



Mt Diablo UU Beacon

Transforming Ourselves and Our World

Volume 72, No. 10

November 2025

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](https://mduuc.bsky.social)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2

Joy Is the Secret of Resistance. Alice Walker says "resistance is the secret of joy" but the inverse is also true. Joy is the secret of resistance. In these tough times we often focus on resistance and forget to be joyful together. But Joy is essential! Our joy is what scares them, our joy is what we are fighting for. Please join guest preacher Heather Vickery and our worship team to hear about some of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's joyful resistance and learn about how you too can lean into joy in these troubling times.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9

Religious Freedom and Other Topics To Avoid at the Dinner Table. As with many of the freedoms we have come to take for granted, religious freedom has a central place in our tradition. As we approach this holiday time when we often engage with others who have different ideologies, this is a good time to affirm this basic principle and also to reflect on how we hold our values in these times. Join Rev. Leslie Takahashi for an exploration of these topics and a simple ritual to acknowledge the pain that restrictive or hate-filled theology can cause in our lives.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16

Optimism. A Bid4Love Service. Come and see how we rise to the challenge put to Revs. Leslie and Rodney by Les and Sue Polgars, the 2024 winners of the Bid4Love sermon! As believers in the potential for goodness in each person, we do have a link to an optimistic view. The Polgars put forward the premise that optimism is part of our tradition and one that we need right now. Some would say that optimism has been our strength and some our Achilles heel. Come and be part of the discussion of how we hold this in these times.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23

The Cost of Prophetic Witness. Prophetic voices throughout history have disrupted the status quo by breaking the comfortable silence in favor of uncomfortable truth telling. If we are to be a prophetic faith, we cannot do so without counting the cost. Join intern minister, Aiden McMahon for this service.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Not Your Mama's Communion. We affirm that each human life is sacred and also that we welcome people of many identities to our open table. Come and reflect with the ministers on these beliefs and enjoy an embodied practice of sharing the ancient ritual of communion with homemade bread and with cider. Have terrible memories of communion? This is a multi-generational service with an active and participatory way of learning.



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28 FROM 2–5PM

Community Harvest



YOU'RE INVITED!

Join us for a warm and welcoming celebration of gratitude, abundance, and connection.

Whether you attend, volunteer, or donate—your presence matters.

Together, we're building a compassionate community where everyone feels at home.



SCAN TO VOLUNTEER AND
HELP SERVE AS A COOK,
TABLE HOST, SHOPPER, OR
BE A MEAL DELIVERER

BORTIN HALL
 MT. DIABLO UU CHURCH
 55 ECKLEY LANE, WALNUT CREEK
 925.934.9135

SCAN TO RSVP OR
TO REQUEST A
MEAL TO BE
DELIVERED



SCAN TO HELP
FINANCIALLY



1st & 3rd WEDNESDAY EVENING PROGRAMS

Upcoming Dates: Wednesday, November 5 & 19

VESPERS, at 5 p.m. in the Sanctuary and online

Join Rev. Leslie Takahashi, Jo Gelinas and others for this brief mid-week gathering focused on recentering and calming. This is also a good place to hold your grief at what is happening in the world.

In November the themes will be:

- November 5: How do we witness for the world we wish to see?
- November 19: What is seeking stillness in you?

COMMUNITY DINNER, at 6 p.m. in Bortin Hall

All are welcome to join this simple meal with conversation. Please register online to help us honor a headcount for preparation.

Register for Community Dinners here or on the calendar:

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

A\$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, at 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary and online.

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!!!!

Leslie's Logos

Last summer, while I was in Ohio visiting my uncle, I walked about the campus at Oberlin College. A large oak tree spread its arms over a scenic pond with a sign saying that they have been there for more than 200 years. I thought about all that tree had seen. I wonder if it had seen my parents in their courting days and then I wondered who had planted the tree or allowed it to remain standing, who had tended it and made sure it was pruned. And who had put up the sign so newcomers such as myself could reflect on the legacies represented. This tree had seen so much and was still around to be a witness because of all who had helped it survive.



