like my pre-adolescent self, needing that boost and the push of the community, the wave. Others ride the waves mostly for fun and pleasure and to learn new skills, such as leadership (kinda like surfing these days, truth be told!).

Yet what is also true and magical to me about waves is that the same wave never reaches a beach again. Each time it breaks into the frothy dance on the sand, the water drops are different though many of them may be the same as the last wave. Yet the power and the carrying and the beauty continues. True religious community is like this too—much may change including location and people and yet they provides that carrying capacity, that beauty and that persistent dependability.

As we celebrate 75 years of this congregation in the world, we celebrate many drops who make the wave.

In faith and perseverance, Leslie

Leslie

Rev. Leslie serves as the community's Lead Minister. Please note Leslie's email is not working correctly. If you write and don't get an answer, feel free to call at 925-934-3135 extension 12.

You can follow her on BlueSky ([leslietakahashi@bsky.social](mailto:leslietakahashi@bsky.social)) and on [Substack](#). To make an appointment with Rev. Leslie, visit <https://calendly.com/revlesliemeet>.

## Marena McGregor, DRE



Greetings and Happy Spring!  
As summer approaches we have an exciting opportunity for children and youth at MDUUC!

**Chalice Music Summer Camp – Save the Date!**  
**Registration is now open — please spread the word and invite friends!**

Save the dates for a week full of music, movement, and joy! Chalice Music Summer Camp will run June 8 through June 12, ending with a special performance on June 12. This is a wonderful opportunity for children and youth to build confidence, creativity, and community through music.

### **Camp Options (Suggested Donation, \$150 per child)**

- Morning Session (9am–12pm) – Ages 3–6
- Afternoon Session (1pm–4pm) – Rising 2nd–8th graders
- Camp Counselor Track – Rising 9th–12th graders  
A meaningful leadership opportunity for teens who want to grow their skills, mentor younger campers, and be part of the magic behind the scenes. Email [Marena@mduuc.org](mailto:Marena@mduuc.org) to apply.

### **Support Our Youth: Coffee Hour Fundraiser**

Our youth group is fundraising, and you can help by contributing to coffee hour food donations. Donations can include home-baked goods to be served on Sunday, non-perishable individually wrapped snacks, or gift cards to purchase bagels, donuts, or other treats.

Every contribution helps support youth programming and leadership development. To donate or ask questions, please email [Marena@mduuc.org](mailto:Marena@mduuc.org).

Sincerely—Marena

Marena serves as the Director of Religious Education and is best reached at [marena@mduuc.org](mailto:marena@mduuc.org)

## Register To Join The Family Music Program

Join our Family Music Program for a fun and enriching experience for families to come together to sing, dance, play instruments, and share the joy of music.

Whether you're a seasoned musician or just love to sing in the shower, there's a place for you here. Come perform in our Sunday services and participate in our delightful multigenerational holiday pageants. This is a wonderful way to connect with others, celebrate our community, and create lasting memories.

All ages are welcome! Register on Church Center or online: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3055350>



Feeling tense, overwhelmed, unfocused? This is a space for you. Especially those of us who live with the aftermath of traumatic experience may be finding these times hard. Join Rev. Leslie Takahashi and our member seminarian Ronnie Boyd for this experience which you can partake in on-line or in-person. If you plan to join us on-line, bring something you can tap out a beat on and something to tap with (hint—a water glass and a pencil will work) as well as something to write on and with. This gathering will be held in hybrid form. *Join in the Sanctuary or online at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 8.*



**We Are Mosaic! April 11 & April 23**

Join us for a deep exploration of antiracist and anti-oppression thought and action using a course created and provided to us by the UUA. Through connection, reflection, and collective learning, we'll discover practical tools to dismantle oppressive systems within ourselves and our communities. This isn't just theory. It's about honoring our multifaceted identities while building the liberation we all deserve.

This gathering is especially important and beneficial for those interested in leading our congregation into the future!

The link to register and to join on zoom is available on the calendar.

**Upcoming gatherings:**

- Saturday, April 11, 2026 at 9:30–11:30 a.m., in Bortin Hall and online. [Zoom Link](#)
- Thursday, April 23, 2026 at 7:00–9:00 p.m., online. [Zoom Link](#).

**Restorative Practices**

In these challenging times, finding peace and mindfulness is more important than ever as is remembering the inner resources we have which we can develop to anchor ourselves.

- 2nd and 4th Friday Virtual AM Mediation, 8:30 a.m. Start your day with calm and clarity. Join Rev. Leslie online for a short, 30-minute session to ease into your day.
- Saturday Mindfulness Meditation, hybrid, at 9:00 a.m.
- Sunday Virtual Meditation, 9:00 a.m. Email [yoga@mduuc.org](mailto:yoga@mduuc.org) to be added on to the mailing list.
- Virtual Meditations - Visit [HERE](#) for recordings.



**The Healing Power of the Natural World**  
 Quarterly Half-Day Retreat  
 Mindfulness Meditation, Chanting, Art, and Music



Scan to register.  
 \$20 Suggested donation.  
 We're grateful for any support you can offer. If you're able to give, thank you. If not, thank you for being here.  
 Everyone is welcome, always.

