

# the Mountain Chalice



Unitarian Universalist Community of the Mountains

December 2019

## UPCOMING SERVICES

**Two Service Times on Sundays: 9:30 AM or 11:30 AM**

Social hour is between the two services; you may either stay after the first service, or come early to the second one.

Religious education classes for children (K-5th grades) are offered during the 9:30 AM service, and classes for youth (6th-12th grades) are offered at 10:30 AM. Nursery care is available for both services.

### What Does it Mean to be a People of Awe?

Being "at once astonished at the world and yet at home in it" is the journey we travel this month. Drawn toward the long night of the winter solstice, wrapped in the season's holidays and holy days, surrounded by the overstimulating jingle and jangle of the commercial trappings and political noise, and warmed and/or frustrated by the annual facing of family and friend relationships, we'll seek to gain perspective. Let's step back and notice that we are intimately interconnected and, at the same time, each a unique, small piece of an extraordinary existence.

#### Dec. 1 Thank you for this...

**Lindsay Dunckel, Rev. Kevin Tarsa, and all**

Our full community (all ages) service on this Thanksgiving weekend calls us to the spiritual and life practice of gratitude. What are you thankful for? **First Sunday: Please bring non perishable food for people and pets.**

#### Dec. 8 What's Wrong with God?

**Gail Johnson Vaughan, Allison Rivers Samson**

The word "god" is rarely used in UUCM services, or even in conversations. So, what's wrong with god? There are so many ways for UU's to answer that question. Member Gail Johnson Vaughan shares the sermon she developed in last spring's Shared Pulpit Class, and Allison Rivers Samson weaves in her worship associate magic. Join us for an awesome, and perhaps surprising, service. **Soup Lunch at 12:45 PM**

#### Dec. 15 Feel the Presence of a Hope

**Rev. Kevin Tarsa, Wendy Wernigg, WA**

A "poetic" hour of music and reflection through facets of the season: "the gentle of the moon, the garnet of a star, the presence of a hope where the crowding shepherds are."

#### Dec. 20 Solstice Eve Celebration, 7:00 PM \*

**Friday (Singing begins at 6:45 PM)**

**Wendy Wernigg and Beth Karow, Worship Assoc.**

Our annual Solstice Eve Celebration aligns the rhythms of our hearts and our spirits with the rhythms of the earth and sky. Come, center yourself in the midst of the holiday hustle. Singing, silence, candlelight, fire (and some hot, spiced cider) guide us around this turning edge of the year.

#### Dec. 22 Find a Stillness

**Wendy Wernigg**

UUCM's annual December meditation service calls you in from the literal and figurative cold and winter winds to rest for a moment. Come, pause, breathe, center, notice, and listen. Find your stillness in this precious hour and be renewed.

#### Tuesday, Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Services

##### 5:00 PM Deck the Hall \*

**Rev. Kevin Tarsa, Allison Rivers Samson, WA**

In this 45-minute all-ages-friendly service, singing, story, ritual, and yes, candlelight, invite us to note the traditions we keep or create from year to year, the traditions that help us find meaning in this season and on this particular night.

##### 8:00 PM Within the Shining of a Star \*

**Rev. Kevin Tarsa, Chuck Champlin, Worship Assoc.**

A UU song notes that "within the shining of a star we catch a glimpse of who we are." Whether that image leads you on this night to ponder the cosmic stardust out of which your body is so wonderfully made, or the elemental love and divinity that the star in the Christmas narrative represents to many, come, celebrate in the spirit of love and goodwill. Music, candlelight, poetry and singing to touch the spirit of this night.

*The Christmas Eve offerings support the UUCM Minister's Discretionary Fund, used to support people in need, both within the congregation and in the wider community.*

##### 10:00 PM Dark of Winter, Soft and Still

**Rev. Kevin Tarsa**

Come, night owls and Christmas Eve arrivers, for an intimate circle of meditative singing, silence, and candlelight, in the spirit of our monthly singing meditation circles.

