



Mt Diablo UU Beacon

Transforming Ourselves and Our World

Volume 73, No. 5

May 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

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR PODCAST!

Search for “MDUUC Beacon Light” on Spotify

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

SUNDAY, MAY 3

The Limits of Personal Sincerity. Despite Rita Nakashima Brock: Individual feelings and beliefs are subordinated by participating in the rituals. Sometimes that can be good, and sometimes it can be dangerous. Rituals have this “as if” quality of imagining it. Takes the pain out of the frame of personal responsibility for a time.

SUNDAY, MAY 10

She Who Is: Culturally, we have a long history of defaulting to masculine language when speaking, both about people and about God. What lessons can we learn from feminine images of the divine, and how can they apply to people of all gender identities? Join Intern Minister Aiden McMahon as he explores the intersection of gender and religious imagery.

SUNDAY, MAY 17

The Temple Was Never A Cage. Some traditions taught that the body is sacred and then used that very teaching as a reason for shame, building altars out of restriction and making holiness synonymous with denial. This Sunday, we are reclaiming joy itself as a revolutionary act, because choosing pleasure, delight, and full embodiment in a world that has told so many of us to want less, feel less, and take up less space is not indulgence, it is liberation. Come fully, come joyfully, come exactly as you are. Join Rev. Rodney Lemery for this service.

SUNDAY, MAY 24

Love and Resistance: Reflections from Minnesota. Please join us as we reflect on how do we hold love and resistance in the same hands? When neighbors are taken. When families are torn apart. When lives like Renee Good’s and Alex Pretti’s from Minneapolis are lost. Bring your grief, your hope, your questions as Rev. Ron Ahnen returns with a witness to share, and together we’ll wrestle with what love asks of us in these complicated times. *This sermon was previously scheduled on April 26.*

SUNDAY, MAY 31

When Faith is a Metaphor. In the best of times, faith may seem unnecessary. In the worst of times, it may seem in adequate. How does our particular form of faith which affirms our agency in creating the connections and steadfastness use metaphor as a proxy for certainty? Please join Rev. Leslie Takahashi for this service about how we, whether we believe in a more traditional idea of God or not, can find meaning in metaphors of faith.



Breath & Spirit - “The Healing Power of the Natural World”
A Quarterly Half-Day Retreat, Saturday, May 2, 9:30 a.m.–1 p.m.
Mindfulness Meditation, Chanting, Art, & Music

Join us in the Bortin Hall at MDUUC

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

Please register on the church center app or use this link:

<https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3020590>

Are you looking for ways to nurture and calm yourself with more contact with nature? Are you feeling as if a morning of peaceful engagement with the wonders of our campus would be good for your spirit? Are you interested in learning more about meditation, meditative singing and spirit-healing art? Want to experience walking the labyrinth with a group of spirit-filled people? Have you heard about forest bathing and want to experience it? Then consider coming to this Saturday’s Breath and Spirit retreat where you will have opportunities to experience all of this in the spirit of connection and healing.

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 Gelinias, Aiden MacMahon, Nancy Foster and others for this remarkable gathering.

AFTERNOON SERVICE - SUNDAY, MAY 31, 1PM

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 including spaces of music, contemplation and fun. Interested in helping support these services? Let Rev. Leslie Takahashi know.

Leslie's Logos

When we were preparing for the 75th Anniversary service, I got a message from our long-time member Art Ungar who told me a story about the Scaff Building. He was the chair of the group which led the effort to build the office where now most of our staff have their offices. He says a man in Berkeley was selling building kits which included all the beams—predrilled!—and the hardware, roofing materials, glass etc. One weekend a truck pulled up and delivered all the materials and volunteers went to work putting together the structure.

Yet the kit only covered the outside. Art began to wonder how they would do the interior walls which would need sheet rocking and electricity. They didn't really have the funds. Yet in the congregation, Art recalls, was a man named Ernesto—a professional sheet rocker. He put up all the aluminum studs and also the sheet rock. His day job was in San Francisco yet he came after hours and did the skilled work. Not only that, he salvaged materials from worksites which would often discard partial sheets of materials and even some beautiful doors. Ernesto also helped with an electrical short discovered after all the sheet rock was put up which allowed the building to pass inspections.

Art's story is a great example of how the right person shows up when we need them. I was reminded of that again the last Sunday in April when so many skilled medical and emergency responders just rose out of the chairs and took charge of a medical emergency.

