



# Mt Diablo UU Beacon

*Transforming Ourselves and Our World*

Volume 73, No. 2

February 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, FEBRUARY 1

**Walking Together: Stories From Immigration Court.** Join us for a worship service of witness and solidarity as community organizer Sergio Jaime Lopez shares stories of courage from immigrants navigating the asylum process in Contra Costa County. Through bilingual music, personal testimony, and collective commitment, we'll explore what it means to accompany our neighbors seeking safety and freedom.

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8

**When Souls Cry Out.** When we are confronted with affronts to our values on such a regular basis, we can suffer spiritual injury. Chaplains and others who deal with those who are subject to such on-going assaults to their core beliefs call this “moral injury.” Join Rev. Leslie Takahashi to examine how we counter this debilitating condition.

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15

**Finding Our Voice(s).** When we speak, it is not just our own voice; instead, we speak with a synthesis of many voices, learned, quoted, and internalized. The voices we choose to amplify matter, and in this day and age, we have more power to shape our voices than ever before. Join Intern Aiden McMahon as he reflects on the voices that have shaped him, and the ones he is working to integrate.

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

**Happiness As Resilience.** When our days are filled with much that makes us despair, happiness can seem frivolous or a form of spiritual by-pass. Yet as living creatures, we need happiness. Rev. Leslie Takahashi will talk about this essential form of survival—from the perspective of those who have had to seek it despite circumstances for generations AND with new research.

## Congregational Forum

**Join us on February 22, 2026, 12:30–1:30 p.m.**

A strong gathering of minds and hearts shaped six proposals at our November 2025 “Let’s Dream Together” session. As we update our process, join the Board and leaders of our congregation for a fresh chance to dream and help guide what comes next!

## WEDNESDAY EVENING PROGRAMS

February 4 & February 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. Here are the themes for this month: On February 4, “How can we hear the songs of our heart?” On February 18, “How do we center Love?”

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

<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!!!!

Many are feeling the need to pause and care for their inner lives. While we cannot know what lies ahead, we can choose to meet this time with presence and renewed connection.

Join us on Saturday, February 7, from 9:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. for this gentle half-day retreat designed to help you breathe deeply, restore what feels depleted, and begin again with clarity.

Breath & Spirit offers a quiet space for anyone feeling the weight of the year, longing for steadiness, or simply needing moments of reflection and companionship. Together, we will release accumulated strain, reconnect inwardly, and cultivate a grounded sense of calm.

\$20 suggested donation. Please do not let this amount be a barrier from joining. Register here: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3020584>

## Leslie's Logos

Sometimes it feels as if the world is crying.  
Or if it is not, that it should be.

Images of violence multiply in our nation and around the world, much of it done using the resources of this nation, while many among us face increased struggles to be safe, warm, and fed.

Within that frame, the rhythms of our own lives continue. Which means that some of us are celebrating great accomplishments, some of us are mourning great losses and some of us are just more in need of comfort in these times. And it matters, and we as a community still wish to embrace all.

I remember when, a few years into being part of a Unitarian Universalist community, I knew I was all in. It was the day I realized the part of the service which was most important to me wasn't the minister's message (and the minister in my home church was a brilliant preacher.) Rather, it was the time when we heard the joys and sorrows of the community. I wanted to know how my friends—and my chosen extended family members—were doing. In the days before Livestreaming, THAT was why I came to church. I could buy the sermons on cassette tapes (yep, for real—old school) in the Fellowship Hall later. Yet I wanted to hear how my beloveds were doing.

Since the election of November 2025, the world has seemed off-kilter. One of the ways I know this is that attendance is down in the many groups we have to support people who are grieving, going through a transition, caretaking, fighting addiction, dealing with difficult diagnoses, etc. And one of the ways that has been true for me is that people are not letting us know of major life events. New life! (Yay!) New jobs! (YES!) Moving! (Boo.) Illness. (Oh no! How can we help?) Even deaths and pending end of life issues have gone unreported. When I follow up, people say that it seemed unimportant because of all that is going on.

Yet many people have lived under oppression and chaos as well as threats of violence for lives and generations. And what they know is the important rituals of caring and connection are lifelines. My friends, sharing your celebrations and your losses is a form of service and I invite you all to bring your offerings!

In faith, persistence, and everyday resistance,



Leslie

Rev. Leslie serves as the community's Lead Minister. Feel free to email at [leslie@mduuc.org](mailto: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](mailto:leslietakahashi@bsky.social)) and on [Substack](#). To make an appointment with Rev. Leslie, visit <https://calendly.com/revlesliemeet>.