I think of those kinds of legacies all the time when I am on our campus as well. We have so many people who do so many things so that we can have the place and space of sanctuary among us. The people who had the original idea for the congregation 75 years ago, who were willing to risk the approbation of their neighbors at a time when religion meant one thing, who taught, led, gave, volunteered, cooked, sang, painted, cleaned, led and on and on. All of their legacies are here among us—both in the strength of the traditions we inherit and in more tangible places such as in our rooms, walking our labyrinth, in the plants of our memorial garden and in the stained glass, the seats, the floor boards, etc. I particularly enjoy looking at the bricks on the brick patio since that reflects many generations of legacy—those who originally volunteered to lay that patio and the family who generations later during a global pandemic, made it into an Eagle Scout project for their son whose friends took up and cleaned all those bricks and then put them down again.

We truly are warmed at fires we did not light and we are held by care from people we will never know—they made possible the care we DO know here. Next time you are on campus—or in a Zoom meeting for our technology prowess is a legacy as well—take a moment and be grateful for the generosity which has and continues to fuel this place.

May our investments in the future be solace in these present days of heartbreak.

In faith and perseverance,

Leslie

Rev. Leslie Takahashi serves as the Lead Minister for the congregation and is best reached by the church phone or leslie@mduuc.org.

Schedule an appointment with Rev. Leslie at <https://calendly.com/revlesliemeet>

November 2025

Marena McGregor, DRE

Greetings!



It's that wonderful time of year again — pageant season! We're thrilled to invite all ages and abilities to join in the joy, laughter, and community spirit of our upcoming Holiday Pageant, happening Sunday, December 15 during the service.

This year's pageant will be a lively, musical celebration filled with creativity, storytelling, and togetherness. Whether you're a singer, a mover, a shaker, or just someone who loves to spread holiday cheer — there's a place for you!

We're looking for:

- Singers (of all voice types and experience levels!)
- Movers and shakers who love to bring energy and joy to the stage
- Instrumentalists, including ukulele players, tongue drummers, and boomwhacker enthusiasts
- Anyone who wants to help us tell this magical story through music, movement, and fun

You don't need prior experience — just bring your enthusiasm and holiday spirit!

Rehearsals take place Sunday mornings at 9:00 AM leading up to the pageant. It's a wonderful way to connect with others, share in the creative process, and make lasting memories.

So come one, come all — kids, teens, adults, elders — this truly is a multi-generational celebration of love, joy, and community. There's something for everyone in this year's pageant, and we can't wait to see what we'll create together!

If you'd like to participate or learn more, please email Marena.

Let's make this holiday season one to remember — full of music, laughter, and the spirit of togetherness that makes our UU community shine.

Sincerely,

Marena

marena@mduuc.org



**Save The Date! Sunday, December 14
Holiday Pageant (During Sunday Service)**

It's not too late to join the holiday pageant!

Rehearsal dates: Nov. 9, 16, 23 and Dec. 7.
Dress rehearsal on Dec. 14.

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Rev. Rodney Lemery Associate Minister

Despite our increasingly digital lives, face-to-face connections remain essential. When we come together for community events, we lift each other up, deepen our relationships, and remind ourselves that we belong to something greater. I believe there is an ancient wisdom in sharing meals together. Breaking bread side by side creates space for authentic relationship building, mutual support, and collective growth. These gatherings become classrooms where we inspire, comfort, and renew one another.

Our September 28 "Making Our House a Home" gathering showed us exactly this. Roughly 120 people came together over a modest breakfast that became so much more. While exploring Unitarian Universalism's foundational ideas, we recognized that we were not merely absorbing information! We were actively creating community through genuine dialogue and presence.

These kinds of community gatherings are so important to provide us with refuge and respite in these difficult times. Our justice work and spiritual growth can thrive when we come together to be in community!

As autumn unfolds toward Thanksgiving, another opportunity for connection awaits. Our Community Harvest Meal on Friday, November 28, 2-5PM, holds special meaning for us. This annual tradition brings MDUUC members and neighbors together to celebrate abundance, gratitude, and relationship.

Your presence matters, whether you join us at a table, offer your skills and time, or provide financial support. Each gesture of generosity and engagement strengthens the vibrant, compassionate community we're building together. Through our individual contributions, we craft a space where everyone feels welcome, supported, and appreciated. This is how we truly make MDUUC a home.