#### Dec. 29 Cider Sunday: Looking Back, Looking Forward

**Wendy Wernigg, Worship Associate**

For many years UUCM has celebrated a New Year's Cider Sunday with Anita Wald-Tuttle's skillful leadership. Attendees were each invited to share reflections on the year past, as well as expectations and intentions for the year to come. With UUCM's growth, the details of the ritual are shifting, yet this remains an important annual invitation to reflection. So, we'll keep the essence of Anita's vision, adapt the details to this new day, and prepare to move into the new year. And yes, there will be cider. And coffee. And tea...

*\* You are invited to bring refreshments to share at each starred service; healthy, gluten-free and vegan options are especially appreciated.*



Rev. Kevin Tarsa  
UUCM Minister

## From the Minister

sojourn around the sun, and in beloved stories of exemplars, of birth, of wonder, of long journeys toward an impossible star that beckons.

December will bring its yearly chaos as well as its invitations to wonder and awe. Let us remind each other this month that we will have some choices as to where we focus our attention. Our services all month are meant to help us step out of what doesn't serve our spiritual health, and to step into what centers and grounds and connects us.

With care,  
- Rev. Kevin

### LOVE REACHES OUT CONGREGATION WORKSHOP

On Saturday, January 11 UUCM will engage the members' and board's interest in exploring UUCM's plans for outreach. All are invited to this day-long workshop, and all leaders are especially encouraged to

participate. Watch for details via email and in the eChalice.

We'll begin the day by exploring the Changing Religious Landscape and how UUCM can respond to that reality.

We'll then examine who we are as Unitarian Universalists, both in our congregation and as a faith movement, and whether we are effectively communicating this to the wider world.

Finally, we'll discern UUCM's Sweet Spot and identify Entry Points, starting to plan ways for UUCM to reach out into the community while staying grounded in our core identity and mission.

Please mark the date on your calendar, and plan to join in this important conversation.

### What does it mean to be a people of awe?

As Wendy Wernigg and I contemplated this month's theme of awe, seeking an image that might capture the concept, the experience of the night sky came immediately to mind for each of us - that powerful, personal "direct experience of transcending mystery and wonder" named as one of the sources from which we Unitarian Universalists draw awareness, wisdom and understanding.



I associate that sudden, felt sense of my place within the immensity and mystery of the universe with an unexpected intake of breath, an involuntary gasp. Or sometimes with a quiet melting away of distance and separateness until words, thoughts and images disappear and I am left with..., well, until I simply am.

I can experience a similar awe when witnessing human creativity, brilliance or artistry, or a person's extraordinary compassion and generosity, or births of many kinds, or in the midst of singing with others.

I write in the middle of the impeachment hearings, high cultural anxiety, impending holiday schedules, and more to do than can possibly be done, and so the thought of such transcendent experience calls to me, experience that reorients me within a larger frame of reference than my immediate concerns and my small-in-the-scheme-of-things worries.

Though commercial drive can hijack them, this is what the December holidays invite - a take-your-breath-away experience of re-orienting transcendence and/or a quiet melting away of all that separates us from our truest "I am" self.

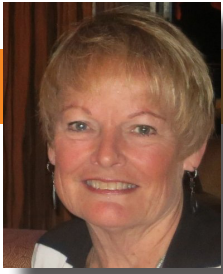
If we are fortunate and attentive, we might reach such moments through taking in the stars of the night sky, witnessing human compassion, vulnerability and generosity, in candlelit shared silence, in powerful prayer or meditation, in breathing and singing together, in deep connection with loved ones, in ancient rituals marking our annual earthly

### REV. KEVIN'S OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday	1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Wednesday	5:00 PM - 6:30 PM
Thursday	11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Please contact Rev. Kevin or our Office Administrator to make an appointment for Rev. Kevin's office hours.

Contact Rev. Kevin to schedule appointments at other times.  
[minister@uugrassvalley.org](mailto:minister@uugrassvalley.org) or (231) 883-1058 -  
[admin@uugrassvalley.org](mailto:admin@uugrassvalley.org) or (530) 274-1675



# Your Board of Trustees

Rev. Karyn Packard  
President,  
UUCM Board of Trustees

- Consider having a debriefing after a large event to see what changes might be incorporated in the future.
- When challenges occur, try to deal with them even-handedly...no shame/no blame.