## Marena McGregor, DRE

Greetings and Happy February!



Are you ready to start planning your children and youth's summer camp experiences? Our Chalice Music Summer Camp is Back!

Get ready for a week filled with music, movement, and joy! We are thrilled to announce that the Chalice Music Summer Camp will return this year from June 8 through June 12.

This camp is more than just learning notes on a page; it's a vibrant opportunity for children and youth to build confidence, spark creativity, and find community through the power of song and play. We will wrap up our week together with a special performance on Friday, June 12, where campers can share their hard work and spirit with family and friends.

### Camp Sessions & Details

We have tailored programs for every age group, ensuring everyone from toddlers to teens has a place to shine:

- Morning Session (9 am – 12 pm): Ages 3–6  
*Suggested donation: \$150 per child*
- Afternoon Session (1 pm – 4 pm): Rising 2nd – 8th graders  
*Suggested donation: \$150 per child*

### High School Leadership Opportunity

- Camp Counselor Track: Rising 9th – 12th graders

*Do you have a teen looking for a meaningful way to spend their summer?* Our Counselor Track is a wonderful leadership opportunity for teens to grow their skills, mentor younger campers, and help create the magic behind the scenes. To apply, please email Marena at [Marena@mduuc.org](mailto:Marena@mduuc.org).

**Registration is officially now open.** We encourage you to spread the word, invite neighbors, and bring a friend along for the fun! We can't wait to make music with you this June!

Sincerely—Marena

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



Save the date and come welcome Spring with a Equinox Sunday Service held on Sunday, March 22. All are invited to anticipate the awakening of Spring with a focus on renewal, balance, and nature, featuring Earth-centered rituals.

## Rev. Rodney Lemery Associate Minister



Each year for over a decade now, MDUUC has taken part in the Winter Nights Rotating Shelter Program. As one of the participating congregations throughout central and east Contra Costa, MDUUC offers a clean, safe, and warm shelter to homeless families with children for two weeks each winter, serving up to 30 persons at any one time.

Winter Nights provides bedding, tents, and professional supervision for each congregation. Besides the funds the MDUUC congregation contributes to support the program, over a hundred of our members take part each year by making and serving breakfasts and dinners, leading activities for the children, and cleaning, installing, and taking down the equipment. Time, talent, and treasure are the ways we ask our members and friends to contribute to our community.

We are now accepting monetary donations to cover the costs of non-perishable and perishable items alike.

If treasure is a way you can support this program, please visit our Giving page found on our website and select 2026 Winter Nights:

### [DONATE HERE](https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/giving/to/2026-winter-nights)

(<https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/giving/to/2026-winter-nights>)

If you're able to contribute talent and time to this program, please sign-up for a volunteer shift and directly support our guests by contributing to the many activities and meals we will facilitate over the two-week period.

### [VOLUNTEER HERE](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D44AEA828A2F-CC61-61717301-mduuc#/)

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D44AEA828A2F-CC61-61717301-mduuc#/>

Here's what MDUUC members and friends have to say about their participation in Winter Nights:

*"The rewards are enormous — when I know that I have touched another human being in a direct way." Ellen Doerfer.*

*"Volunteering at Winter Nights with my kids is a great way to get them to think about others and appreciate their own privilege. It's a great way to expose my kids to the way that giving and helping can open your heart and bring such joy." Meranda Broder.*

*"I have been helping out with the Winter Nights cooking for ... years. I have always felt appreciated, and it's kind of fun." Bob Hanson.*

*"I helped with breakfast a few times. Very organized and clear instructions. Got to know the guests, who were very appreciative. So grateful for the opportunity to put my UU values in action!" Elsie Mills.*

Ready to volunteer? Prepare for your experience by completing our brief online training program, [found here](#).

(<https://mduuc.org/living-our-values/winternights-training/>)

With respect and hope—Rev. Rodney

Rev. Rodney serves as the Associate Minister. Schedule appointments at <https://calendar.app.google/Ja3STbGbF6TrY28S9>

Please Save The Date & RSVP

Saturday, March 7

12:30 to 2:30 PM

Bortin Hall

## Celebration of Community

(formerly known as The Fellowship Event)

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.

Join us for this celebratory event formerly known as the Annual Fellowship Event. The Celebration of Community event will be held on Saturday, March 7, from 5–8 PM.

