



Mt Diablo UU Beacon

Transforming Ourselves and Our World

Volume 73, No. 3

March 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, MARCH 1

I Lift My Lamp. Our nation has been shaped by immigrants from many shores. Though we no longer offer sanctuary, sanctuary and opportunity to people from other nations, let us celebrate their contributions. Join Rev. Leslie Takahashi for this service.

SUNDAY, MARCH 8

The Sugar Bowl: Power, Permission, and the Practice of Joy. When young Harriet Tubman stole a sugar cube from her mistress’s sugar bowl and ran, she was brutally punished. Join us as we explore different questions from this historical story, depending on our position in society. This service calls us to an honest reckoning with our different positions in systems of oppression and our shared responsibility to destroy the bowls that limit joy for everyone. The music and the messages in this time together will center us around a greater Love that moves us to collective liberation.

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

The Nonviolent 45. In a time when we are compelled to reexamine how our actions relate to our motives, how do we both hold our values close AND be willing to compromise when we need to do so. Rev. Leslie Takahashi will look at what the deeper history of other movements for social change tell us about commitment, determination and the time for holding compromise with intention. .

SUNDAY, MARCH 22

Chiarascuro. Twice a year, the world has an equal share of day and night. In this celebration of the Spring Equinox, let’s take some time to appreciate the beauty of both, especially as they are held in perfect tension. Join intern minister Aiden McMahon for this service.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29

Songs of Resistance. In this service we celebrate the way that singing has become a powerful tool of expressing our joy in resistance. this will be a joyful service of song and rhythm and movement. With Rev. Leslie Takahashi and our music director Jyvonne Haskin!

WEDNESDAY EVENING PROGRAMS March 4 & March 18

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:

March 4: What is springing anew in you? Rev. Leslie Takahashi and Aiden McMahon for this service.

March 18: Where do you find balance? Join guest leader Penny Hackett-Evans for this evening.

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.

<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!!!!

10 Weeks of Commitment



SAVE THE DATE
APRIL 19

With our Celebration of Community (formerly known as the Fellowship Event), we kick off Ten Weeks of Commitment—a time when we will be focused on garnering the resources we need to keep MDUUC strong and vibrant. As many of you know, unlike other faith traditions, Unitarian Universalist congregations do not receive directives or funds from some national or international body. Instead, we are autonomous, making our own decisions and generating the resources we need to operate each year.

Leslie's Logos



The study's conclusion was stark. The Harvard Study of Adult Development, one of the longest-running studies on happiness, reveals that relationships help people feel fulfillment in life. This study, now ongoing for 90+ years, found achievement and money had less to do with satisfaction with life than being connected. This conclusion, in a world where we are all feeling isolated and scared by what is happening around us, bears repeating--and spurs some questions.

A yearning for connections brought me into this faith when I was in my mid-20s. Watching people connect is my favorite part of what happens here. The connections PLUS the opportunity to create shared frames of meaning no doubt allow our faith to contribute to longevity! And yet, we can go deeper. How do we continue to reach out to one another when we are feeling alone? When we disappoint one another?

Through opportunities for rich discussion and also for emotional and spiritual support, we strengthen the fabric of human community—and I think that is a radical act of resistance in this era when so much lures us away from relationship. How can we continue to use our connections to renew our spirits?

One exception to the researchers' findings was that while money can't buy happiness, one does need a basic level of resources. This past month I have seen how our community rallies to provide connection to those who do not have adequate support. How do we deep our noticing of one another and of our neighbors?

The stress is also pushing us-- as caregivers, as partners and as parents. I am grateful that we offer so many opportunities for people to connect around roles and experiences. Our groups for caregivers, those with difficult diagnoses, parents, people grieving are important. How can we allow ourselves support, knowing it will help us better support others?

Connections matter. They heal and they help. If you would like to figure out other ways to connect—if you are new or if you have been here for a while, reach out to me, to Rev. Rodney or to our amazing intern minister Aiden McMahan. Let's connect.

In faith and perseverance, Leslie

Leslie

Rev. Leslie serves as the community's Lead Minister. Feel free to email at leslie@mduuc.org and to follow up with a call due to a perennial issue with the email. You can follow her on BlueSky ([leslietakahashi@bsky.social](https://bsky.social)) and on [Substack](https://www.instagram.com/leslietakahashi). To make an appointment with Rev. Leslie, visit <https://calendly.com/revlesliemeet>.