**Breath & Spirit! Save The Date**

Our next quarterly gathering will be Saturday, May 2 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Each year one of our gatherings focuses on the healing power of the natural world. Join Rev. Leslie, Jo Gelinas, Aiden MacMahon, Nancy Foster and others for this remarkable gathering.

\$20 suggested donation. Please do not let the donation be a barrier from joining. All are welcome to join.

You can register online by using the qr code or visiting: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3020590>

**History Committee**

Our history committee has been on a hiatus since the pandemic. Are you interested in learning more about the particular history of this congregation? Or some of our longest serving members? Do you like organizing materials? Please let Rev. Leslie know! (You can email her and if you don't hear back then just reach out another way!).

**Call For Pastoral Visitors**

Pastoral visitors are amazing people who commit to be in one-to-one listening relationships with people who can use a little bit of support. Rev. Leslie is recruiting additional visitors and if you have an interest, please flag her down and let her know! Please email Rev. Leslie Takahashi at [leslie@mduuc.org](mailto:leslie@mduuc.org).

Did you know that we have virtual meditations on our website at <https://mduuc.org/virtual-meditation/>  
 Search for "Beacon Light" on Spotify or subscribe here: <https://open.spotify.com/show/4iQZnnkS3HIXBa94JRuMin?si=808541c48b2b451f>

## wednesday nights ARE WONDERFUL AT MDUUC!

JOIN US ON 1ST & 3RD WEDNESDAYS  
APRIL 1 & APRIL 15

**VESPERS, 5PM, Sanctuary and Zoom.** Join Rev. Leslie Takahashi, Jo Gelinas and others for this brief mid-week gathering focused on recentering and calming with a theme in mind. This is also a good place to hold your grief at what is happening in the world. In March, the themes are:

April 1: How Do I Invite New Growth into My Life?

April 15: How Do I Center Those I Love?

**COMMUNITY DINNER, 6PM, Bortin Hall.** All are welcome to join this simple meal with conversation. Please register online to help us honor a headcount for preparation.

*Please note on April 1 we will have pizza, join in the Owl Room, and if weather permits, we will meet on the patio.*

<https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/category/82674>

\$10 suggested donation to help cover costs, but please give what you are able to, and it's completely optional—it should never be a barrier to attending.

**MINISTERS' CONVERSATIONS, 7PM, Sanctuary & Zoom.**

These times require us to hold onto our values even tighter AND also requires that we do so in new ways which can feel uncomfortable. Join us for a free-ranging conversation about what it means to honor our values in ways that are steady and changeable, time-honored and wholly new. In addition to discussion, we will also be using ritual, story and shared experiences to remind ourselves of key skills for these times.

Come help us build the ship as we float along!!!!

## A Special Thanks To You!

“Starr King continues to prepare students for Unitarian Universalist ministry and progressive religious leadership in society...Your generosity has moved us one step closer to reaching our 1.2 million-dollar annual goal.”—*Jessica C., Sowing Seeds Campaign, Starr King*

“Your impact can be seen in the story of Regina and her 3 young children. Through our comprehensive support services, Regina was able to secure stable permanent housing.”—*Donalda W., Shelter Inc.*

“Your congregation’s generosity is helping to build networks of support amid anti-transgender policies in the U.S., provide vital resources to ethnic minorities targeted by military brutality in Burma, advance systemic alternatives to the root causes of injustice in Haiti, and so much more.”—*Rev. Laura Randall, UUSC*

“Your commitment to our mission helps ensure children in foster care have a consistent, caring adult by their side during some of the most difficult moments of their lives. We are deeply grateful for your partnership and belief in this work.”—*Child Advocates of Contra Costa County (formerly known as CASA)*

## MDUUC To Help Host The General Assembly of Congregations June 19-21

Wow! We have been chosen to be a satellite location for the General Assembly this year. While the programming is virtual, the UUA has set up satellite sites around the country and we will be one of them! Such a fun opportunity to get to meet other UUs from our area. Help us by being part of our hospitality team—we need people who might be able to help us offer home hospitality and also provide registration and light refreshments and maybe some other tasks yet to be revealed. Also if you are thinking about being a delegate for this General Assembly, talk to Board President Linda Russell.

General Assembly 2026, Meet the Moment: Together Everywhere, will unfold in two parts with a midweek pause. From June 14–June 16, delegates will engage in fully virtual General Sessions focused on the business of the Association. Programming resumes June 19–21 with worship, featured speakers, and Meet the Moment themed programs online and select participating local congregations.

***Flexible Model that makes GA more accessible, sustainable, and connected for UUs everywhere (shown in PDT):***

### Sunday, June 14

1PM—Opening Reflection  
1:30PM—General Session I  
4:30PM—UUA Budget Hearing

### Monday, June 15

9AM—General Session II  
12:30PM—CSAI Workshop  
2PM—General Session III

### Tuesday, June 16

9AM—General Session IV  
12:30PM—CSAI Workshop  
2PM—General Session V

### Friday, June 19

5PM—(RE) Convening Worship

### Saturday, June 20

8AM—Meet The Moment Opening Program  
10:30AM—Meet The Moment, Breakout Groups  
11:00AM—Featured Speakers  
12:30PM—Featured Speakers  
2PM—Meet The Moment Wrap-Up  
5PM—Ware Lecture

### Sunday, June 21

7:30AM—Community Sing  
8:00AM—Sunday Worship

## Membership Book Signing

Have you been thinking about joining? Been around for a bit visiting and wondering what the next steps might be? Interested in participating and having a voice in some of the exciting developments going on? The first Sunday of each month, we offer an opportunity for people to sign the membership book—this is a simple act which captures your desire to shape the future of this congregation.