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 dessert at the dessert table, or volunteer for a caregiving shift, please let us know when you RSVP on the form or contact [justintime@mduuc.org](mailto:justintime@mduuc.org).

### **Please RSVP here:**

<https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3020584>

FEBRUARY 8  
12:30-1:30PM  
BORTIN HALL

## Love & Liberation *justice sunday*

### JUSTICE SUNDAY - FEB 8

Join us Sunday, February 8, for Justice Sunday as we dance, create, and share love with detained families. From 12:30-1:30 PM, we'll groove to justice, joyful music, and craft beautiful homemade Valentine's Day cards for families separated by immigration detention through the Free Families campaign. Lunch is provided with our Love & Liberation Bowl featuring brown rice and quinoa, roasted vegetables, black beans, avocado, lime-cilantro dressing, and vegan cornbread, with vegetarian and omnivore options available.

Ordination for  
**Ron Ahnen**

Save  
the Date!  
May 3,  
4-7PM



## A Message From Your Board of Trustees

Greetings, folks!

First of all, we truly want to extend our appreciation to all who made time on their Sunday afternoons for our congregational Forums and for the wonderful turnout for our congregational meeting. From the 50+ people online to the 130+ in the sanctuary, we easily reached the quorum required for our voting. This process is central to who we are, as we make decisions that affect all of us.

Engaging: to occupy oneself – to lean into commitment. This year one of the best ways for us to celebrate 75 years as a church community is to engage in our visioning process – where we want to go as we look ahead.

This discussion began at a Forum in fall of 2025. In November, many of us met on a Saturday morning to take the conversations wider and deeper. At that meeting, people broke into impromptu focus groups, to articulate the commitments of this church and how we express these commitments in our name, mutual aid (transitional housing), caring for our campus while also caring for the climate, financial sustainability, and volunteering. This process truly laid the groundwork for bigger conversations to come. This is a Board-lead activity and we look forward to having more of you engaging in this very important process.

We called the outcome of these small groups, “Provocative Areas” because, in each area, we are asked to consider the issue from many perspectives – an insider who has been here for a long time, new members and friends and those looking for us, as well as multi-generational and multicultural. As you review each of those areas listed here, consider where you might want to engage in the conversation that will be continuing over the coming months.

- Design a multi-purpose campus that supports spiritual grounding, fosters all generations, preserves and enriches our physical spaces and heritages.
- Come into right relationship with people and all beings; create a safe, beautiful, welcoming and stable sanctuary by eliminating fossil fuels, developing humane and sustainable solutions and modeling for others.
- Create a name that becomes an emblem that speaks to the beauty of our welcoming community and embodies our aspirations and plurality.
- Possess an abundance of flexible resources to support our physical needs, and activities which enhance spiritual growth. Our donors give joyously knowing they are perpetuating UU values. We risk audacious bold asks while also being appreciative and sensitive to individual circumstances.
- Help address the housing crisis in Contra Costa County that is grounded in empathy and generosity, in ways that discuss, acknowledge and mitigate important risks (based on facts not fear).
- Engage and support our community and congregation through volunteerism as a way of improving health and well-being supporting our ministers and staff, deepening connections, transforming ourselves and our world.

To engage in this process, please listen for updates to come and also feel free to contact a member of the ministerial staff or a member of the Board to indicate your interest.

In Faith and Gratitude,

Linda Russell, President

2025-2026 MDUUC Board of Trustees

## Holding Our Center In Traumatic Times Saturday, February 21 from 9–11 a.m.

**2-HOUR WORKSHOP - 3<sup>RD</sup> SATURDAYS  
FROM 9 TO 11AM - HYBRID EVENT**

### Holding Our Center In Traumatic Times

[Click Here to Register Online](#)

Join Rev. Leslie and the Pastoral Visitors Team for an opportunity to talk about how we take care of our bodies, minds and spirits during traumatic times

Join Rev. Leslie and the Pastoral Visitors team for this 2-hour workshop for an opportunity to talk about how we take care of our bodies, minds and spirits during traumatic times. Contemporary trauma theory has helped us understand some of the ways to center ourselves in the midst of disruption.

Register online on the calendar or visit here:  
<https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3431895>

### 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](mailto: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>

## 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, February 1.

## GETTING TO KNOW UU

A Discussion To Help You Understand What We Believe In



### Getting To Know UU

OWL Room | March 7, 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 7, from 12:30–2:30pm. [Register here: https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3416696](https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3416696)

## 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 “We Are Mosaic” a deep exploration of antiracist and anti-oppression thought and action using a course created and provided to us by our Unitarian Universalist Association (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.