Marena McGregor, DRE



Greetings and Happy March!

We have some exciting offerings coming up over the next few months!

High School Youth Trip to Regional Assembly - April 10-12
All 9th-12th graders are invited to join us in traveling to Sacramento, California for our annual regional assembly. This year's theme is Rising Resilient. In these trying times we need each other! This will be a great time for our youth to connect with other UU youth from across the region as we explore tools for resilience, connection and hope.

Young Adult OWL (18-35ish year olds)

Embrace a holistic approach to sexuality and relationships in our Our Whole Selves Young Adults program. Tailored for individuals in the 18-35ish young adult age range, this transformative program explores topics such as consent, boundaries, healthy relationships, communication, sexual health, and personal values. Through engaging discussions, experiential activities, and guest speakers, participants develop a deeper understanding of their own identities and beliefs, fostering self-acceptance and respect for others. Led by knowledgeable facilitators, this inclusive and affirming program provides a safe and supportive environment for open dialogue, exploration, and growth. Join us to build meaningful connections, expand your knowledge, and navigate the complexities of adulthood with confidence and authenticity.

Adult OWL (35ish-60ish year olds)

A holistic sexuality education program for adults that fosters caring, compassion, respect, and justice. It balances knowledge-building with exploration of attitudes, values, and feelings about one's own and others' sexuality. This program is comprehensive and progressive, addressing sexuality with candor, sensitivity, and respect for adults' wisdom and life experience. Don't miss out on this engaging opportunity to have the sex education you never had in school!

Schedule:

Day: Sunday nights April 12-May 24

Time: 5pm-8pm (dinner included)

Sincerely—Marena

Marena serves as the Director of Religious Education and is best reached at marena@mduuc.org

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, March 1**.

Aiden McMahon Intern Minister



Hello, folks!

Can you believe we're more than halfway through the year? I certainly can't. In some ways, it seems like just yesterday I was showing up for day one of my internship. That said, I can see the difference between myself then and myself now. I really feel as though I've found my voice, so to speak.

Our staff trip to Albuquerque at the end of January taught me a lot about creativity and overcoming perfectionism - I was able to take a course on Improv as Theology, which you may have seen explored during my recent Time for All Ages. I hope I'll have the opportunity to strengthen those skills further.

I've also been enjoying my time facilitating our 7-9th grade OWL class. It's something of a miracle watching the change in our participants from the beginning of the class onward. If you've ever considered becoming a facilitator, I highly encourage you to take the training!

Lastly, I want to let you know about a couple of things that might interest you. You might have heard that I recently gave a talk to the UUs of Rossmoor last month on the topic of Christian Nationalism. The slides from that presentation are up on their website (rossmooruu.org/past_programs) if you'd like to see them.

Secondly, starting on Saturday, March 21st, I'll be hosting a six-session biweekly class on Biblical Literacy. My hope is for it to be equally entertaining and educational, with some robust conversation and games sprinkled throughout (and not just 90 minutes of me lecturing). We'll cover topics like the history and construction of the Bible and events contained within, the different genres of the Bible, and the critical lenses we can use to read it better. I hope to see you there!

Yours in faith, hope, and love—Aiden

Aiden serves as the Intern Minister for 2025-2026 year and is best reached at aiden@mduuc.org

Register for the Bible Literacy Class with Aiden on the calendar or use this link:

<https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3478080>

Please plan on attending all sessions. Saturdays from 5-7PM. 3/21, 4/4, 4/18, 5/2, 5/16 and 5/30 in the Owl Room.

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.



Winter Nights, March 23–April 6

What if you could help transform two weeks of someone's life? Winter Nights is MDUUC's largest volunteer opportunity of the year, and we need YOU to make it happen. This March 23 to April 6, our congregation opens its doors to welcome unhoused neighbors, providing not just shelter, but genuine hospitality, hot meals, and the dignity of community.

Here's what makes Winter Nights special:

- Work alongside fellow UUs in our most hands-on expression of interdependence and justice
- Perfect for families, friends, or anyone wanting to deepen their MDUUC connections
- Flexible 2-3 hour shifts that fit your schedule
- Direct, immediate impact (you'll see the difference you make)
- No experience necessary (just bring your generous spirit!)