To volunteer at the Community Harvest Meal, sign up here:
<https://people.planningcenteronline.com/forms/902305>

To attend or request meal delivery, register here:
<https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/902303>

To contribute financially, donate here: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/giving/to/community-harvest-meal-donations>

With respect and hope,
Rev. Rodney
rodney@mduuc.org



Aiden McMahon, Intern Minister

Hello All! These first two months with you have been a bit of a whirlwind, but I'm finding myself settling in now. In these past few weeks I have shared sermons and homilies, kept vigil for our immigrant neighbors, and had many wonderful visits with members of this beloved community. Thank you all for such a warm welcome.



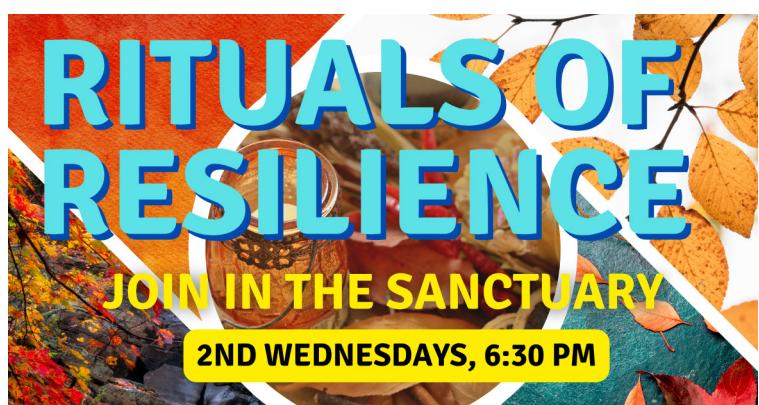
One thing I might never get used to, however, is just how different California is from New England! I find myself constantly getting surprised and delighted. I recently made a trip to a nearby public garden where there were bees and butterflies and hummingbirds, lively and energetic! Back home we would be well past such activity, though I think autumn in the Northeast has its own charm. This is especially true with regards to the many observances that happen on either side of October 31st.

I would like to use this space to uplift a couple of things I've gotten involved with. The first is our Earth-Centered group which meets after service on the 4th Sunday of the month. This is a dimension of spirituality that I am eager to explore, and I think we all have a lot to learn from each other!

Similarly, I am excited to announce "Meanderings," a group that I will be leading on the first Saturday of every month, weather permitting. My hope is to create a space for conversation and appreciation of the myriad natural spaces in and around the community. *Keep an eye on the calendar for where we'll be meeting each month!*

Here's to a wonderful church year together! ~Aiden

Rituals of Resilience, November 12 at 6:30 p.m., Sanctuary



Feeling stress, anyone? If you answered yes, then consider marking your calendar for a new gathering. Embodied practices are ways that we can help rid our bodies of the stress and trauma of these times. Join the ministers for this new monthly gathering occurring on most 2nd Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. **Please note that due to the nature of this programming, it will be in-person only.**



A Message From Your Board of Trustees

Greetings, everyone,

By the time you read this, we will have had our first congregational forum of the year, during which we hope many of you participated in the start of our visioning process for this year. It is important to note that one of the things that makes Unitarian Universalism unique is the invitation to participate in the development of this faith community. That, friends, is what shared ministry means. It is the process by which we connect not only with each other, but combine our efforts to live out the values that are important to us.

"Shared ministry means sharing in the responsibilities of the community," says Dr. Janice Marie Johnson, director of the Unitarian Universalist Association's Ministries and Faith Development staff group. **Unitarian Universalist Congregations Are Breaking with Traditional Leadership Models and Thriving, UU World, 4/1/24, Elaine McCardle.**

The article goes on to describe the changes that came about during COVID-19 and the ways in which ministers, the professional staff, and members and friends blended their efforts in order to meet the needs of the congregation. This was, and is, a unique approach to "doing church." It is an invitation to contribute - sharing ideas about the values most important to us and how we envision those values showing in our reality. It is also an expectation that you are willing to contribute in some way to make good things happen.

Did you ever read the children's story, "The Little Red Hen?" It is a very interesting tale to teach the lesson of collective participation. It is a reminder that we are all often offered an opportunity to contribute to something, even when we don't know how we may share in the end result.

At MDUUC, many things are offered but they do not happen on their own nor by coincidence. It is not just the responsibility of the ministers and the staff, or the various committees to decide what we do. Things happen because people are willing to create something of value together. Our visioning process is that opportunity to gather with others - to create a vision, to make a plan, and to carry out that plan. Leaning into those conversations and being a part of the work to be done brings us not only ownership in the process but ownership in the outcome.