PLEASE register for ALL the Thursday virtual and Saturday hybrid sessions separately.

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

#### Upcoming gatherings:

Saturday, February 14, 2026 at 9:30–11:30 a.m., in Bortin Hall and online. [Zoom Link](#)

Thursday, February 26, 2026 at 7:00–9:00 p.m., online. [Zoom Link](#)

Register for either dates by scanning the qr code, visiting our calendar found on the website and Church Center app, and [here](#).

## 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.



Feeling stress, anyone? If you answered yes, then consider joining us for embodied practices are ways that we can help rid our bodies of the stress and trauma of these times. Join the ministers for this gathering on February 11, 6:30 p.m. held in the Sanctuary. *Due to the nature of this programming, it will be in-person only.*

## Dances of Universal Peace - 4th Sundays

Sunday, February 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!

# HATS OFF!

## Honors, Accolades, and Thanks!

- To Dan Barnard who is concluding his service on the personnel committee where he has been an invaluable member.
- To the Climate Justice Team for their work on the issue of reducing the use of fossil fuels on the campus, especially Matt Smith for his leadership.
- To David Fitzgerald, Janet Danciger, Jim Hasse, Norman Meites, and Therese McCluskey for their leadership in the Saturday Mindfulness Meditation Group.
- To Kathryn Wellington for analyzing the pricing of the HVAC project
- To David Stanley and Lynn Scoby for doing dishes after dinner
- To Bruce Pennington for irrigation work
- To Kevin Hsieh, Alison Ray, Amy Moseley, and Julia McLeod for their help with the youth and RE
- For songleaders while Jyvonne was out, especially Scott Schrader, Aki Rasmussen, Betsy Livengood for December, Laura Zucker, and the solstice helpers.

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

## A Special Thanks To You! - From The Recipients of The Hope Solutions Giving Tree Program -

“Thank you so much for the blessings for this holiday. My family is very grateful for all of you! Thank you! Merry Christmas!”

—Anonymous

“Thank you for everything. Happy Holidays!”

—Hernandez Family

“Happy holidays from my family to yours. We are grateful.”

—God bless you

“Thank you so much for the gift and I hope [you] have a wonderful season. Merry Christmas.”

—Anonymous

“Thank you for all the gifts. I appreciate everything you all do. Merry Christmas.”

—xo

“Thank you so much for your kindness. Happy Holidays!”

—Anonymous

## Restorative Practices

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

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

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/4iQZnnkS3HXBa94lRuMin?si=808541c48b2b451f](https://open.spotify.com/show/4iQZnnkS3HXBa94lRuMin?si=808541c48b2b451f)



Sunday, February 22 from 5–7 p.m.  
Bring a Multi-Cultural Snack, A Game and Friends!  
Bring a Puzzle To Exchange!

Join us for this beloved community tradition! On Sunday, February 22 starting at 5 p.m. we will gather for a night of board games, puzzles and fun snacks. Grab your favorite board games and come on!

And if you like you can bring a snack that reflects an aspect of your culture however you define that. Like to make pierogies? Sushi? Scones? Know a great source for halo-halo? Bread pudding? Ginger snaps? Willing to try those latkes gluten-free? Is your culture rainbow cookies or vegan lentil pasta? Bring it on!

Able to come and can't bring anything, then bring us the gift of yourself.

Do you have a puzzle you have already worked and are looking for another to occupy these cooler and still-longer evenings? Bring a puzzle and take a puzzle. (And we are looking for an engaging 500 piece one for people to do during coffee hour because we learned during our Harvest Festival this year that this is fun to do in community.)

## 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

Get involved! Start your 2026 right by volunteering. This community may be led by our amazing Board and ministers and staff, yet it is powered by volunteers. A regular volunteer slot gives a meaningful structure to a week and also gives a feeling of stability in our often chaotic world.