We especially need volunteers for:

- Meal preparation and service
- Activity coordination with guests
- Setup and hospitality support

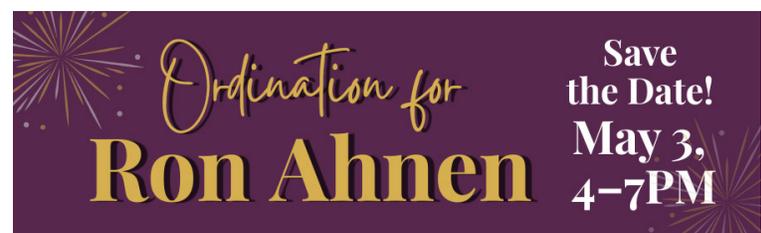
Whether you're new to MDUUC or a longtime member, Winter Nights offers a powerful way to live our values through action. Click [HERE] to learn more about the program and discover how your specific talents can serve.

Ready to be the heart of someone's home? Use the buttons below to sign up for shifts or contribute resources to this transformative program.

[DONATE FUNDS](#) | [VOLUNTEER HERE](#) | [COMPLETE TRAINING](#)

Getting To Know UU Oak Room & Zoom | March 29, 12:30–2:30PM

Register to join us for a quarterly conversation that helps answer questions about who we are and what we care about. Come learn more about what we believe! Our next scheduled gathering is Saturday, March 29, from 12:30–2:30pm. Register here: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3416696>





A Message From Your Board of Trustees

Greetings, good people of MDUUC and Happy Year of the Fire Horse!

We are a busy, thriving congregation! With weekly justice activities and classes and community circles, we also have a wonderful opportunity to gather in large connection with one another coming up. More on that in a moment..

First – as your Board, we want to extend a hearty congratulations to our incredible Music Director, Jyvonne Haskin! Not only do we benefit from her professionalism, her thoughtful musical curation and her ability to teach us songs from our new UU hymnal every week, we are in the presence of Oscar-nominated musicianship, embodied in humility. We extend deep appreciation for her talents and wish her, and her team, the best in the upcoming Oscars!

On March 7th, we will have our Celebration of Community, our “soft launch” for this year’s pledge drive. This will be an evening of connecting and sharing the joys of belonging to a community such as ours. During the Call for the Offering, you hear one of your Board members talk about the importance of our offerings. Each week the theme is different, in alignment with the messages delivered in the service, but the common thread is the importance of supporting this community. We hope you will join us for the evening and please let Jen Marsh, Rev. Leslie, or a Board member know if you are available to host a table.

There are always questions regarding the pledge process so let us begin the season with a few pledge FAQs:

Why do we need pledges? The pledges help us determine our budget for the upcoming year. As we focus on being a self-sustaining community, we need to know how much we are working with in the upcoming year (July 2026 - June 2027).

How do I pledge? You can fill out a pledge card that will be available in the coming weeks and drop it in the pledge box when you are on campus or fill out the information online – at the GIVE button on the Church Center app. If you have any questions, please call Jen, in the office, speak to Rev. Leslie or any of your Board members.

You decide on the amount that is most appropriate for your circumstances. We know financial contribution is not one size fits all. You also decide how you want to contribute – weekly, monthly, semi annual, etc. You can submit your contribution through checks, cash in the envelope on Sundays, or through the Give Now button online.

If you are not able to make a commitment, enter a pledge of \$0.00, so we can note that you have responded, You are always welcome to put money in the offering basket or online when you are able.

As we enter into our 2026-2027 pledge season, your contributions help us celebrate community - by supporting our ministerial and administrative staff, investing in our beautiful campus and embodying the spiritual practice of supporting a shared ministry that reminds us we can do wonderful things together!

In Faith and Gratitude,

Linda Russell, President
2025-2026 MDUUC Board of Trustees

Pastoral Visitors

Pastoral visitors assist our ministers with pastoral care in two capacities. First, they are matched one-on-one with members who could use a listening ear. And second, they provide on-site listening support on Sunday mornings (yep, that is them behind the water column during the Offertory.) If you are a member and interested in serving in this capacity, please email Rev. Leslie Takahashi at leslie@mduuc.org.