Look for a minister or board member outside the Sanctuary doors at 11:30 a.m., 15 mins. after service ends on **Sunday, April 5.**

## Share The Plate - UU Ministry For Earth Sunday, April 12

Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth is a seedbed for spiritual grounding and education that inspires deep practices of Earth care, justice and flourishing for all.



## A Message From Your Board of Trustees

Greetings, members and friends of Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church,

Spelled out, we see the many parts of our identification —location, the faith of which we are a part, and what we call our “gathering place”—where we meet, where we learn, where we worship together. For some, the name as it is remains fine. For others, these same elements represent something with which they do not identify—a colonial name, Unitarian Universalism feels too long, “church” as a designation feels too traditional or uncomfortable, given the multiple backgrounds of our members and friends.

As we enter this discernment, we remember that our community has changed names before. Founded as Valley Fellowship, we have carried three names over 75 years, each marking growth and deeper alignment. We share this not to suggest a direction, but to acknowledge that change has been part of our story.

We also recognize that for some, a name change may feel unnecessary or painful. Deep meaning, memories, and spiritual grounding are held in our current name. Your feelings matter, and honoring them is essential as we move forward together.

We began to consider renaming MDUUC in November 2025. This was one of the six “provocative areas” we discussed at that Saturday morning conversation (an all-congregation invite called Dreaming Together) along with five other areas that are important to us as we define who we are as a community.

We dedicated time for reflective discussion on the important elements to consider if we decide to rename MDUUC. Full text for name consideration:

**Create a name that becomes an emblem which speaks to the beauty of our welcoming community and embodies our aspirations and plurality.**

Since that initial conversation, we have continued the discussions at our monthly Forums (Third Sundays). We encourage everyone to attend and be a part of the discussions. All areas will be discussed over the next few months. We will bring the potential for a name change to the June Congregational meeting for a vote.

Changing our name requires our collective voices. At the Forums, we have gone deeper, in small group discussions:

- Various aspects of the name of the building – church, community, center, society?
- Geographic focus or similar designation (e.g. Valley/Hills)?
- Do we want to name ourselves after a specific person, group or ideal?
- Unitarian Universalism in the name or separate (e.g. new name followed by “a UU community”)

These conversations are thoughtful and reflective of the journeys people have experienced in finding MDUUC, in identifying as part of this community, and aspirational for where we are today and who we want to be. At our upcoming Commitment Sunday, Rev. Leslie will share the many iterations our name has gone through over these 75 years.

Please join the conversation as we consider – “How do we want to be known?”

In Faith and Gratitude,

Linda Russell, President

2025-2026 MDUUC Board of Trustees



## Just In Time Volunteering

Here are a few simple ways you can help to welcome all

**On Commitment Sunday, April 19 we could use help with:**

- Could you bring a breakfast bread as a delicious way to welcome everyone on Sunday as they check in?
- We could use many small bites for the historical tour!
- We need drivers, especially those who can lift a light wheelchair!
- We need guides to support our elders who will share stories from our history
- Could you help usher?
- Could you help prepare coffee and tea? We need a few hands to help breakdown and setup.

**Join the hospitality team for GA in June!** Also a great way to meet UUs from our area!

Gifts of time power our amazing community. Opportunities to volunteer are also listed on the Friday Weekly Email.

If you can give community, send a message to

[justintime@mduuc.org](mailto:justintime@mduuc.org).



## Honors, Accolades, and Thanks!

- To Mike Stanfield and the work party for beautifying the campus before the Celebration of Community
- To the Celebration of Community tablehosts: Andrew Oswald and Julie Torok, Betsy Livengood and Elliot Barenbaum, Elizabeth and Steve Dietsch, Errol Reyes, Marcy Beaty and Michael Brucker, Mary Lou Correia and Anne Rosecranz, Peggy Kroll and Sally Edgerton, Jaynese Davis, Diane Lovitt, Jim Lincoln, Kathryn Wellington, Laurie Matthews, Linda Russell, Mary Schreiber, Patricia Craven, Rose Barreto and Susie Symons, Sharon Solstice, and Marjorie Wallace.
- To Tom Adams and Kevin McGregor for the planned giving ceremony
- To Alison Ray, Julia McLeod, Amy Mosley and Jana Contreras for their help with RE.
- To Jeff Hearn and Lynn Gunney for their help with the slides for March's Congregational Forum
- To Scott Schrader for his beautiful piano playing at the start of the Celebration of Community
- To Peggy Kroll, Randy Stansberry, and Jaynese Davis for help in the kitchen,

We encourage gratitude and appreciation throughout MDUUC. Send “short and sweet” admissions to [thanks@mduuc.org](mailto:thanks@mduuc.org)

## Thursday Virtual Homelessness 101 Events Contra Costa Health - Register to Join

Join us for an engaging and informative session designed for anyone curious about homelessness in Contra Costa. Whether you're a concerned community member, have ideas for service programs, or are seeking services yourself, this presentation is for you!