**Leadership: The art of getting someone else to do something you want done because they want to do it.**

- Dwight D. Eisenhower

As I reflect our November Board of Trustees meeting, I am reminded how fortunate we are to have these committed board members. I believe that it is my job as a leader to make sure they are there because they want to be. If you broaden from the BOT, you realize that except for Kevin, Jordan, and Carol, everyone is a volunteer. There is no doubt about how much there is to do here at UUCM. This is our dilemma. How do we continue to grow in our spirituality, to serve our community, and to be good stewards, and keep our volunteers wanting to do the work that they do?

Our visitor at the November meeting was Kern Hildebrand from the Commission on Shared Ministry. COSM is a standing committee under "Governance" that the BOT charges with evaluating effectiveness of various areas of focus in our church community. Kern was there to find out what the Board wanted them to focus on this year. After considerable discussion, it was decided that the topic of their inquiries would be "leadership development". How do we make sure the right jobs are being done by the right people? Are we preparing our leaders adequately? Are our current leaders working well with volunteers? Does all that we do support our mission? It made me begin to think about some ideas for all of us who benefit from the volunteers at UUCM. I offer you an action list for leaders to consider as we move into holiday season and "event" full times.

- Have a planning meeting and adequately cover the tasks that will need to be accomplished at your event, with the people who will do the work.
- Give them clear instructions and adequate supplies.
- Make sure they have the opportunity to ask questions or share alternate points of view.
- Come early and stay late. Make sure those who are supporting your event feel supported themselves.
- Do not take people for granted. Just because they are "always there", don't expect them to do work that you have not pre-arranged.
- Show appreciation for what they do.

The goal...having volunteers who want to help, and have a good time doing it! In turn, these happy volunteers become tomorrow's great UUCM leaders.

*With excitement, pride and commitment,*

*- Rev. Karyn Packard*

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE UPCOMING BOARD OF TRUSTEES EVENTS

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 11,  
LOVE REACHES OUT CONGREGATION WORKSHOP**  
*All are invited to this day-long workshop to explore UUCM's plans for outreach. Stay tuned for more information via email and the eChalice*

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 10:45 AM  
CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING**

## UUCM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**JULY 2019 - JUNE 2020**

Karyn Packard	<i>President</i>
Jim Perkins	<i>Vice-President</i>
Sandi Lauher	<i>Secretary</i>
Joel Houtman	<i>Treasurer</i>

### **Members at Large:**

Maryann Currington, Janet Dunstan & Dennis Weiher

*Board of Trustees meetings are held:  
the third Thursday of each month at 2:30 PM  
in the UUCM Channing Room unless stated otherwise.*

*UUCM members and friends are cordially invited to attend!  
If you wish to address the board, please give two days notice so the agenda timing can be adjusted.*



## Membership Team

### Circle Suppers

By Claire Miller

The Circle Suppers are well underway. So far 44 members and friends have participated, and several hosts have come forward to offer their homes for the next phase of Suppers starting in the New Year. If you are interested in being a "host" please talk to Claire Miller. [truckeeclaire@yahoo.com](mailto:truckeeclaire@yahoo.com)

Choose your preferred date to be added to the schedule while continuing to work on the details in the weeks ahead. If you have not yet participated in a circle supper, keep your eyes open for the sign up sheets that will appear mid December. Our goal is for everyone to become better acquainted while enjoying a shared meal in a small group.

## Hospitality Team

By Marilyn Young, Coordinator, UUCM Hospitality Hour

Every Sunday, everyone is welcome to enjoy snacks and refreshments, along with socializing, between the two services from 10:30 until 11:20 AM in the Alcott and Channing Rooms.

This month's schedule for contributing snacks:

December 1 - last names beginning with A to E

December 8 - last names beginning with F to J

**Also - Soup Lunch at 12:45 on December 8 - all are welcome; we need soup, bread & butter, cookies...please contribute if you can!**

December 15 - last names beginning with K to R

December 22 - last names beginning with S to Z

December 29 - Everyone!

#### **SPECIAL SERVICES:**

*Healthy Snacks are welcome at the following services:*

Friday, December 20 - 7 PM

Winter Solstice

Tuesday, December 24 - 5 PM -

Deck the Hall All Ages

Tuesday, December 24 - 8 PM -

Shining Star (Singing/Poetry/etc.)