The congregational forum is a monthly opportunity to help shape where we are going together as a church community. Your Board looks forward to your participation in these important discussions – Let Us Dream Together.

In Faith and Gratitude,

Linda Russell, President

2025-2026 MDUUC Board of Trustees

Let's Dream Together! Saturday, November 22, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

How do we continue to ensure that MDUUC can be a place of Sanctuary which is so needed in these times? Part of how we do this is to not just be reactive to the events of the day, rather to be proactive in continuing to ensure we have the ideas and resources to maintain and expand our presence on this campus and the community. At last month's Board forum, we began to discuss the dreams that we have—from electrifying the campus and getting away from our reliance on fossil fuels to building transitional housing to continuing to redevelop our plans for the playground to ensuring our growing choir has adequate space to caring for our trees, parking lot and other parts of campus, we are starting the conversation. Come and be part of the dream. Saturday, November 22 from 10-2.

Hot beverages provided. Please bring your ideas and perhaps a snack to share.

Register here: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3245911>

Membership Matters

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 Rev. Leslie Takahashi or a board member outside the Sanctuary doors at 11:30 a.m. or 15 minutes after service ends on **Sunday, November 2**.

Community Circle Groups

Are you looking to deepen your connections? Our Community Circles are small, supportive groups that meet regularly to share, reflect, and grow in spirit. Whether you're new or a longtime member, there's a place for you.

Visit <https://mduuc.org/connect/community-circle/> to learn more or to join the wait-list.

Dances of Universal Peace

Sunday, November 23 at 2 p.m., Sanctuary

Join us on every 4th Sunday for an interfaith, multi-cultural, spiritual practice. We honor all faith and wisdom traditions with singing, moving, prayers to promote inner peace.

These are joyous and meditative, sacred circle dances celebrating our diversity and oneness with uplifting song and live music. No partner or experience needed. All abilities are welcome!

Led by SierraLynne & Bill Wentz with friends.

Join Us for a Gala Live Event on Saturday, November 8 at 5PM in Bortin Hall

Online Pre-bidding opens soon!

Details coming later this week! Childcare is available!

Check <https://mduuc.org/bid4love-2025> for details!

Our 2025 Bid4Love online auction and gala promises to be a joyous, inclusive, and purpose-driven celebration that uplifts everyone in the congregation.

This year our theme is music and we will make good treble at our biggest annual fundraiser! Come dressed in bright colors and join us for the excitement of the Annual Bid4Love Auction, where every bid supports our amazing community! Your enthusiasm and generosity fuel the fun, so let's make this year unforgettable with a night of lively bidding that includes many unique items that are only available on-site, delicious treats, meaningful connections, and soak up the joy of being part of our MDUUC family.

What to expect? The live event will begin at 5pm with music, time to look at the silent auction items and socialize with friends. There will be yummy food provided by the committee, we'd love any donations of desserts (let us know if you can bring one, email admin@mduuc.org). We'll play some music bingo before our main event, the live auction! After the live auction you can continue bidding on silent items or find a take it now item to bring home. We have items in every price range so don't let fear of cost keep you home. Bring an MDUUC friend and enjoy a fun evening out!

Childcare is available! Register your children at: <https://mduuc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3251536>

We still need more events! Donate online at: <https://mduuc.org/bid4love-2025>

Can you help with setup, cleanup or bring a dessert? Email admin@mduuc.org.



Film & Discussion Event Every 4th Sunday!
Next Date: Nov. 23 @12:30pm, Children's Chapel

Join Linda Russell for a monthly gathering, on the 4th Sunday from 12:30-3 p.m. in the Children's Chapel. We'll come together to watch a thought-provoking film followed by a lively, values-based discussion. Whether the movie explores justice, identity, compassion, or community, we'll reflect on its meaning through a Unitarian Universalist lens.

Why Join Us?

- Grow Together – Deepen your understanding of UU principles through storytelling.
 - Connect – Share perspectives and build relationships in a welcoming space.
 - Enjoy – Relax with a good film and meaningful conversation.
- Each month will feature a different movie, so there's always something new to explore—stay tuned!

Donate to the Children's Auction!

Now collecting through Friday, November 7.

Donate clean, gently used toys and games for our children to bid with pennies! Bring the items on Sundays or drop them off in the RED BIN located by the church office.