MDUUC has been fortunate through the years to have so many gifts to rely upon. These make the dollars that we do raise do so much more than they would in any other setting. The talents and the dedication of our members make such a difference. Some of those in our community stay a long time and others, such as Ernesto—who, by the way, Art also related was an immigrant from the Philippines—give their gifts in shorter stays. And yet they all make so much difference.

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) and on [Substack](#). To make an appointment with Rev. Leslie, visit <https://calendly.com/revlesliemeet>.



Marena McGregor, DRE

As the days grow warmer and the flowers begin to bloom, spring invites us into a season of renewal, curiosity, and connection. In our Religious Education program, we talk often about Unitarian Universalist values, including love, justice, interdependence, generosity, and more! However, these values truly come alive in the small, everyday moments we share as families.

Spiritual practice doesn't have to be complicated or time-consuming. In fact, some of the most meaningful practices are simple, repeatable, and rooted in your daily routines at home. Here are a few ways to gently weave UU values into your family life this season:

Start with Gratitude

Take a moment at dinner or bedtime to share one thing you're grateful for. This simple practice nurtures generosity and helps us notice the goodness around us, even on hard days.

Notice Interdependence

Go outside together and pay attention to the natural world. Ask questions like: What do you notice? Who or what depends on each other here? Whether it's bees and flowers or sunshine and soil, these observations help children understand our deep interconnection with all living things.

Practice Kindness Intentionally

Create a family ritual of kindness, such as writing notes to neighbors, helping a friend, or doing a small act of care for someone in your household. These moments embody love in action.

Make Space for Big Questions

UU spaces are built on curiosity. Encourage your children to ask big questions and be sure to wonder alongside them. You don't need to have the answers. Simply listening and exploring together affirms pluralism and the value of many perspectives.

Reflect on Fairness

When conflicts arise (and they will!), invite reflection: Was that fair? How can we make it right? These conversations build a foundation for justice and equity in age-appropriate ways.

Create a Simple Ritual

Light a candle together at the start of a meal or at bedtime. Take a breath. Share a hope for the day or week. This small act can ground your family in intention and connection.

Spring reminds us that growth doesn't happen all at once; it unfolds slowly, through care and attention over time. The same is true for our spiritual lives. By practicing these small rituals at home, you are nurturing not just your children's faith, but your family's shared sense of meaning and belonging.

We are so grateful to be growing alongside you as a beloved community.

Sincerely—Marena

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



Aiden McMahon, Intern Minister



Hello, folks!

I hope your Spring has been so far enjoyable - mine certainly has. This past month I took a trip to Yosemite to see it properly, with all the waterfalls still flowing strong with snowmelt. I had visited briefly in August, but this was a completely different experience. Lightning flashed across the valley, and I awoke to mist obscuring impossibly tall cliffs. I was, simply put, awestruck.

I've been thinking a lot about awe as I reflect on this past year. I've certainly encountered awe like this multiple times - visiting Muir Woods, driving down the PCH, the first time I saw Mt. Diablo lit up in verdant green - but also a subtler awe that is found in the work we do and the community we make together.

There is awe in a beautiful worship service. When the music, the message, and the mood come together harmoniously, it is an awe-inspiring experience.

There is awe in a community mobilizing to speak out against injustice. When we move not as individuals but as a collective, that, too, leaves me awestruck.

Awe is a paradoxical feeling. It is a cousin to fear, and yet there is a comfort in it. Awe says, "I am small, but I am part of something greater. I am surrounded and held by this mystery." That immensity will outlast us.

Thank you for an awe-inspiring year, MDUUC.

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

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.

Sunday, June 14

Save The Date & Join Us For This Annual Tradition!
Flower Communion and Bridging Ceremony
Bring a Flower and Take a Flower!

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

Ordnation for Ron Ahnen Sunday, May 3 at 4 p.m.

Please join us in celebrating the ordination of Ron Ahnen on Sunday, May 3 at 4:00 p.m. held in the Sanctuary and online via Livestream. We invite you to bring desserts and stay after the service to share in the joy and fellowship of this special occasion. All are welcome! Look for the purple button to join on the [service stream page](#) of our website.

All of MDUUC's Livestreams can be found on our YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@MDUUC/streams>

**CHALICE MUSIC
SUMMER CAMP**
SUGGESTED DONATION: \$150 PER PARTICIPANT

**JUNE
08-12**

- MORNING SESSION (9AM-12PM), FOR AGES 3-6
- AFTERNOON SESSION (1-4PM)
 - FOR RISING 2ND-8TH GRADERS
- CAMP COUNSELOR OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE
 - FOR RISING 9TH GRADERS & UP!