If you plan to bring a snack or a Second Sunday Soup Lunch contribution, please let Marilyn Young know. *We especially appreciate healthy snacks, and at least one gluten-free baked offering.* ([MarilynY04@gmail.com](mailto:MarilynY04@gmail.com))

## Stewardship

### Small Group Conversations

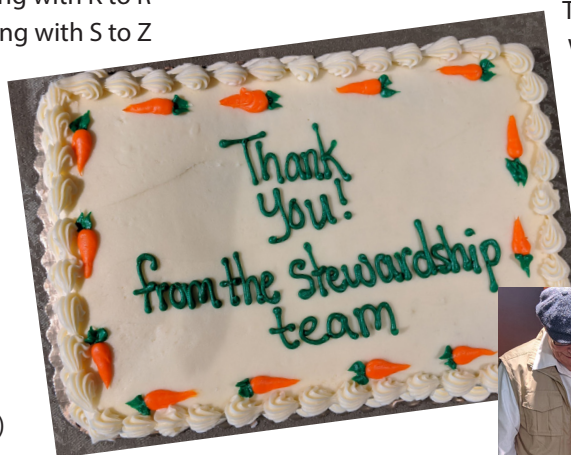
By Maryann Currington, Member, Stewardship Team

During the month of November, the Stewardship team conducted small group conversations during which UUCM members responded with enthusiasm, humor, and thoughtfulness. These were well-spent hours, and the Stewardship Team is grateful for such generous sharing.

First, we asked each member to share one thing they have always wanted to do. (Based on responses, it seems there may be a rash of UUCMers jumping from planes!) The next question elicited an even more interesting variety of responses. We asked: "Given the financial means, what would you like to see happen at UUCM?" Some would like to see UUCM become a more visible presence in our community and a recognized, strong Social Justice advocate; others would like us to look at new facilities and increase the number of paid administrators. Answers to the next question are significant to help guide our stewards during the Pledge Campaign: "When approached to give time, talent or treasure, what kind of invitation feels most comfortable?" We heard the need for sensitivity and frankness and for establishing the importance of task and appropriateness of the request.

Our last question was very revealing to the team: "Does giving (of your time, talent and/or money) feel like a spiritual practice for you?" Responses were varied, but many members differentiated time and talent from money. A few felt money had more obligation attached to it. Several others expressed that all three ways of giving reflected our values.

These are just a sample of responses, but we will keep all feedback in mind as we strive to reflect the hopes and dreams of our community in the upcoming Pledge Campaign. Your participation in and contributions to our small group conversations help us to do that, and the Stewardship team thanks you.



## Caring Team

### Caring Hearts and Hands in our UUCM Community

By Gwen Eymann, Acting Chair, Caring Team

It gives me the sense of awe and wonder when I look around UUCM and see so much caring in the hearts and hands of this community. We share pieces of our lives, our joys and our sorrows. This sharing gives us the opportunity to grow deeper in connection with one another, to share our lives with each other, and to be known for who we are.

We hold **Maya Knowles** tenderly in our hearts as she finds her way after the loss of her beloved husband **Sage** who peacefully passed away on November 21st.

A Celebration of Life for **David Edwards** will be on December 14th at 3pm, followed by a vegetarian pot luck. Please join us in honoring this man who has given much to UUCM.

The Caring Team is launching its annual **Christmas Gift Giving Tree**. Families from our local community are selected from the Salvation Army for Christmas gifts from our UU community. You are welcome to take a gift tag and provide a gift for someone less fortunate. All gifts need to be returned no later than December 8th. Thank you for your generosity and care for those in need in our greater community.

The Caring Team continues to monitor the congregation for folks who might need a hand, a ride, a meal, or a listening ear. Our strength as a congregation is reflected in the wonderful ways people have stepped up and offered to help. If you know someone who could use help and support, please let us know.

If you are drawn to this important work of supporting others through care and kind attention, please contact me or Rev. Kevin. We meet the first Tuesday of every month at 4:00 PM at UUCM, and we'd be glad to speak with you about the ways you can participate and help serve this wonderful community.