JOIN THE MDUUC HOUSE BAND!

Hey Musicians! Are you interested in sharing your talents with your MDUUC community and furthering your spiritual practice of music making? The MDUUC House Band is looking for you to join us for rehearsals on **November 9 and December 14, from 12-1 p.m.** in the Sanctuary. To RSVP, please email bandleader Brett Carson and music director Jyvonne Haskin at band@mduuc.org to let us know your instrument and provide some insight into your experience and music background (e.g. sight reading, lessons, current engagement, etc.). Singers, drummers, guitarists, bassists, violinists, cellists, flautists, you name it—we can't wait to hear from you!

CONGREGATIONAL FORUM

**Sunday, November 16 at 12:30 p.m.
Join online or in the Sanctuary.**

Join Us!

Come share a beverage, coffee-expansive, and some good conversation with members of the MDUUC community who live near you!



Locations & Dates
Posted Below

Coffee & Conversations

Save The Date!

Join our ministers along with members and friends who live near you for a coffee-expansive beverage and good conversation! Look for more details to be announced on the Friday Weekly Email.

- November 13, 2:30pm - Roots Coffee, Pleasant Hill
- November 14, 11am - Steeltown Coffee, Pittsburgh
- November 14, 9:30am - Tellus Coffee, Danville
- November 21, 10am - Barrelista Coffee, Martinez
- January 6, 4pm - The Heritage, Walnut Creek
- January 14, 4pm - Gratitude Cafe, Concord
- January 20, 10am - Rossmoor
- January 27, 4pm - One House Bakery, Benicia

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

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

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

Search for "Beacon Light" on Spotify or subscribe here:

[https://open.spotify.com/
show/4iQZnnkS3HlXBa94JRuMin?si=808541c48b2b451f](https://open.spotify.com/show/4iQZnnkS3HlXBa94JRuMin?si=808541c48b2b451f)

In Memoriam

~

Celebration of Life for Susan Ruano

Saturday, November 1, 11:30 a.m.
Children's Chapel & Memorial Garden

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.

HATS OFF! Honors, Accolades, Thanks!

- To Bruce Pennington, Cyn Coulouthros, and Elizabeth Dietsch for their work around the grounds to beautify the entry to the Sanctuary
- To all who are showing up for our weekly vigils at the Concord Immigration Court (remember the signup is featured each week in the Thursday Justice Email.) Many people stop each week to tell us why our presence is a gift.
- To Scott Schrader and Sally Edgerton for lovely song leading on October 5. Also big thanks to Scott for helping with rehearsal setups and music library support!
- To Juan Contreras for fixing the preschool table.
- To Doug Tamo and Jaynese Davis for safety in the White Building kitchen (repairing knobs on the stove). And to Doug for fixing valves on fire sprinklers.
- To Jo Gelinas and Sharon Solstice for cash counting.
- To Dawn Greenlee for washing and organizing table cloths.
- To Mary Allan for her continuing inspired leadership of our Community Circles.
- To Terry McNally and Holly Ito for leading Open Women's Group
- To Les Polgar, Tom Adams, Jim Hughell and Bill Wostenberg for providing a delicious Fall pumpkin pancake meal for the October Men's Breakfast. (The breakfasts are second Saturday of each month, 9-11 am—usually bagels, muffins, fruit and coffee followed by conversation).
- To Phoenix for their enthusiastic support with editing and moving through the lyric slides in service. Always appreciate seeing your face alongside Liam's in the AV tech station!
- To Sally Edgerton and Sheli Cryderman for your song leading support in the Oct. 19 service. Your harmonies were powerful!
- Deep gratitude to Scott Schrader for filing away so many copies of a lot of song titles back onto the shelves of our music library. Your library management support has been welcomed and so appreciated!
- To Choir Lay Leader Carol Fidler and the Chalice Choir Section Managers—Beth Prantil, Chris Brecheen, Mora Mattingly, and SierraLynn White—for their leadership and community engagement support! And a special shout out to Saudia Highsmith for creating a new communication tool option for the choir.
- To Buildings and Grounds committee for the new campus maps.

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

Legacy Update

The Legacy Committee wants to thank outgoing members, David Stanley and Bob Boster, who completed their terms on the committee. David provided many years of inspired leadership as chair, applying his financial expertise to guide the committee in its work, including monitoring the Sammons Endowment Fund. Likewise, in his years of service, Bob applied his business and communication skills to create new ways to encourage members to leave legacy gifts.