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

Many of us noted in horror the news stories about the taking of small children by ICE agents in recent month and also note the tragedy that the capture of children has been happening throughout these last years. A national coalition led by the Kairos Center has been bringing attention to this issue. And we are all asked to contact 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!](#)

Come Defend Our Democracy March 5, 10:30 a.m.–noon, Owl Room

Join others in writing postcards to voters in Arizona to remind them of the importance of voting for candidates who uphold religious values of justice and the democratic process.

First Saturday Work Party Saturday, March 7, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Our once-a-month Work Party is essential to the well-being and beauty of our campus. Whether you’re a seasoned gardener or simply someone who enjoys on campus and contributing to the life of our community, your presence truly makes a difference.

Caring for our gardens, buildings, and grounds is a simple yet meaningful way we stay connected—to one another and to this place we share.

This month we have lots of work to be done in the community garden, some clean up in the Butterfly Garden, and we have a few small maintenance projects such as cleaning some of the windows and doors in Bortin Hall so that it looks nice for our Celebration of Community event that evening.

Congregational Forum

Join us on March 15, 2026, 12:30–1:30 p.m.

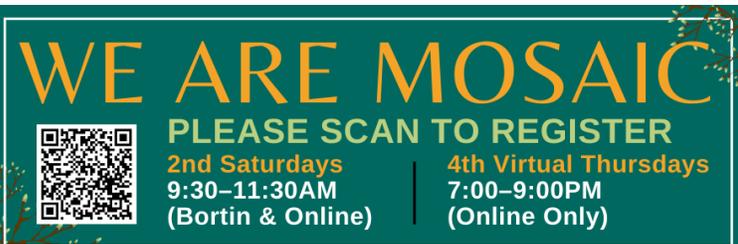
Come and continue our discussions about how we want to dream together about our future and updates on the actions just approved at the January 25, 2026.

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

JUSTICE SUNDAY: Defending Democracy

March 8, 12:30–1:30PM

Join us as we practice love through justice work, nourishing food, and joyful community. We will be having great music and connection while writing letters to Arizona voters. The littles will have coloring sheets. We will also be serving “Community Love Chili”; vegan three-bean base, customizable with cheese or turkey, cornbread and fruit.



WE ARE MOSAIC
PLEASE SCAN TO REGISTER
 **2nd Saturdays** 9:30–11:30AM (Bortin & Online) | **4th Virtual Thursdays** 7:00–9:00PM (Online Only)

We Are Mosaic!

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!

Signup is available on the calendar. *Upcoming gatherings:*

- Saturday, March 14, 2026 at 9:30–11:30 a.m., in Bortin Hall and online. [Zoom Link](#)
- Thursday, March 26, 2026 at 7:00–9:00 p.m., online. [Zoom Link](#).



Join Us for Some Fun!
Multicultural Game Night

Multicultural Game Night Goes Outside Sunday, March 29 from 5–7 p.m.

Bring a Multi-Cultural Snack, A Game and Friends!
Join at the Brick Patio & Bring a Puzzle To Exchange!

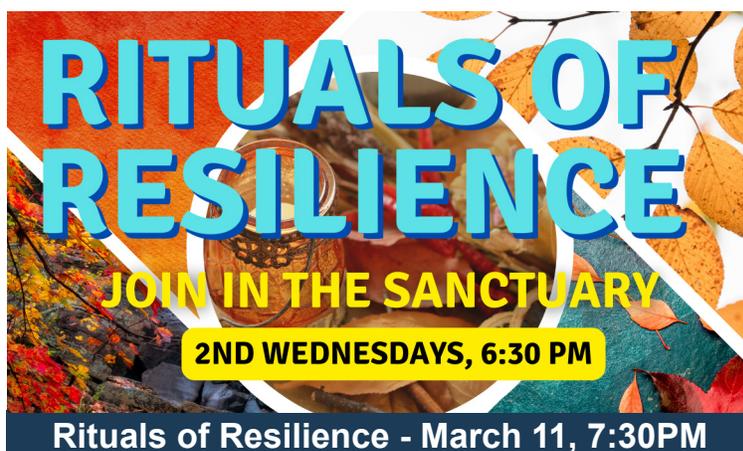
Bring a snack and a game to share. We have been having a lot of fun with games for all ages. At recent Game Nights we had card games featuring unicorns, board games featuring labyrinths, competitive dominoes and Scrabble. We ask everyone to bring a snack representing some aspect of your culture which is a fun way to get to know one another—and produces some yummy snacks as well. And now we are taking it all out to our Patio! We will have giant Jenga, cornhole, giant dominoes and more.