Contact: Gwen Eymann (530) 274-7965,  
or email: [caring@uugrassvalley.org](mailto:caring@uugrassvalley.org)

**Caring Team Members:** Gwen Eymann, *acting chair*, Maryann Currington, Jenny Dewey, Penny Harlan, Robin Hart, Carol Hyndman, Anne Lyon, Tom Wernigg

## Building and Grounds

### Monday, Monday... Our B&G Team Gets it Done Any Day of the Week!

By Wally Holtan, Chair, Building and Grounds Team

I would like to thank everyone who showed up on a Monday to work on our B&G projects.

We now have a second TV monitor installed in the sanctuary. George and Kern spent the day installing the necessary mounting and Bob Miller completed the task by installing the monitor the following Saturday. Thank you to all who helped Bob!

Paul Elias filled in for Keith and Bonnie and vacuumed all the chairs in the building while Joel installed a handrail for the patio stairs that access the backyard. Hopefully, the hand rail will alleviate the concern for safety going up and down the stairs.

Connie, Gwen and Theresa worked on the backyard area trimming the fig tree and the rest of the plants as they are going dormant.

If you get a chance, personally thank these people and everyone else who volunteers their time and energy keeping our community space in top condition.

Remember, if you want to volunteer at UUCM, our workdays are a great place to offer your time and talent.





ANNOUNCING OUR

# Annual Holiday Bazaar

**Sundays, December 8, 15 & 22 between Services**

*(All proceeds to benefit UUCM)*

**Thank you for all the donations you've been leaving in the big box in the office.**

**Keep them coming! We're going to have a great sale!**

We welcome handmade crafts, artwork, jewelry, knitting & crocheting, sewing, woodwork, metalwork, quilts, pottery, re-gifts and family treasures.

**Questions? Our Team Members are:**

Janet Bullock, [janetbullock41@gmail.com](mailto:janetbullock41@gmail.com) Carmen Riley, [copythat2413@yahoo.com](mailto:copythat2413@yahoo.com)

Maryann Currington, [murrington1944@gmail.com](mailto:murrington1944@gmail.com)

*\* Note: If price is important to you and you do not want your donations discounted, please leave a note with the item.*

**Come Shop for Unique Gifts & Have FUN!**

**Please come to our annual**

## Tree Trimming Party

**Saturday,  
December 7,  
3:00 - 6:00 PM**

**Activities for ALL ages!**

- ☆ Unique Snowflakes
- ☆ Mini Universe Ornaments
- ☆ Popcorn & Planetary Strings
- ☆ Singing Carols



ENJOY A  
**CHRISTMAS  
DAY  
POTLUCK  
AT UUCM  
WEDNESDAY,  
DECEMBER 25  
AT 2:00 PM**

*Come to UUCM's Fourth Annual  
Christmas Day Potluck with Rev. Kevin  
and your UUCM family and friends!  
You are welcome to bring guests!*

**Everyone is Welcome! Please sign up in the Foyer!**

# Social Justice News and Activities

## Social Justice News

For more information, or to get involved directly with the Social Justice Team, please contact Steve Temple at [srtemple@ucdavis.edu](mailto:srtemple@ucdavis.edu) or 530-220-0995.

## Local Volunteer Opportunities

*By Keith Johnson, Member, Social Justice Team*

The Social Justice Team encourages all members and friends to volunteer for justice work with local non-profit organizations. UUCM'ers are already doing outstanding work for the groups listed below. Following are descriptions of each group and volunteer help that is needed. If you are moved to do so, please reach out to the designated UUCM contact person to volunteer. They will have further information about the organization and may suggest other volunteer opportunities. If you would like to recommend other service organizations to be included, or if you wish to join us on the Social Justice Team, please contact team chair Steve Temple (530-220-0995).

### **ANIMAL PLACE, SAMMIE'S FRIENDS SHELTER, GRASS VALLEY SHELTER**

Animal Place cares for rescued farm animals. Sammie's Friends and the Grass Valley Animal Control Shelter care for rescued pets. Sammie's Friends has a great foster program, and adoptions are up. They help with medical needs and food for pets whose caretakers can't afford it. All three of these organizations need help feeding, cleaning, walking, and socializing with animals. Contact Carol Hyndman (530-477-0693).

### **HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**

UUCM makes lunches for Habitat workers on the second Wednesday of each month at 11:00 AM at the church. Contact Keith Johnson (530-265-0277).