SAVE THE DATE! FRIDAY, JUNE 12! Performance held on last day of camp!

Chalice Music Summer Camp @ MDUUC June 8 through June 12 —with performance on June 12!

Join us for a week of singing, movement, and fun! Spread the word and get ready for music, connection, and community.

We look forward to having you and your family!

- Morning session, 9am-12pm: For ages 3-6
Suggested donation: \$150 per child
- Afternoon session, 1pm-4pm: For rising 2nd-8th graders
Suggested Donation: \$150 per child
- Camp Counselor Positions - This track is intended for rising 9th through 12th graders. This is an amazing leadership opportunity for teens!

Please email Marena@mduuc.org with any questions.

Donations can be made while registering for the program, or separately online at: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/giving/to/2026-chalice-summer-camp>

Checks are also welcomed.

Did You Know?

Did you know that we have virtual meditations on our website at

<https://mduuc.org/virtual-meditation/>

Also available on Spotify! Search for "Beacon Light"

or subscribe here: <https://open.spotify.com/show/4iQZnnkS3HlXBa94JRuMin?si=808541c48b2b451f>



A Message From Your Board of Trustees

Greetings, members and friends,

We hope you were able to join us for our wonderful celebration of 75 years of MDUUC! It was truly inspirational to hear many of the back stories of those who have been a part of the church and the growth of our beautiful campus. Rev. Sammons' recounting of his journey to become the lead minister at MDUUC, now our Minister Emeritus, was a rich testimony to the heart and spirit that went into the creation of this church.

A huge shout out to all who created the day – Rev. Leslie, Rev. Rodney, DRE Marena McGregor, Intern Minister Aiden McMahan, Laura Zucker, guest song leader Carl Oser and our wonderful Chalice Choir, Jen Marsh, Ging Lee and Emma Brody. A toast to all the storytellers who shared personal remembrances of their time at MDUUC. Our tables were bountiful with sweet breads and food platters as we shared lively in community, with friends old and new.

It was very fitting to have this celebration, and this learning, as we are moving through our 2026-2027 pledge drive. It served as a reminder of the messaging this church offers, the hope it brings to people, the reminder that the creation of MDUUC is ever-evolving, open to new stories and welcoming those looking for a unique faith community.

Common questions:

When does my pledge amount begin? Your pledge, however you prefer to contribute —monthly, weekly, etc. —starts in July.

What is the difference between a pledge and a donation? Your **pledge** is a promise of a contribution over time within the July 2026-June 2027 church year. You decide how you will fulfill the pledge – automatic withdrawal, envelope in the collection plate during the service, mailing in a check, etc.

You can **donate** at any time throughout the year – in the Sunday collection, or in addition to your regular pledge (e.g. Share the Plate, Minister's Discretionary Fund or other special offerings).

What if I am unable to make a specific commitment at this time? We ask that you submit a pledge of \$0. This lets us know that you have considered this so there is not need to follow up with you regarding a pledge. But please know if you make a pledge and your circumstances change, you can always adjust your pledge, online or calling the office.

Do you call people about pledging? If we do not receive a pledge, of any amount, from you, we may call to see if you are considering a pledge or what questions you may have.

Pledging is always a time of many questions and, we hope, thoughtful consideration. Please feel free to ask your ministers, a Board member or call the office and speak with Jen Marsh with questions you may have. If we don't have an immediate answer, we will get one and respond to you as soon as possible.

Grateful for your presence, your participation and your financial support for MDUUC.

In Faith and Gratitude,

Linda Russell, President
2025-2026 MDUUC Board of Trustees

wednesday nights
ARE WONDERFUL AT MDUUC!

JOIN US ON 1ST & 3RD WEDNESDAYS
May 6 & May 20

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 May the themes are:

May 6 - "What is lighting a fire in you?"

May 20 - "How do you hold the grounding of community?"

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 to do so in new ways that 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. We will use discussion, ritual, story, and shared experiences to remind ourselves of key skills for these times.

Mindfulness Reboost on Saturday Mornings

Did you know that our mindfulness group is still going strong? And that you can join in person in the Fireside Room or on campus? This is a great chance to connect with a dedicated group who make a priority of being mindful. We have some very experienced leaders and starting in May, Travis McPhee will be returning to lead the group in an extended teaching session once a month. Check it out to be more mindful.