This church year, we welcome Mary-Helen Binger and Mary Lou Correia, as new members. If you have any questions about Living Legacy or Memorial Legacy Gifts, please see Mary-Helen, Mary Lou, or any of the other committee members, Ed Lampo, Suzanne Lofquist, Laura Zucker, Chris Carter, Tom Adams, or MDUUC Lead Minister Leslie Takahashi. Legacy gifts are important to the current and future financial health of the Church.

—Tom Adams, Legacy Committee Chair

Just In Time Volunteering

Mutual aid is how we will thrive. If you care about this community, consider dedicating some of your volunteer time. Contact justintime@mduuc.org with any questions or to signup!

Did you know you can sign-up on Church Center to volunteer as a driver? [Click here!](#)

Do you have 30 minutes to spare to help with coffee hour before joining Sunday service? Our coffee hour is a vital time for community. Email sundaycoffee@mduuc.org to join the coffee team.

Help us keep all involved—Be part of our welcoming team.

- Can you help greet people? Answer questions?
- Offer rides to those who otherwise can't participate

Do you play an instrument? Like to lead songs? Jyvonne Haskin our amazing new music director is rebuilding our database and we want to include your gifts.

Want to support our children and youth?

- Be an adult mentor for our middle schoolers
- Help buy supplies for classes
- Help with youth soup lunches

Pastoral Visitors needed. Are you a good listener (or want to learn to be one?) In these times, we need more people to offer this valuable ministry. Please email Rev. Leslie Takahashi for an application at leslie@mduuc.org.

Are you nostalgic for actual money? If so, perhaps you can get your fix as part of our once a month cash counting team.

Gifts of time power our amazing community. If you can give community, let us know by sending a message to justintime@mduuc.org.

Justice Sunday - Link With Pink Haven Sunday, November 2, 10:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. (Lunch included)

Joy is essential! Please join us for worship with guest preacher, Heather Vickery, for connection and lunch as we hear about some of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's joyful resistance and learn how you, too, can lean into joy in these troubling times.

Quiet Meditative Space on Election Day Tuesday, November 4 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Need a place to be quiet and held on Election Day? MDUUC's ministers will be keeping the Sanctuary open from 10-5 on Tuesday, November 4th. Feel free to come by and set, meditate, pray or just feel less alone. We will have a brief hybrid circle gathering at noon for those who wish to join their voices with others. Though this is an off-cycle year, this day will be one in which our fears about our democracy will be present and we wish to offer you this space.

Join online <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88446533331>

Healing Your Religious Past Sunday, Nov. 9, 12:30–1:30 p.m., Children's Chapel

Many people who come through the doors of MDUUC do so carrying the baggage of religious trauma. This "baggage" can often impinge on efforts to participate in a new community. Does your personal history contain spiritual or religious abuse? Do you have experiences with abuse through prior religious affiliations? If this fits you, consider joining Rev. Leslie Takahashi and Intern minister Aiden McMahon for this conversation.

Register To Join The Family Music Program

Join our Family Music Program for a fun and enriching experience! This program invites 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>



Save The Date!

Holiday Pageant on December 14, 10:30 a.m.

*During Sunday Service

Winter Solstice Service on Sunday, December 21, 5 p.m.

Christmas Eve Services on Wednesday, December 24

Family Christmas Eve Service, 5:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve Service, 8:00 p.m.

Share The Plate - Shelter, Inc. Sunday, November 9

SHELTER, Inc. rebuilds lives one family at a time, by helping them re-establish a home, and assisting with the skills and resources needed to live the life they deserve.

Wrap-around services are essential components of long-lasting solutions. Affordability is only one factor that results in someone becoming homeless. Education, training, counseling and goal planning are vital to the success of regaining and maintaining a home.

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/>

Climate Justice Team Endorses Prop 50

After a robust discussion about November's impact on environmental legislation, the Climate Justice Team ("CJT") unanimously voted to endorse [Proposition 50](#), primarily to stop the disastrous gutting of federal environmental legislation. The CJT is confident that a better-balanced Congress will more fully support both existing environmental laws, as well as restore funding for renewable energy projects that are not only already in the pipeline, but are also nearly complete and are now stalled. As part of that endorsement, the CJT has partnered with [Commit to Democracy](#) to create a postcard campaign in support of the proposition; you can sign up [HERE](#) and join the effort, and/or for further information you can reach out to Chris Steiger or Vera Lenaro. And either way, don't forget to vote by November 4th and make your voice heard!