### Highlights:

- Key data and trends on homelessness
- Overview of available services
- Community response initiatives
- Opportunities for involvement
- Interactive Q&A session

**Presenter:** Jaime Jenett, MPH. Have questions? Please email [contracostacoc@cchealth.org](mailto:contracostacoc@cchealth.org).

Please choose only one meeting to attend:

- Virtual Evening Sessions, April 16, July 16, or Oct 15 [[please register here](#)]
- Virtual Daytime Sessions, May 21, Aug 20, or Nov 19 [[please register here](#)]

## Exploring Whiteness Together Virtual Meeting, 4th Wednesday, 7-8PM

The next meeting will be held on zoom, April 22 from 7-8PM  
Link to join is on the calendar and [HERE](#).

Interested in having a non-judgemental space to unpack what whiteness means and how it is affecting our movement through this world? This is a sacred space for white-identifying members and friends to explore decentering whiteness (anti-racism/anti-oppression) to foster growth, empathy, and tools to dismantle systemic racism.

## Support The Community Pantry

Could you help stock our pantry with food items? We are especially in need of pasta, small containers of cooking oil, and shelf-stable milk. Drop the items on campus in Bortin Hall.

## Indivisible Bias Training Sunday, April 26 from 4-9PM, Bortin Hall

Learn, organize, and take action with Indivisible. Join calls and training to build power and defend democracy together.

Have questions? Contact Rev. Rodney, [rodney@mduuc.org](mailto:rodney@mduuc.org)



The threat of addiction is higher during difficult times. Many among us struggle with the traditional theistic language of 12 step programs and find it a great entry or a good supplement to engage with a UU specific approach to the 12 steps.

**Join us on Wednesdays from noon-1p.m. online on Zoom.**  
**The link to join is available on the calendar.**

## Spring Community Circle Registration is Open, Groups Are Forming!

Our Community Circles have been and continue to be a beloved piece of our small group ministry, designed to explore topics in community and build relationships. If you are a new member, or perhaps a longstanding member, looking for ways to develop a meaningful connection to our faith tradition and other members of the church, Community Circles are for you.

Community Circles offers a stress-free and comfortable setting to explore questions within a theme while providing an opportunity to learn about others. Before registering, check your calendar to make sure you can attend all 6 sessions. Contact [ccadmin@mduuc.org](mailto:ccadmin@mduuc.org) with any questions or to join the waitlist. Visit the webpage for updates and to register.

<https://mduuc.org/connect/community-circle/>

### Available Sessions:

- **Friday Mornings at MDUUC**  
April 24 through May 29, 10AM-12PM, Children's Chapel  
Register here: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/1185073>
- **Sunday Afternoon at MDUUC**  
Sundays, April 26 (skip 5/17) through June 7, 12:30-2PM, \*Oak Room. \*5/3 and 6/7 will meet in the Redwood Room  
Register here: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/1185005>
- **Virtual Thursday Evenings**  
April 30 through June 4, 6:30-7:30PM  
Register here: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/1185075>
- **Thursday Afternoon at MDUUC**  
Thursdays, April 30 through June 4, 1PM-3PM, Children's Chapel  
Register here: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/1185057>
- **Thursday Mornings at Rossmoor**  
Thursdays, April 30 through June 4, 10AM-12PM  
Meeting Space: \*to be shared by facilitator  
Register here: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/1185071>

## Looking for Usable Screens!

We are looking for larger TV screens and computers and tablets which we can use in programming as well as cell phones which we can reequip for people in need.

## Celebration of Life for Mieke Van Hout

Friday, April 25, 2026 at 11 a.m.

Join in the Sanctuary. Reception to follow in Bortin Hall.

~

## Celebration of Life for Harvey Segal

Saturday, June 6 at 11 a.m.

Join in the Sanctuary. Reception to follow in Bortin Hall.

~

## In Memoriam of Mary Fenelon

We will be dedicating a special recognition on Sunday, April 12 from 12:15 p.m.-1:30 p.m. in honor of Mary Fenelon, whose commitment helped bring the shower program to life. Please join in Bortin Hall.

If you would like to send a card or note to Mary's family, you are welcome to contact Rev. Leslie for their mailing address.

## Living Our Values: Actions You Can Take

The potential for justice exists in all spaces we cultivate together, including the virtual ones! You can visit our Living Our Values page to participate in Justice efforts at our local, state, and national levels. This is a great way to live out our UU values, especially when we want to remain safely distanced and engaged.

Visit: <https://mduuc.org/living-our-values/>

## Report ICE Sightings

Help keep our community informed. No account required and with real-time reports.

Report here: <https://juntosseguros.com/>

## Tuesday and Thursday Interfaith Vigils at Concord Immigration Court

Join Revs. Rodney, Ranwa, Leslie, and others as we provide the ministry of presence for folks lined up to enter the immigration court in Concord.