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 to be added on to the mailing list.
- Virtual Meditations - Visit [HERE](#) for recordings.
- Rituals of Resilience is a embodied practice held on the 2nd Wednesday evenings that offers ways that can help rid our bodies of the stress and trauma of these times.

These sessions allow you to connect with yourself and our community, whether you're new to meditation or have been practicing for years.

RITUALS OF RESILIENCE


Join online or in the Sanctuary May 13, 6:30PM

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.

Register at <https://registrations.planningcenteronline.com/signups/3557817>

WE ARE MOSAIC

PLEASE SCAN TO REGISTER



2nd Saturdays 9:30–11:30AM (Bortin & Online)	4th Virtual Thursdays 7:00–9:00PM (Online Only)
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Saturday, May 9 & Thursday, May 28

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.

Saturday, May 9 will meet in Bortin Hall from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and online only on Thursday, May 28 from 7–9 p.m.

Just In Time Volunteering

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

- **Join the hospitality team for GA in June!** Also a great way to meet UUs from our area! The GA Regional Event will be from June 19–21.
- **Be a Driver!** Give a ride to those who otherwise cannot come, especially to the Annual Meeting on June 7. We'll connect you with someone in your area.
- **Help Make Coffee.** Coffee and tea helps keep the conversation flowing after services.

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

If you can give community, email justintime@mduuc.org

HATS OFF!

Honors, Accolades, and Thanks!

- Thanks to Rev. Dr. David Sammons and Jean Wilcox for their messages; to Dave, Bob Maxwell, Marge Chapel and Rowena McGregor for sharing their stories afterwards and for our videographers, ushers, board members and all who helped make the event a success.
- Thanks to Laura Randall who coordinated the reception help for the Celebration of Life for Mieke Van Hout and for all who participated including Aiko and Paul Damrow, Susie Symons, Bill Wostenberg, and Inge Yarborough.
- Thanks to the hard work of the Philanthropy committee including Emily De Falla, Chris Carter, and Elizabeth Dietsch in launching our Campaign for the Campus.
- Thanks to our departing worship associates Sheli Cryderman, Ives Humpreys and Peter Morse.
- Thanks to Diane Lovitt and David Eppley who have served diligently as chairs for our Pastoral Visitors program for extra years.
- Thanks to our loyal ushers Richard Brown, Tom Taylor and Jeff Hearn. Feel free to join them!
- To all who brought food to Commitment Sunday and helped celebrate 75 years of commitment with us!
- To our bakers who took the challenge of making something from our legacy recipes: Catherine Der, Izabella McKensie, Katie Wills, Linda Russell, Nancy White, Peggy Kroll
- To all who prepared our grounds and buildings to be a welcoming campus
- To Linda Russell, Sharon Solstice, Mary Schriber, Mary Lou Correia and Peggy Kroll for leading the clean-up after the party.
- To our launderers who took home tablecloths to wash!
- To Katherine Wellington and Angie Walters for shopping groceries for Commitment Sunday
- To Andrew Tjang for picking up our party platters, and Susie Barr-Wilson for our many, donuts!
- To our drivers Zendra Zehner and Mary-Helen Binger

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

Membership Book Signing - May 3

Thinking about joining? Have you been visiting and wondering about next steps, or interested in participating and having a voice in our congregation's future? On the first Sunday of each month, you can sign the membership book—a simple way to express your commitment to this community.

Look for a minister or board member outside the Sanctuary doors at 11:30 a.m., 15 minutes after the service ends.

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.

Please choose only one meeting to attend:

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

Movies That Matter Sunday, May 24 at 12:30 p.m., Children's Chapel

In May, we will be viewing: Imara Jones, Ware Lecture, 2025 General Assembly. Please join in the Children's Chapel. Bring your lunch or a snack, and join us to watch and discuss the viewing.

Exploring Whiteness Together Virtual Meeting, May 27, 4th Wednesday, 7-8PM

Link to join is on the calendar and [HERE](#).

Interested in having a non-judgmental 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.



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.*

Join Us for the General Assembly of Congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Democracy is at the heart of how we make decisions as UUs and the heart of that is our annual gathering. This year we will be a host site for what is largely a virtual General Assembly. We have gathered for virtual General Assemblies before and have found the companionship to truly enhance the experience so we are excited to do so again. Here is a little of what we have planned (subject to change as we see numbers etcetera!) We are looking for some volunteers to help make hospitality happen!

To volunteer email GA2026@mduuc.org.