**How to volunteer?** Check out the Just In Time section in Friday's "This Week at MDUUC" email.

Here are some top ideas and you can volunteer for any of them by emailing [justintime@mduuc.org](mailto:justintime@mduuc.org):

- **Help make coffee.** You love it and your friends do too. Despite rumors to the contrary this is NOT made by magic elves. If the staff don't have to do it, they can help do other welcoming preparations on Sunday mornings.
- **Be an usher.** Join the list by visiting <https://registrations.planningcenteronline.com/signups/3351988>
- **Become a pastoral visitor.** Rev. Leslie is taking applications for this loving ministry which extends the care of this community to others. Message "pastoral care" to [leslie@mduuc.org](mailto:leslie@mduuc.org)
- **Count cash.** We operate a financially responsible campus which means that we require two people to count cash. If you miss a world of bills and coins, this might be for you. This is also a good task for people available weekdays.
- **Assist with mailings.** Help fold the monthly Beacon Newsletter and other mailings. We need people who are available during weekdays.

Gifts of time power our amazing community. If you can give community, send a message to [justintime@mduuc.org](mailto:justintime@mduuc.org).

*The best way to have a meaningful relationship with this community is to get involved!*

## 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](mailto:mailer@churchcenteronline.com),  
[no-reply@planningcenteronline.com](mailto:no-reply@planningcenteronline.com) and  
[publications@mduuc.org](mailto:publications@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>.

## Violin & Piano Concert

A Special Bid4Love Event

**Bid Online Now Through Feb. 15, 6PM!**

**Event Date: March 22 at 3PM**

Oops!!! This popular event donated by Karl & Betsy Livengood did not make it in to the Bid4Love Auction catalog this past fall and is now ready for your bid! There are 34 spots are available!

Enjoy a Sunday afternoon violin & piano concert at Suzanne Lofquist's Walnut Creek home featuring Johanna McShane and Julian Fong playing the Suite for Violin and Piano by William Grant Still, and Beethoven's Sonata for Violin and Piano Number 8 in c minor. Refreshments will be served after the Concert. Winners will be contacted directly by the host(s).

**Place Your Bid Here:** <https://event.auctria.com/94b79e53-3c29-4725-8b9f-346b8d4ec3c7/>

## Register for the Estate Planning Forum

**March 1, 2026, 12:30 p.m. in Bortin Hall**

The Legacy Committee will present an informal estate-planning forum, featuring local estate attorney Katie Capielo, of the law firm of Candelaria LLP. The seminar will include time for questions and answers about estate planning.

Please register to attend online or by using this link:  
<https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/1145310>

## Winter Season Community Circle

**- Limited Space Available -**

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. Each Community Circle lasts 6 weeks and space is Limited!

Before registering, please check your calendar to make sure you can attend all 6 sessions.

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](mailto:ccadmin@mduuc.org) for assistance, thank you!

## Share The Plate - Winter Nights Sunday, February 8

Winter Nights protect homeless families by providing shelter in a clean, safe, and warm environment and to help them break the homelessness cycle by assisting them toward self-sufficiency and into stable housing. We provide unwavering guidance and support so that families can work towards overcoming the barriers to sustainable housing. At Winter Nights we recognize the power of working TOGETHER.

## 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.

## 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 a.m. until 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](mailto:leslie@mduuc.org)

## 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](mailto:kyounger@im4humanintegrity.org).

## 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. Submit a report through the form, contributing to a more aware and prepared community. No account required and with real-time reports.

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



## Wednesday Virtual 12 Steps For UUs

Any time of stress can awaken addictive behavior and these coping strategies can become their own morass. 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. The link to join is also on the calendar.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/98830218453>

## 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](http://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.

## 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.

## 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](mailto:artleadership@mduuc.org).

**QUEER CORNER**  
*Justice and Joy*  
**Saturday, February 14, 2026**  
**11:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m.,**  
**San Francisco**  
**Fort Mason Festival Pavilion**

15th Annual BAAITS Two-Spirit Powwow  
The only Queer Powwow in existence!!!

## BAY AREA AMERICAN INDIAN TWO-SPIRITS 15TH ANNUAL TWO-SPIRIT POWWOW

GRAND ENTRY  
GOURD DANCE  
DANCER/ DRUM REGISTRATION

WELCOME  
Gregg Castro

EMCEE

Dustina Abrahamson, Coy McLemore

ARENA DIRECTOR  
Buffalo Barbie

HEAD DANCERS  
Sage Noelle, Kenneth Taylor

HEAD GOURD DANCER  
Ricky Sheridan

NORTHERN DRUM  
Red Hoop

SOUTHERN DRUM  
Southern Pride

TABULATOR  
Shea Norris

All are welcome; Indian Market, Frybread,  
Non-Gender Contest Dancing; No drugs, alcohol, or weapons