### **HOSPITALITY HOUSE**

Hospitality House manages and operates Utah's Place, the local homeless shelter. Hospitality House needs help in three program areas:

UUCM purchases, prepares, and serves dinner to our guests at Utah's Place on the third and fifth Fridays of every month. Contact Keith Johnson (530-265-0277).

Hospitality House manages the Bread and Roses Thrift Store and help is needed in all aspects of store operation. Contact Cassandra Holdeman (530-575-4428).

Utah's Place needs volunteer monitors. Contact George Dunstan (530-205-8159).

### **IFM**

Interfaith Food Ministry provides food at least three times per week to those in need. Currently they need both drivers and packers. Contact Anne Lyon (619-933-1618).

See the next page for an update on the upcoming IFM events during the holiday season.

### **SIERRA ROOTS**

Sierra Roots is a local homeless advocacy group which requests assistance in operating a cold weather shelter and their one-on-one advocacy program. Contact Keith Johnson (530-265-0277).

### **SYRCL**

The South Yuba River Citizens League is dedicated to preserving and protecting the South Yuba River. Volunteer opportunities include river monitoring, becoming a river ambassador, and clerical support. Contact Keith Johnson (530-265-0277).

## Donations for Nevada County Pets in Need

*By Carol Hyndman, Member, Social Justice Team*

Please remember donations for Nevada County Pets in Need will be collected on the first Sunday of each month when food donations are collected for the Interfaith Food Ministry. Nevada County Pets in Need serves not only pets of the homeless but also pets of lower income people. Contact Carol Hyndman (530-477-0693).



# Social Justice News and Activities, Continued

## Are We an Activist Congregation?

By Bob Miller, Coordinator,  
Carbon Dividend Candidate Task Force

We live in interesting times. We are changing our climate, capitalism is failing us, the democratic process is producing unwelcome results.

How should UUCM respond? We can offer support to members who are activists in their chosen causes, or we can be an activist congregation.

An activist congregation seeks to effect change. Powerful forces maintain the unfortunate status quo. We need powerful forces to effect change.

UUCM has significant resources: a \$200K budget, paid staff, meeting space and an organized membership of over 100 members.

As an activist congregation we would apply these resources to a few chosen causes. Too many causes dilute our resources and reduce our power. We become ineffective.

Alternatively, a supporting congregation recognizes that our members espouse many different causes. The congregation offers them support and an opportunity for spiritual reflection.

Do you want UUCM to be an activist congregation or a supporting congregation? Let your leadership know.



## Why are Ginny and Anita Examining this GIANT Shoe?!

Are we expecting a giant barefoot visitor? Has Old Mother Hubbard moved in? Be sure to check out next month's Mountain Chalice to explain why mysterious oversized footwear has taken up residence in our UUCM garage!

## Pass the Plate

### Our December Partner is...

December's pass-the-plate recipient is **Hospitality House** (Utah's Place), whose history is woven into UUCM's history, and whose mission is "to bring homeless people in Nevada County into a circle of community caring that offers shelter, sustenance, medical care, advocacy, opportunity, dignity, and hope as we assist them in transitioning from homelessness to housing."

### THANK YOU TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER

Members and friends of UUCM collected **\$1202.00** in September for **California Care Force!** Thank you everyone, for giving so generously.

**California Care Force** is a group of medical professionals, community leaders, and engaged citizens who provide free medical, dental and vision care to those in need at temporary clinics across California. You can still volunteer to help at the Nevada County event January 11-12: <https://www.californiacareforce.org/volunteer/grassvalley/>.

In October, UUCM members and friends donated \$495.51 to Interfaith Food Ministry, which works to feed the hungry and reduce food insecurity in Nevada County.

## IFM Holiday Plans

### Making a Difference for Nevada County Families

By Anne Lyon

Are you wondering how to help folks in need during the holidays? From now through December you can "Sponsor a Family" at Interfaith Food Ministry. \$20 not only buys a holiday meal but also a regular distribution.

In addition, December 3rd is "A Global Day of Giving" at IFM when a non-profit campaign to feed the disadvantaged will include tours of IFM with light refreshments from 9:00 to 4:00. Volunteer drivers as well as workers for Cal Fresh (formerly food stamps) and facility management are also needed.