- **Friday Night** - Welcome circle and game night! We will have snacks, board games and a chance to get to know one another.
- **Saturday** - Brief gathering worship featuring Dr. Elias Ortega-Aponte of Meadville-Lombard Theological School BEFORE programming starts.
- **Live workshop options:**
 - Conversation on theology with Dr. Ortega Aponte
 - DRUUMM Gathering sponsored by the dynamic California chapter of Diverse and Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries
 - Saturday Night party with special guest TheRevDrDJ
- **Sunday** -
 - Live hymn sing featuring our acclaimed music director Jyvonne Haskin.
 - Opportunities for groups to arrange to lunch together informally after the closing session.
 - Session on the Free Families campaign to end the detention of children, youth and families sponsored by the Free Families Coalition.

Help With the Mary Fenelon Shower!

Last month we gathered to dedicate the shower in the Gilmartin Building to Mary Fenelon who was instrumental in making it happen. As Rev. Rodney shared, the shower not only makes ours a better site for the Winter Nights program, it also lets us offer showers to people throughout the week.

If you are interested in helping out, contact Rev. Rodney or intern minister Aiden McMahon for information. We could especially use a few more folks to wash towels and contribute shampoo, conditioner and liquid soap.

Free Families Fridays

Need some inspiration? Have you been participating in work to support our immigrant neighbors, especially those with children? Are you interested in learning more about what is being done to help end family separation, deportation and detention? Are you in need of a way to have your spirit uplifted by song and connection? If so, please join the weekly Free Families Fridays gatherings which you can register for [here](#). This weekly gathering is designed to boost your spirits as well as connect you with other activists concerned about these efforts.

Fridays, May 1, May 8, May 15 and May 22 at 1 p.m.

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/BFn6wyu_R7mbIVvkQvvNoQ#/registration

Living Our Values: Actions You Can Take

The potential for justice exists in all spaces we cultivate together, including the virtual ones! Visit our web-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/>

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](#)

Help Report ICE Sightings

No account required and with real-time reports.

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

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/#CjQKIEs2U2Tujbt12h9uOPPi-7FEai-aTxJvqDHLlaQkGONEhBSeDW4e-w5A2qJR2-xSG6G>

Share The Plate - CASA Sunday, May 10

CASA - In 1977, out of a dire need to have more information about the children appearing before him, Juvenile Court Judge David Soukup created Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) in Seattle, Washington. CASA was founded in 1981 through the leadership of Judge Richard Patsey as Court Appointed Special Representatives (CASR) of Contra Costa County, was one of the first four CASA organizations. CASR became Court Appointed Special Advocates of Contra Costa County in 2001. Today there are close to 950 CASA programs nationwide.

They are an independent, 501(c)(3) community-benefit organization, but they operate under the authority of and according to guidelines established by the Judicial Council, as outlined in the California State Welfare and Institutions Code and in the California Rules of Court. They are a member of both, the National and California CASA Associations.

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.

Sunday, May 17, Bortin Hall

Poetry Workshop, 1:30–3:30 p.m.
Followed by an Open Mic Event at 3:30 p.m.

Featuring Poems by Casey Gardner
and Music by Laura Zucker

\$15 donation requested for poetry workshop
Event recommended for ages 16 & up.

Casey Gardner will be hosting a poetry and music open mic event as well as reading from her debut poetry collection “The Werewolf Doesn’t Die in the End”. These poems explore the relationship between the mind, the body, and the culture that they both inhabit. Event will also feature music by Laura Zucker.

Following the Bid4Love Writing Workshop, anyone is welcome to read their work in the open mic, including workshop participants. Anyone is also welcome to join the workshop for a \$15 donation. Event recommended for ages 16 and up.

MDUUC Art Gallery - Solar Resist Art Featuring Marianna Tubman



Marianna Tubman creates striking works from fabric samples and found objects, using resist techniques that reveal color when exposed to heat or light. By layering screens, twisting fabric, or placing three-dimensional objects, she creates textured resists where depth and shadow shape each piece. Inspired by a lifelong habit

of collecting shells, feathers, coins, leaves, pebbles—and even roadside and beach finds—Marianna embraces the mystery of what these materials might become. She invites viewers to follow these works on their own journey of discovery.

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.

Celebration of Life for Michelle Jenkins

Please save the date for Friday, June 5 at 2 p.m.

More details will be announced soon.

Celebration of Life for Harvey Segal

Saturday, June 6 at 11 a.m.

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

Celebration of Life for Barbara Sugrue

Saturday, June 13 at 2 p.m.