\*MDUUC ministers will be present every Tuesday and Thursday from 7:30–9:30 a.m., with the exception of holidays when courts are closed. You are invited to sign up to let us know you are joining. Our interfaith partners will remain on-site until noon. Steps to stay connected for vigils:

1. Register to join and help us coordinate - [HERE](#)
2. Sign up for specific Dates/Times [HERE](#)

## Join Contra Costa County's Signal Network

Signal is the most secure way to communicate about upcoming meetings, trainings, and actions. Bay Resistance asks that we each sign up for Signal, a key tool for organizers in cities like Portland and Minneapolis. Use this link to join our CoCo Pod Signal chat: <https://signal.group/#CjQKIEs2U2Tujbt12h9uIOPPi-7FEai-aTxJvqDHLLaQkGONEhBSeDW4e-w5A2qjR2-xSG6G>

## Exploring Whiteness Together March 25, 7–8PM, Zoom

If you are looking for a space to deepen your understanding of the system of whiteness, please join us!

- Sacred space for white-identifying members and friends to explore decentering whiteness (anti-racism/anti-oppression)
- Thoughtful discussions, engaging activities, and a nurturing environment
- Foster growth, empathy, and tools to dismantle systemic racism
- Sibling group for people of color facilitated by Rev. Leslie

## MDUUC Art Gallery

*Don't have art but have ideas for exhibits* —let us know. Contact our Art Committee Chair, Randy Stansberry or Dave Fitzgerald at [artleadership@mduuc.org](mailto:artleadership@mduuc.org).



Mt Diablo Unitarian  
Universalist Church

**MDUUC COULD BE YOUR  
SPIRITUAL HOME!**

## MDUUC Could Be Your Spiritual Home!

Imagine a faith community where doubt is welcome, questions inspire curiosity, and Love embraces every person who enters. This is what Mount Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church (MDUUC) strives to be.

As a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association, MDUUC values exploration over conformity. Whether individuals come from Buddhist practice, Christian tradition, scientific inquiry, or no religious background at all, the congregation affirms that wisdom has many sources and each path enriches the whole.

Membership at MDUUC does not require specific beliefs; it asks for a commitment to community and social justice. Members gain the ability to vote in congregational decisions, serve in leadership roles, and represent the church at national gatherings. More importantly, membership strengthens shared purpose—especially at a time when religious freedom is under pressure nationwide. Joining a community like MDUUC becomes both an act of gratitude and a stand for progressive values.

The congregation lives its principles through action as a form of spiritual practice: offering sanctuary to immigrant families, providing food and showers to unhoused neighbors, and advocating boldly for climate justice. All are invited to consider formally joining this collective effort toward a more compassionate future. Membership Sunday is held on the first Sunday of each month, when newcomers can hear members' stories and sign the congregation's historic membership book, in use since 1951.

## Not Getting Our Emails?

- Check your spam folder and mark "Not Spam" and if you're using Google, from a desktop, drag and drop emails into your primary tab to train your inbox. On your mobile device, tap the menu and then choose "Move to" from the drop-down menu, and then choose the Primary folder.
- Save these MDUUC email addresses into your contacts folder address book: [mailer@churchcenteronline.com](mailto:mailer@churchcenteronline.com), [no-reply@planningcenteronline.com](mailto:no-reply@planningcenteronline.com) and [publications@mduuc.org](mailto:publications@mduuc.org).

## Ongoing Programming

*For the most accurate and up-to-date information on meeting times and dates, please refer to our calendar at <https://mduuc.org/mduuc-calendar/>. While the program descriptions provide a helpful overview of our ongoing offerings, the calendar is your go-to source for event locations, Zoom links, and registration details for events that require it. To stay informed about any changes or new opportunities, we also encourage you to join our mailing list.*

### **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 on Wednesdays from 10:30–11:30 a.m. The group meets weekly virtually and hybrid, in person at the Bortin Hall on the 2nd Wednesdays.

### **Vespers**

Vespers is a mid-week recharge for the spirit and a chance to connect to the community. You can join via Zoom or in-person on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, at 5 p.m., of the month. This is a great place to check in with your spirit and some friendly community members.

### **Ministers' Conversations**

Our ministers' conversations Join via Zoom or in-person on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, at 7 p.m., of the month.

### **Virtual Yoga**

Mondays at 7:00 p.m. (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. Email [yoga@mduuc.org](mailto:yoga@mduuc.org) to join the mailing list.

### **Tuesday and Thursday Virtual Lunch Groups**

A friendly drop in virtual group that meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12:00 p.m. on Zoom.

### **Friday AM Mini-Meditation Boost**

End your week with a guided meditation and an opportunity to state an intention for your self. Join Rev. Leslie on 2nd and 4th Fridays from 8:30–9:00 a.m. for this chance to destress and connect.

### **Saturday Mindfulness Meditation Group**

Join us on most Saturday mornings at 9:00 a.m., on campus and online. Email Rose Riedel at [rose@mduuc.org](mailto:rose@mduuc.org) to be added to the group list. *\*See calendar for dates.*

### **Sunday Virtual Meditation**

Join Sharon Lawrence online on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. Email [yoga@mduuc.org](mailto:yoga@mduuc.org) to join the mailing list.