Mark your calendar for March 29 from 5-7 p.m. and join us all on the Brick Patio.

Touching The Spirit

Save The Date - Breath & Spirit - Saturday, May 2, 2026
Register on the calendar or [HERE](#).

In times when human-created turbulence is all around us, we will take some time to reconnect with the power of the Earth. Our relationship with the larger body of life with whom we share the resources and beauties of the natural world has long been the foundation for many spiritual practices. We will explore a variety of these and also offer a space for reflection on how you wish to create more space for spirit in your daily life. Breath and Spirit is our quarterly half-day spiritual retreat. We offer practices and activities to remind us all that we need to connect with creativity, wisdom, joy and peace. Led by Rev. Leslie Takahashi, Jo Gelinas and a team of amazing souls, this is a rich offering for our community and the larger community. Want to check it out? Please do and bring a friend.



RITUALS OF RESILIENCE
JOIN IN THE SANCTUARY
2ND WEDNESDAYS, 6:30 PM
Rituals of Resilience - March 11, 7:30PM

In March, we will focus on ways to come back into a regulated state when our nervous systems are overwhelmed. We will use quiet music and simple ritual as well as practical exercises to gather at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 11 in the Sanctuary and also on-line. Zoom link to join is available on the calendar.

Register here: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3496703>

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 Meditation, 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 to be added on to the mailing list.
- **Virtual Meditations** - Visit [HERE](#) for recordings.

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/4iQZnnkS3HlXBa94JRuMin?si=808541c48b2b451f>



Honors, Accolades, and Thanks!

- Thank you Scott Schrader for choir warm-ups, continued support and leadership with Chalice Choir, stepping in to warm up the choir.
- Sincerest gratitude to the Chalice Choir for their hard work in the rehearsal room and at home to prepare the anthems to be so beautiful for our Sunday morning worship services! You make a joyful noise!
- Thank you to all the affirming support from this community, sharing your appreciation or discontent with the music heard in our services! Whether you were for or against some of the choices, it's warming to know that you're listening and engaging our musical moments together!
- To our ushers especially Richard Brown, Tom Taylor and Jeff Hearn.
- To Bruce Pennington who has been working on restarting our Peace Garden (come help him keep it going.)
- To the members of our Faith Without Walls team who responded to the needs of one of our members when she was in need of support.
- To those who continue to donate to our food pantry AND to those who continue to take from it which is a great gift to us all.
- To all of those gearing up to help with our Winter Nights program.
- To our amazing Community Dinner dishwashers, Lynn Scoby, Jim Lincoln and David Stanley. You make it work!
- To all who produced an amazing array of paper dolls for Rev. Leslie Takahashi to take with her to the vigil protesting family detention, separation and deportation.
- To those who participated in our conversation about how to become more inclusive of those among us who suffer from trauma.

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

Visit The Church Center App To Volunteer!

Visit the Signups section on the app and change the category to "Volunteering" to see a few ways to help.

<https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/category/99744>.

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.



Just In Time Volunteering

Simple ways you can HELP!

If you can help, please email justintime@mduuc.org

- Be a table host for our Celebration of Community!
- Sign up to help with Winter Nights—so many
- We need drivers, especially those who can lift a light wheelchair!
- We need desserts for our Commitment Sunday celebration in April.
- We need guides to support our elders who will share stories from our history in April

Gifts of time power our amazing community. If you can give community, send a message to justintime@mduuc.org.

A Special Thanks To You!

"Thank you for your ministries and for MDUUC's steadfast support for The Annual Program Fund. You are among our most generous Honor Congregations. Please share my appreciation with your leadership on behalf of all congregations who benefit—you make all UUA Services possible."