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 14, 2026**  
FORT MASON CENTER FESTIVAL PAVILLION  
**2 MARINA BLVD**  
**SAN FRANCISCO 94123**

FOLLOW US FOR MORE ON IG:  
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LIMITED PARKING AVAILABLE FOR  
ELDERS AND MOBILITY IMPAIRED

## Nominating Committee

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



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

### *What do these jobs entail?*

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

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

**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>

## 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.



## Ongoing Programming

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

### Elder Journey

Elder Journey is a spirited conversation about life issues and the perspectives of older folks. Please join Rev. Leslie and the Elder Journey Community on Wednesdays from 10:30–11:30 a.m. The group meets weekly virtually and hybrid, in person at the Bortin Hall on the 2nd Wednesdays.

### Vespers

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

### Ministers' Conversations

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

### Virtual Yoga

Mondays at 7:00 p.m. (virtual). The session begins with gentle integrated yoga asanas and stretches, breath work exercises, relaxation techniques, and opportunities to set neural pathways for happiness that include laughter yoga. A 20-minute guided relaxation meditation follows. Email [yoga@mduuc.org](mailto:yoga@mduuc.org) to join the mailing list.

### Tuesday and Thursday Virtual Lunch Groups

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

### Friday AM Mini-Meditation Boost

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

### Saturday Mindfulness Meditation Group

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

### Sunday Virtual Mediation

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

### MDUUC Choir

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

### Black, Indigenous and People of Color Caucus

3rd Saturdays at 4:00 p.m. in the Oak Room and on Zoom (hybrid). Members and friends of MDUUC who identify as people of color are invited to join this gathering where we will create a sacred space of sharing and power. We meet monthly with alternating times—please email [leslie@mduuc.org](mailto:leslie@mduuc.org) to be apprised of our scheduled meeting times. Get in touch and learn more!

### Exploring Whiteness Together

4th Wednesday of every month from 7:00 p.m. on zoom. Members and friends who identify as white are invited to this gathering to create a sacred space where we can engage in what decentering whiteness means especially in a culture where whiteness is almost always the center. Through guided discussions and personal reflections, participants will explore their experiences with racism, learn about the impact of microaggressions and allyship, to develop actionable steps to become effective advocates for racial justice. Join us in this transformative journey to dismantle systemic racism and build a more inclusive community.

### MDUUC Bike Group

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

### Open Women's Group

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

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

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

### Men's Breakfast

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

### YA, Young Adult Group at MDUUC

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

### Xillennial Group (Ages 30s–40s)

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

### Community Garden Group

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

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

1st Saturday of the month, from 9 a.m.–noon. Join our to help beautify our campus while connecting with members and getting a few tasks done that cannot be done by one person alone! If you can, bring and share snacks to refuel! Contact admin@mduuc.org 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!

## **First Saturday Work Party**

**Save The Date: Saturday, Feb. 7, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.**

Join the First Saturday Work Party in February to prepare for Spring! Our Grounds Chair Bruce Pennington, who has a background as an arborist, has detected that runoff from winter rains is affecting the oaks on the edge of our property. We need people with shovels to join us from 9–12 on Saturday, February 7. We will have other projects as well to prepare for Spring. This once monthly gathering is essential for the maintenance of our grounds especially and happens on the first Sunday of most months. To learn more or to be added to the list for alerts, email the Congregational Administrator, Jen Marsh at jenm@mduuc.org.

## ***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

## **March Beacon Deadline**

Wednesday, February 18 at 10:00 a.m.  
Please send submissions to [publications@mduuc.org](mailto:publications@mduuc.org).

All submissions are subject to editing for space and approval.



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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

### MDUUC Ministers and Staff

Rev. Leslie Takahashi, Lead Minister, [leslie@mduuc.org](mailto:leslie@mduuc.org)  
Rev. Rodney Lemery, Associate Minister, [rodney@mduuc.org](mailto:rodney@mduuc.org)  
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## COMMUNITY CONCERT SERIES PRESENTS SINGER SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND

**Featuring: Alice Ducey, Judi Jaeger, Claudia Russell, Sheryl Thirlwall and Laura Zucker will enthral us with their musical magic.**

**Saturday,  
February 21 at 8PM**  
Doors open at 7:30 p.m.



**Scan QR Code to Purchase Advance Tickets.  
Join in Bortin Hall at MDUUC  
55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek, CA 94596**