### **MDUUC Choir**

The MDUUC Choir is a chance to connect with others, deepen your faith, and be part of something truly special. Everyone is welcome to join, no auditions are required. *\*See calendar for dates.*

### **Black, Indigenous and People of Color Caucus**

3rd Saturdays at 4:00 p.m. 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. We meet monthly with alternating times—please email [leslie@mduuc.org](mailto:leslie@mduuc.org) to be apprised of our scheduled meeting times. Get in touch and learn more!

### **Exploring Whiteness Together**

4th Wednesday of every month from 7:00 p.m. on zoom. Members and friends 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 where whiteness is almost always the center. Through guided discussions and personal reflections, participants will explore their experiences with racism, learn about the impact of microaggressions and allyship, to develop actionable steps to become effective advocates for racial justice. Join us in this transformative journey to dismantle systemic racism and build a more inclusive community.

### **MDUUC Bike Group**

The MDUUC Bike Group holds a ride on the third Saturday of each month—all levels of ability are welcome. We meet at the church at 10:00 a.m. and carpool or ride to our starting location. Contact Jim Hughell at [bike@mduuc.org](mailto:bike@mduuc.org) to join the email list to receive and communicate plans.

### **Open Women's Group**

1st Thursday of every month, online from 10:30 a.m. to noon. All are welcome. Please email [admin@mduuc.org](mailto:admin@mduuc.org) to be added to our mailing list.

### **Wild and Wonderful Women's Spiritual Arts Group**

2nd Wednesdays from 2–4 p.m. in the Owl room. MDUUC women to explore their spiritual lives through creative practices like writing, painting, movement, voice, ritual, and storytelling. Contact [wild-and-wonderful@mduuc.org](mailto:wild-and-wonderful@mduuc.org) with questions or to join the group!

### **Men's Breakfast**

2nd Saturdays at 9:00 a.m. in the Owl Room or on Zoom. This is a group for those who are male-identified to gather for conversation and to share life experiences.

### **YA, Young Adult Group at MDUUC**

YA is comprised of adults ages 24–35. This group provides an opportunity for people to gather, meet and do fun things together.

### **Xillennial Group (Ages 30s–40s)**

This group provides opportunities to connect and gather. Please email [xillennial-leads@mduuc.org](mailto:xillennial-leads@mduuc.org) to join the list.

### **Community Garden Group**

Do you have interest in gardening but don't have a space of your own? Want to be involved in growing fresh food for our neighbors experiencing food insecurity? Any excess food grown will be part of the Faith Without Walls program. Contact [garden@mduuc.org](mailto:garden@mduuc.org) to find out more.

### **Buildings and Grounds Work Party\***

1st Saturday of the month, from 9 a.m.–noon. Join our to help beautify our campus while connecting with members and getting a few tasks done that cannot be done by one person alone! If you can, bring and share snacks to refuel! Contact [admin@mduuc.org](mailto:admin@mduuc.org) with questions. \*Weather permitting. We will need help in February to prepare for spring.

### **Wednesday Virtual 12 Step for UUs**

Join virtually on Wednesdays at 12 p.m. as we share our experience, strength, and hope with one another. No matter what addiction you have, you are welcome to join us as we engage in recovery as Unitarian Universalists.

### **Grief Group**

This is a monthly, drop-in group for those who have suffered a loss can continue to gather support. Join on the 1st Friday of the month from noon–1 p.m. available in-person and virtual.

### **Memory Matters Group**

4th Saturdays at 3:00–4:00 p.m. in the Oak Room and on Zoom (hybrid). This friendly, drop-in group is for those experiencing loss of memory or new difficulties with familiar tasks to come together to share in memory strengthening exercises, experiences and for support.

### **Health and Hope Group**

\*1st Saturdays at 4 p.m. Health and Hope is a group for people who have a difficult diagnosis. Please consider joining Rev. Leslie if you could use a space to talk about the challenges of living with a life-altering condition.

### **Virtual Monthly Caregiver Support Group**

Care-giving for a loved one can be challenging. Our drop-in virtual, monthly support group meets the 1st Saturday, 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

### **Transitions Group**

Join the group on the 3rd Saturday at 11 a.m. in-person and on Zoom. Transitions and Loss is a group for people undergoing life transitions. This group works for people who are going through a change of relationship, retiring or other job status change, federal workers experiencing stress or those in the later stages of grief who are rebuilding and reassessing. Join Rev. Leslie for this monthly conversation on the third Saturday of the month from 11-12. Please note, we are trying to arrange child care for this group.

### **Parent Group**

The Parent Group meets on the 1st Sundays from 12-1:30 pm. Childcare will be available.

### **Parents and Toddlers Group**

The Parents and Toddlers Group meets on the 3rd Sundays from 9–10:30 am. Childcare will be available.

### **MSYG, Middle School Youth Group**

MSYG meets on Sundays 12–1:30 pm.

### **YRUU, High School Youth Group**

YRUU meets on Sundays, from 12:00–1:30 p.m.

### **Emerging Adults (Ages 18-24)**

MDUUC's Emerging Adults gather to learn new life skills, make new connections, enjoy good company, nurture their spirits and have fun! This group supports each other as they navigate life transitions from post high school into adulthood. Whether it's a new skill, game night, or a delicious meal, the emerging adult group is the place to be!