—Rev. Vail Weller, Senior Philanthropic Advisor, UUA

"Thank you for your generous support of Child Advocates of Contra Costa County throughout 2025. Your commitment to our mission helps ensure that 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)

Climate Justice Movie & Discussion March 29, 12:30PM, Children's Chapel

Come for an uplifting documentary, The War on Air Pollution, and discuss issues around climate justice. The movie inspires hope and records the important progress of methodical advocacy for clean air over years.

On a more somber note, the administration's repeal of the endangerment finding terminated the federal government's legal authority to regulate greenhouse gases responsible for global warming. There are legal challenges to this move which will take some time to play out. To learn more about the endangerment finding, the Feb 12 edition of the podcast, The Daily, by the NYTimes, [The Secret Plan to End U.S. Climate Regulation](#) is quite informative.



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](https://mduuc.bsky.social) and Rev. Leslie Takahashi [@leslietakahashi.bsky.social](https://leslietakahashi.bsky.social).

Share The Plate - UUSC - March 8

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is a nonprofit, nonsectarian organization advancing human rights together with an international community of grassroots partners and advocates. UUSC works on intersecting roots of injustice to defend rights at risk due to criminalization and systemic oppression of people based on their identity, support self-determination and defend the rights of people displaced due to climate, conflict or economic hardships; and we respond to humanitarian crises as partners with people whose access to aid is most limited.

Guest At Your Table 2025 - 2026



Support our partners with UUSC's longest-running program for congregations. For half a century and counting, UUSC has worked with faith communities across the country to bring our partners' stories and experiences to your family table. The long-running Guest at Your Table program

is a chance to learn about our partners' work and support our shared efforts to advance human rights.

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, click the menu icon in the app 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,
no-reply@planningcenteronline.com and
publications@mduuc.org.

In Memoriam of Mary Fenelon

We will be dedicating a special recognition in honor of Mary Fenelon, whose commitment helped bring the shower program to life.

If you would like to send a card or note to Mary's family, you are welcome to mail it to:

Theresa Falk, 201 Coggins Dr., Apt. B109, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

~

Celebration of Life for Mieke Van Hout

Please save the date for April 25, 2026. More information about this service will be shared when its available.

Nominating Committee



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>

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.

Future Pickling Parties are being planned to help stock the community pantry on campus.

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/>

Faith Without Walls

Faith Without Walls is our ministry to those who experiencing houselessness. If you are interested in learning more or being trained to be part of our showers program, or washing towels, please contact one of our ministers.

Faith In Action East Bay

Faith in Action East Bay is creating a fund for families where the main breadwinner has been deported. Here is a link to contribute: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-immigrant-families-in-east-bay>. This is a great way to practice mutual aid.

Report ICE Sightings

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

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

Educate Yourself To Prepare For Trans Justice

Our faith has been a leader in religious advocacy for trans people and in light of attacks, we need to do more. Visit this document for comprehensive list and links to UU Actions & Resources to Support Trans Justice & Safety [tinyurl.com/UU-trans-action]. Here you'd find resources for:

- Organizations to Support/Follow
- Reputable & Worthy Sources of News on Trans Justice
- UU Resources
- Resources for Trans/Nonbinary UUs
- Resources for Understanding & Responding to Anti-Trans Legislation & Rhetoric
- General Resources on Trans Identity, Allyship, etc.

An Important Way To Get Involved

If you are looking for an important act that you can do to support immigrants in these VERY difficult times, this program is for you!!!

Do you LIKE supporting families? Will you HELP us welcome newly arrived immigrants and asylum seekers?

Learn about how you can reduce fear and offer safety, comfort, and clarity by providing a friendly face to help navigate the legal system in Contra Costa County and the Central Valley.

Join us in making a difference for our newcomer neighbors! For more information contact IM4HI Accompaniment Manager, Kelly Younger at kyounger@im4humanintegrity.org.