Sources:

<https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/statewide-elections/public-display/prop-50-title-summary.pdf>

<https://www.commit2democracy.com/>

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 kkyounger@im4humanintegrity.org.

Support The Community Pantry

Community Pantry Needs - Our pantry needs some additional supplies. Can you help? We are especially in need of instant noodles, shelf stable milk, and small/individual servings of cereal. Drop the items on campus in Bortin Hall.

Throughout the year we will be hosting Pickling Parties to help stock the community pantry on campus. Our upcoming date is **Saturday, Nov. 1 from 1:30-3:00 p.m.!**

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.

Your Vehicle Can Make A Difference

Do you have a reliable car that you no longer need? Instead of selling or trading it in, consider making a world of difference for individuals and families in need. Contact Rev. Leslie Takahashi with any questions you may have.

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. Look for the link on the calendar to join online.

Nationwide Economic Blackout

From November 25 through December 2 join others as we are taking the steps necessary to build and strengthen parallel systems and networks within our own communities (stay local). We are shutting down the U.S. economy - strategically and peacefully - by removing our labor, our spending, our financial support, forcing the system to listen. Visit the blackoutsystem.com to learn more.

Nominating Committee

Self-Nominate or Nominate Others!



**We're Looking
For A Few Good
Members**



The MDUUC Nominating Committee works diligently each year to identify members that would be interested in getting involved and serving our church community.

- Do you want a deeper connection to MDUUC?
- Do you know good people at MDUUC?
- Would you like to ensure we have strong leaders?

Please self-nominate or nominate another member for a position on our Board of Trustees, our Legacy Committee, or our Nominating Committee for the 2026–27 term. The nominated slate will be presented to the congregation for vote at our Annual Meeting in June.



[Click on this link](#) or Scan the QR code to fill out a nomination form.

For more information, contact the Nominating Committee at NomCom@mduuc.org.

QUEER CORNER

Justice and Joy

Sunday, November 2, 10:30 a.m., Bortin Hall

Join in Bortin Hall for worship, lunch, and workshop supporting our trans siblings locally and nationally

Educate Yourself To Prepare For Trans Justice

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

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

Community Concert Series Presents The House Jacks!



**Saturday, November 21, 8–10PM, Bortin Hall at MDUUC
Tickets on sale on EventBrite.com**

Sliding scale tickets sold at the door. Doors open at 7:30 p.m.
Light refreshments available.

The House Jacks instantly redefined what people thought of as “vocal music.” Founded in 1991, The House Jacks instantly redefined what people thought of as “vocal music.” Combining their virtuosic harmonies with spectacular stagecraft, these world-class performers continue to push the boundaries of the human voice, thrilling audiences around the world.

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.

Get tickets:

<https://mduuc.org/community-concert-series/>

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 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Elder Journey meets virtually and is hybrid (in person or virtual) 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. *See calendar for dates.

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 most Fridays from 8-8:30 am 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 Mediation

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. In November, we will meet with Rev. Leslie Takahashi. All are welcome. Please email admin@mduuc.org to be added to our mailing list.

Wild and Wonderful Women's Spiritual Arts Group

3rd Wednesday of every month from 3–5 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 and to be added to our contact list. *Weather permitting.

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!



Join the first Sunday Work Party to help protect them from root rot. 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, November 1st. We will have other projects as well. 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 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

December Beacon Deadline

Wednesday, November 19, 2025
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
55 Eckley Lane
Walnut Creek CA 94596

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

Bluesky: mduuc.bsky.social
Podcast on Spotify - Beacon Light

You're Invited! Join Us For The Annual Bid-4-Love Event!



Community Matters!

Join Us For Our Annual Live Auction Event on Saturday, November 8 from 5–8 p.m. in Bortin Hall.

This isn't just an evening out; it's a chance to come together, lift each other up, and support the largest fundraiser of the year for MDUUC.

Let's stand together, celebrate our strength as a community and make an impact for the future.

See Page 5 for more information!

fundraiser.bid/bid4love2025

There will be a Children's Auction This Year!

Childcare Is Available!
Scan to register your children!



SCAN HERE