## **Dances of Universal Peace - 4th Sundays**

### **Sunday, April 26 at 2 p.m., Sanctuary**

Join us for an interfaith, multi-cultural, spiritual practice with singing, moving, prayers to promote inner peace. Led by SierraLynne & Bill Wentz with friends.

No partner or experience needed. All abilities are welcome!

### *Do You Have A Skill Or An Area Of Knowledge To Share?*

One of the joys of MDUUC is to learn about the many talents people can offer. Learning together is also a great way to connect with new people. If you have an idea for an adult class you would like to offer, email Rev. Leslie Takahashi at [leslie@mduuc.org](mailto:leslie@mduuc.org) and put "ADULT" in the email subject line.

### *Did You Know?*

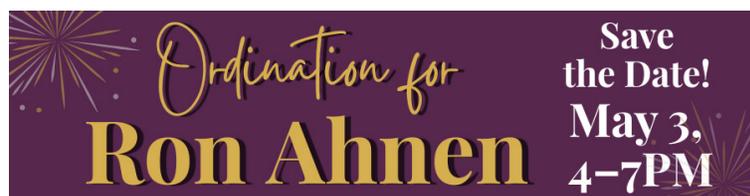
MDUUC has a space for scattering the cremains of beloved companion animals in the Robert De Vight Legacy Garden. If you would like to have a minister participate in helping you with the scattering, please contact Rev. Leslie Takahashi.

### Board of Trustees

Linda Russell, President  
Andrew Oswald, Vice President  
Mark Chase, Secretary  
Elizabeth Dietsch, Treasurer

### Trustees

Andy Smith, Kevin Hsieh, Jim Lincoln,  
Mary Kelly Persyn, Patricia Craven



Ordnation for  
**Ron Ahnen**  
Save the Date!  
May 3,  
4-7PM

## **May Beacon Deadline**

Wednesday, April 15 at 10:00 a.m.

Please send submissions to [publications@mduuc.org](mailto:publications@mduuc.org).

All submissions are subject to editing for space and approval.

## Nominating Committee

Self-Nominate or Nominate Others!  
We're Looking  
For A Few Good  
Members



Each year the MDUUC Nominating Committee works diligently to identify members who are interested in getting involved and serving our church community through positions on the Board of Trustees, Legacy Committee, or Nominating Committee.

### What do these jobs entail?

**The Board of Trustees** is the governing body of MDUUC.

Trustees are active in the life of the congregation and ensure that the church's activities and assets support our mission and values. They safeguard the fiscal health of the church and take actions on church business. 3-year terms, may serve for 6 consecutive years.

**The Legacy Committee** manages Endowment investments and solicits new membership to the Legacy Circle. Their activities vary greatly and run the spectrum from reviewing investment statements, planning presentations, hosting a party, and drafting communications. 3-year terms, may serve for 2 consecutive terms.

**The Nominating Committee** identifies lay leaders for service on the Board of Trustees, the Legacy Committee, and the Nominating Committee. They reach out to the larger congregation to gather recommendations for potential candidates and engage in robust discussion to determine a slate of nominees to be voted on at the Annual Meeting. 2-year terms, may serve for 2 consecutive terms.

Please self-nominate or nominate another member for the 2026-27 term. You can use our online nomination form or reach out to a member of the Nominating Committee -

Rose Barreto, Juan Contreras, Jaynese Davis, Catherine Der, Gabriel Escobar, Rosie Reed, and Joe Schellenberg.



Scan the QR code or use this link:

<https://forms.gle/mQBPZtRJW4D6iixm8>

## Paper Doll Campaign of #FreeFamilies Download the Toolkit - [HERE](#)

A national coalition led by the Kairos Center has been bringing attention to this issue. Join in contacting our representatives to ask them to end the practices of family detention, separation and deportation. A toolkit is available with a template, background info, and a phone script for calling your representative. Have a friend or relative in another state who might also participate? Download the toolkit and share with others (includes printable paperdoll template) and take action — [Download Here!](#)

## Walnut Creek Jazz Band Concert Spring Concert at MDUUC! Saturday, April 11 at 7:30PM



An Evening of Big Band  
and Vocal Jazz

Join us at MDUUC for an enchanting night of swingin' favorites. The Walnut Creek Jazz Band will set the stage ablaze with driving rhythms, lush harmonies, and timeless classics, while our

supremely talented vocalist Joyce Grant brings the music to life with elegance and power.

From toe-tapping swing to smooth, heart-stirring ballads, this is more than a concert — it's an experience. Let the melodies sweep you away, rekindle memories, and create new ones as the big band sound surrounds you in nostalgia and pure musical bliss.

Don't miss this unforgettable evening of jazz magic — where every note tells a story, and every song is a celebration.

**Advance tickets sold on EventBrite:** Discount code Student50 for student price. Recommended donations of \$20/adult, \$10/student at the door

## Community Concert Series Presents

Aki Kumar

Friday, May 15 at 8PM



Bollywood blues. Come hear amazing blend of musical excitement from Bombay to deep blues.

**Advance tickets sold on EventBrite:**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/aki-kumar-tickets-1984209655493>

Doors will open at 7:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be available. Masks are recommended, but not required.



Did you know MDUUC is on Bluesky?