Contact Anne Lyon 619-933-1618 or [mountan6@gmail.com](mailto:mountan6@gmail.com).



# Community Connections – Social & Spiritual Activities

## Humanist Discussion Group

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4  
AT 10:30 AM

By George Dunstan



Our topic will be Freedom and Equality. Can they coexist in a society or do they undermine each other? Here are two views on the topic and there are many more out there if you care to look for them:

<https://medium.com/@brennanstark/equality-vs-freedom-why-they-cant-coexist-68a36d5dd9aa>

<http://www.citizensproject.org/2017/03/24/balancing-freedom-and-equality-in-a-vibrant-democracy/>

I hope to see you at the meeting.

For further information, or to be added to the Humanism Discussion Group email list, please contact George Dunstan: 530-205-8159 or [gvgeode@gmail.com](mailto:gvgeode@gmail.com).

## UUCM Walking Group

By Theresa Houtman

Join intrepid walkers at 8:30 AM on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Houtmans, 418 Chapel, Grass Valley. We walk a gentle two miles and then have coffee, conversation and treats. The fall weather and Bridget's coffee cake inspire us! Cat-friendly dogs on leashes are welcome. Please contact Theresa Houtman (530) 277-9294 to confirm.

## Meditation Group

Tuesday mornings at 9:00 AM, a self-directed group of congregants meets for an hour of meditation in the Sanctuary. Enjoy a time of inner peace and reflection with others. For more info: Shelley North-Gerson, 272-8930, [shelley10493@gmail.com](mailto:shelley10493@gmail.com).

## Singing Meditation

FIRST THURSDAYS, 7-8:30 PM

Singing Meditation is an interfaith spiritual practice in which singing and shared silence alternate in a deepening rhythm. The songs and chants are drawn from a variety of religious traditions and participants are invited to bring song ideas. The music is taught as we go.

The Singing Meditation Circle is open to all. We will be glad for your presence, your voice, your heart, and your spirit.

## December Women's Circle & Potluck MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 6:00 PM AT UUCM ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

UUCM Women's Circle is having their annual end-of-the-year Holiday Party this month – We'll share a delicious traditional holiday potluck. This year we'll be celebrating at UUCM. Instead of exchanging gifts, we'll do a collection for a local charity. (Last year we collected over \$200 to send to the Paradise fire victims.)

Please RSVP to the Women's group email list: [womensgroup@uugrassvalley.org](mailto:womensgroup@uugrassvalley.org). Let us know what you plan to bring to the potluck... and remember, bring the recipe! We can add your holiday favorites to the on-going cookbook project.

All UUCM women (and friends!) are invited to any Women's Circle gathering. If you are not on the Women's Group email list, please contact Kathryn Young, ([kathryneyounguu@gmail.com](mailto:kathryneyounguu@gmail.com)) or send an email to Carol Fulkerson at: [admin@uugrassvalley.org](mailto:admin@uugrassvalley.org) and she will add you. Then you'll get monthly updates and reminders of our upcoming meetings.



## Men's Groups

On Wednesday mornings, 8:30 to 10:00 in the Channing Room, and on Thursday mornings, 8:30 to 10:00, men gather to enjoy each other's company and discuss the issues of the day or whatever takes their fancy, in an open and free-flowing way. The Thursday meeting location is now at BriarPatch, 290 Sierra College Dr, Grass Valley.

## Drop-In Support Circle

SUNDAYS 10:50 TO 11:25 AM

IN THE ANTHONY ROOM ANNEX

Join us in the cozy and intimate "library annex" between the two services at 10:50 AM. If you would like a safe, confidential place to share your feelings about life's challenges and give support to others, this group should be a good fit for you. Facilitators: Corrie Silva: ([corriesilva@sbcglobal.net](mailto:corriesilva@sbcglobal.net) or 415-204-7448), Janet Bullock, Wally Holtan and Tom Wernigg

Family Ministry offers many ways to serve the life of the community.