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

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, 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 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



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

June Beacon Deadline

Wednesday, May 20 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

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 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.

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

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 provided by the Kairos Center and share with others (includes printable paperdoll template) and take action —[Download Here!](#)

Not Getting Our Emails?

- Check your spam folder and mark “Not Spam”
- Save these MDUUC emails into your contacts
 - no-reply@planningcenteronline.com
 - publications@mduuc.org
 - mailer@churchcenteronline.com

A Mindful Nature Gathering: Connecting in Uncertain Times

May 11, 2026 from 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Meet at the Redwood Area near Bortin Hall

Many of us are carrying a persistent heaviness right now. It can be hard to know what to do with all that is unfolding in the world. Beneath much of what feels frightening or destabilizing is a deeper thread of disconnection from one another, from our inner steadiness, and from the living Earth that holds us.

While this moment certainly calls to action, it also invites us to root in connection.

This 90-minute gathering offers space to:

- Connect inwardly through gentle mindful awareness of what is present for you
- Connect with one another through simple, facilitated sharing
- Connect with nature as both refuge and partner – receiving support from Nature and anchoring to our roles in supporting its many forms

Join us for this free community offering facilitated by Travis MacPhee and Jenny Hernandez. Together we will practice an ancient and deeply human response to uncertain times: slowing down, coming into relationship, and tending what is here so we may move forward more grounded, connected and whole.

All are welcome. Accessibility and inclusion will be prioritized. Please disclose any accessibility needs with your registration. Feel free to reach out to Travis@mduuc.org with further questions.

Community Concert Series Presents

Aki Kumar

Friday, May 15 at 8PM



COMMUNITY CONCERT SERIES PRESENTS
AKI KUMAR
FRIDAY, MAY 15
8PM AT MDUUC
\$30. GET TICKETS ON EVENTBRITE.
SLIDING SCALE TICKETS SOLD
AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR.

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

Advance tickets sold on EventBrite:

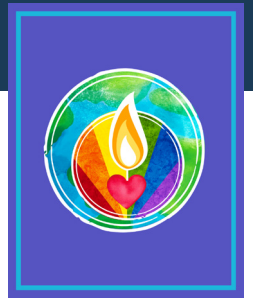
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/aki-kumar-tickets-1984209655493>

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

The Community Concert Series (formerly Devil Mountain Coffee House) offers an opportunity to experience great music in a warm and informal setting. Our performers present a rich variety of musical genres: mostly acoustic, mostly original, but always wonderful.

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.

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
Rev. Rodney Lemery, Associate Minister, rodney@mduuc.org
Jyvonne Haskin Music Director, jyvonne@mduuc.org
Marena McGregor, Director of Religious Education, marena@mduuc.org
Jen Marsh Prink, Congregational Administrator, jenm@mduuc.org
Aiden McMahon, Intern Minister, aiden@mduuc.org
Brett Carson, Accompanist, brettcarrson@mduuc.org
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Rev. Dr. David Sammons, Minister Emeritus
Rev. Ranwa Hammamy, Affiliated Minister
Rev. Meg Richardson, Affiliated Minister
Board of Trustees - board@mduuc.org

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

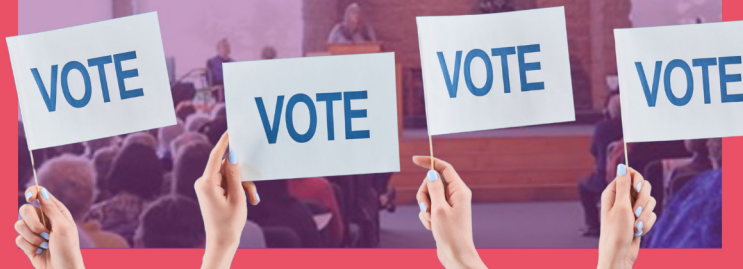
Bluesky: [mduuc.bsky.social](https://www.mduuc.org)
Podcast on Spotify - Beacon Light

Annual Meeting - June 7, 10:30AM
Arrive early to register to vote!

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

JUNE 7, 10:30 AM

Please save the date and join us.



**Flower Communion and Bridging
Ceremony - June 14, 10:30 a.m.**

FLOWER COMMUNION

and Bridging Ceremony



**BRING A FLOWER,
TAKE A FLOWER!**



EXTRA FLOWERS WELCOMED!

**SUNDAY, JUNE 14
10:30 A.M.**



*We will be honoring our youth
who are graduating high school
with a celebration after service.*