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](#)
3. Download the Signal App - [HERE](#)
4. Let Rev. Leslie know you are joining. leslie@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>

Let's Honor Betty Reid Soskin

Betty Reid Soskin, born in 1921, died at the end of 2025 was known as the oldest US Park ranger, conducting talks and tours at the Rosie the Riveter museum in Richmond. She helped the museum uncover the neglected history of Black women in that era. Her life also intersected with the life of this congregation as a young mother, she was a member of this congregation and also a leader, serving on the Board and also sharing her amazing musical gifts with the congregation in worship. You can read more about her amazing life here:

In her last years, her friends and family have been working to create a documentary of her life with a special focus on her music. If you wish to contribute to this effort, go to <https://www.notimetowastefilm.com/>

MDUUC Art Gallery Now Featuring Richmond Art Center's 2026 Art of the African Diaspora

There is a new art show up in Bortin Hall. It's an African Diaspora show in honor of Black History month. Stop by the interior hall between the Sanctuary and Bortin Hall to view artwork of Chamia Larae and Anita Carse.

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.

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.

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

Community Concert Series Presents Broken Compass Bluegrass Saturday, March 21 at 8PM



Please join us to enjoy this young band with incredible energy.

<https://www.brokencompassbluegrass.com/index>
<https://www.brokencompassbluegrass.com/video>

Band members:

Django - Singer, songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist, Django Ruckrich began his musical journey at the age of 4 when his Dad bought him his first guitar. Demonstrating a preference for bluegrass music at an early age, Django began flatpicking by learning to play along to traditional fiddle tunes. It wasn't long before he extended his passion for music to the mandolin and fiddle.

Mei Lin: Mei Lin Heirendt started violin at the age of 7 through the Suzuki Method. Alongside classical studies, her first teacher integrated a sprinkling of Mark O'Connor's violin books, so Mei Lin quickly learned traditional tunes like Soldier's Joy and Angeline the Baker. Mei Lin played in the Music in the Mountains Youth Orchestra (MIMYO) for about 4 years and, in 2017, became the Concertmaster at just 12 years old.

Kyle: Kyle's musical journey began inside Mom's belly where his parents would stretch over a pair of headphones each night and play Bach & live Phish shows. Kyle was born into the music festival world, immersed & saturated in melody & rhythm. Thanks to the free fiddle lessons for kids at the Strawberry Music Festival, he started making noise at the age of 3. He continued with a few private lessons learning the Suzuki Method while quickly developing an ear for tone.

Sam: Sam grew up in the rolling hills of San Luis Obispo, CA to the soundtrack of a diverse range of music, including jazz, folk, funk, and rock. Bluegrass has certainly been an important part of Sam's life, but there are few genres of music that he doesn't digest on a regular basis. They all influence his playing style on upright and electric bass to this day.

Tickets are \$25. Sliding scale tickets available at the door

Advance tickets sold here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/broken-compass-bluegrass-tickets>

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

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 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 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, March 22 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!

Are You Looking To Deepen Your Connections?

Our Community Circles are small, supportive groups that meet regularly to share, reflect, and grow in spirit. Whether you're new or a longtime member, there's a place for you. Visit <https://mduuc.org/connect/community-circle/> to register, learn more or to join the wait-list.

Have questions or need to make a change to your enrollment? Please contact ccadmin@mduuc.org for assistance, thank you!

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 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.

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April Beacon Deadline

Wednesday, March 18 at 10:00 a.m.
Please send submissions to publications@mduuc.org.
All submissions are subject to editing for space and approval.



Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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 Podcast on Spotify - Beacon Light

**Celebration
 of Community**

**Saturday, March 7
 5PM-8PM**

Everyone is welcome!

 **Please Scan To RSVP**
Childcare is available

Celebration of Community - March 7 at 5PM

The moment has arrived to come together, catch up with friends, make new ones, and celebrate community! Join us for an all-ages event—with activities, conversation, and community building.

Please send in your RSVP (if you haven't already) and join us for celebratory event, Celebration of Community, formerly known as the Fellowship Event held on Saturday, March 7, from 5-8 PM in Bortin Hall.

Come as you are, bring a dish for your table of 6-8, and let's make this one for the books. We're excited to have you there!

Childcare is available!

This is a shared, inclusive community gathering, and we invite each guest to nurture our connections through conversations and by bringing a small, savory or sweet offering. We encourage keeping a variety of dietary options in mind (chicken, vegetarian, and gluten-free)!

Let's share not just food, but warmth and hospitality. If you'd like to host, contribute a baked good to the dessert table, or volunteer to help with childcare, please let us know when you RSVP on the form or contact justintime@mduuc.org.

RSVP with the QR code, on the calendar or here:
<https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3020584>