With all the recent attention to the nefarious activities of some of our social media platforms, you might want to be reminded that MDUUC is on Bluesky. You can follow us at @mduuc.bsky.social and Rev. Leslie Takahashi @leslietakahashi.bsky.social.

# MDUUC IS GRATEFUL FOR YOUR ANNUAL PLEDGE

## 2026–2027 ANNUAL PLEDGE INFORMATION



We are living through one of the most difficult eras in our country’s history, and no matter what, your MDUUC is committed to being here for the long haul, and to continue showing up for everyone in our community.

As you consider what level of giving makes the most sense for your family and budget, we ask that you give as generously as you are able. Every gift and pledge goes to support MDUUC’s

### COULD YOU TAKE A STEP-UP WITH YOUR ANNUAL PLEDGE THIS YEAR?



worship life, spiritual support and pastoral care, community-building, and educational programs, as well as our social justice efforts in the community and the world at large.

As we sail through uncertain waters, we are leaning in as a community to ensure no one is left behind. Thank you for helping to navigate the stormy seas ahead. We couldn’t do it without you!

Already completed a pledge card? Have a question on how to make a pledge? Contact [admin@mduuc.org](mailto:admin@mduuc.org).

Make a pledge online at <https://mduuc.org/pledge/>

Prefer to use paper? Snip the form below and drop-ff in the church office mail slot, place it in the pledge box located in the Sanctuary, mail it in, or call it in.



### Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church

#### July 2026–June 2027 Annual Pledge Form

Name(s) .....

Email(s) ..... Phone: .....

Email(s) ..... Phone: .....

We commit to an annual pledge of: \$..... for MDUUC fiscal year starting July 1, 2026.

We wish to make a one-time gift of: \$..... for MDUUC fiscal year starting July 1, 2026.

- DREAMKEEPER: The UUA encourages giving at least 3–5% of annual income when possible, to sustain church operations and support community building. **Please check here if your pledge does represent this amount.**
- Check here if this is a Sustaining Pledge (will renew automatically - you may change amount or duration at any time)

MDUUC accepts all the following forms for pledge payments:

- Cash/check/credit card by mail, online, or in Sunday collection
- Automatic “Bill-Pay” service (arrange with your bank)
- Stocks/Mutual Funds/IRAs/Required Minimum Distributions directly to MDUUC\*

\* Check with your financial advisor for possible tax advantages. Please contact MDUUC to arrange for any transfers.

**All pledges are appreciated – Thank you for your generosity.**

Signature(s) .....

Date.....



Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church  
 55 Eckley Lane  
 Walnut Creek CA 94596

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

### MDUUC Ministers and Staff

Rev. Leslie Takahashi, Lead Minister, [leslie@mduuc.org](mailto:leslie@mduuc.org)  
 Rev. Rodney Lemery, Associate Minister, [rodney@mduuc.org](mailto:rodney@mduuc.org)  
 Jyvonne Haskin Music Director, [jyvonne@mduuc.org](mailto:jyvonne@mduuc.org)  
 Marena McGregor, Director of Religious Education, [marena@mduuc.org](mailto:marena@mduuc.org)  
 Jen Marsh Prink, Congregational Administrator, [jenm@mduuc.org](mailto:jenm@mduuc.org)  
 Aiden McMahon, Intern Minister, [aiden@mduuc.org](mailto:aiden@mduuc.org)  
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 Ging Lee, Communications Assistant, [ging@mduuc.org](mailto:ging@mduuc.org)  
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 Tianyuhao Nie, Tech Specialist, [tianyuhao@mduuc.org](mailto:tianyuhao@mduuc.org)  
 Rev. Dr. David Sammons, Minister Emeritus  
 Rev. Ranwa Hammamy, Affiliated Minister  
 Rev. Meg Richardson, Affiliated Minister  
 Board of Trustees - [board@mduuc.org](mailto:board@mduuc.org)

Main Office Phone: (925) 934-3135  
 Website: <https://www.mduuc.org>

Bluesky: [mduuc.bsky.social](https://www.mduuc.org)  
 Podcast on Spotify - Beacon Light

## JOIN US IN CELEBRATING 75 YEARS!



- **10AM – Check in and grab a donut!**
- **10:30AM Sunday Service starts**
- **Historical tour with yummy tastings along the way!**
- **Cake and ice cream social**



**There Will Be A Bounce-y House For The Kids Too!**

#### Volunteer Just-In-Time!

- We need breakfast breads in addition to the donuts we will be providing!!
- Help make the historical tour shine with some mini-bites!

Email [justintime@mduuc.org](mailto:justintime@mduuc.org)

### SAVE THE DATE AND JOIN US!

On April 19, we will celebrate the amazing history of this community. Though it would be impossible to mention or celebrate all the people who helped make this place what it is, we can at least grow in our collective knowledge of all that we inherit. The stewardship and bravery and, yes, some sacrifice of those who came before us allows us to be here today. And as we face a time when more bravery and resilience is part of what we need from our faith community, this is a great moment to remember some of what has come before.

**Fun for the whole family!** There will be a bounce house, balloon animals, and face painting!

And a chance to learn more about this place we call home for our spirits.

## JOIN US FOR COMMITMENT SUNDAY - APRIL 19 AT 10AM