Contact Rene Wiley if you'd like to find out more! [familyministry@uugrassvalley.org](mailto:familyministry@uugrassvalley.org)

## What does it mean to be a Family of Awe?

By Rene Wiley, Chair, Family Ministry

Soul Matters' *Soulful Home* describes awe as the undeniable pause while our psyches, bodies, and spirits integrate the reverent and wonder-filled experience we are having. Awe can be a feeling in and of itself, but it can also inspire a positive action taken in light of a new understanding. It's a powerful, moving, and universal force that can jolt us from where we are to the next step in our individual and collective evolution. Who of us doesn't need a "jolt of awe" at times in our lives?!

We will approach all of these ideas as we create awesomeness in RE this month! Join us at 9:30 for ages 5 and up.

### NEW YOUTH RE OFFERING

**STARTS SUNDAY, JANUARY 12 AT 10:30 AM**

Ages 12-18 will have an amazing opportunity to grow in leadership around solutions to climate crisis and more. This dynamic class will be open to the wider community and invites youth to lead in justice projects of their design. Led by Linda Siska and Walt O'Maley with special guests.

### CREATIVE SOLUTIONS TO A WORLD IN CRISIS

By Linda Siska

Fire and drought, flood and storm, dying bees and refugees. We are faced with the reality that the future will challenge us in ways that humanity has, perhaps, never been challenged before. But it is equally true that by living in right relationship to the earth and its inhabitants, we can begin to heal the wounds humanity has inflicted and prepare ourselves to meet an uncertain future with creativity, courage and resilience.

Beginning in January, the youth RE classes will be exploring the problems the world is facing and the innovative ways that people are already addressing those problems — ways that include urban farming, regenerative ranching, clean power generation that enriches the soil as a by-product, water collection and conservation. We will be weaving together our UU principles, our soul matters themes, and practical solutions for a changing world.

The first few sessions will be primarily informational and will center around the documentary "The Need to Grow." Once we have established a common base, the youth themselves will be determining our direction. We will not only be talking

about things we can do, we will be doing things we can do, connecting with members of our congregation and the community at large as we expand our horizons.

## Lots of Opportunities for Inter-Generational Fun this December at UUCM

### DEC 7- CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATING PARTY, 3-6 PM -

Inspired by the Awe of the Night Sky. Come for crafting mini-universe globe ornaments, unique paper snowflakes, and star & planet strings to trim UUCM's Christmas tree. Take time to gaze at the moon in wonder and then enjoy hot cocoa and caroling by the piano. All Ages!

### DEC 8 - HOLIDAY BAZAAR –

Unique gift shopping for family, teachers, and friends!

### DATE TBD – CAROLING TOGETHER WITH THE UUCM CHOIR –

We'll entertain our neighbors at the Bret Harte Retirement Inn, and return to UUCM for hot cider afterward.



### DEC 20 – SOLSTICE EVE CELEBRATION, 7:00 PM –

Join the ancient tradition of ushering in the light of the season, a UU family favorite! *Bring snacks to share, and we especially appreciate a few healthy, vegan and gluten-free offerings.*

### DEC 24 – CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

**5:00 PM, ALL-AGE-FRIENDLY SERVICE,**

**8:00 PM MUSIC/POETRY/SINGING SERVICE**

Both services will have refreshments and hot cider afterward. We welcome your snacks to share, and we especially appreciate a few healthy, vegan and gluten-free offerings.



## What Does It Mean to be a People of Awe?

*From the  
Soul Matters Authors*

*"This at least seems to me  
the main problem... How  
can we contrive to be at once  
astonished at the world and  
yet at home in it? ...How can this  
world give us at once the fascination  
of a strange town and the comfort and  
honor of being our own town?"*

- G.K. Chesterton

The path of awe seems well worn. It's a journey intended to bring us down to size. Pictures of our galaxy with a note that there are 100 billion more just like it. Videos of deep-sea creatures with bioluminescent bodies. Images of the northern lights that are utterly otherworldly. All of them remind us that the universe is more vast than we can imagine. All of them leave us with a sense of wonder that overwhelms. We are brought to the edge of what we can wrap our minds around. It's like staring into an incomprehensible abyss. One can't help but feel humbled and small.

But religion has never wanted us to stop there. Hold tight it says. I know it's hard but trust us: the path doesn't end with a deep darkness that doesn't care. Just stand at the abyss a bit longer. Lean in just a little bit more. And when you do so, suddenly an invitation emerges from that awe-full abyss. You look into the vast mystery and surprisingly, it stares back, as if to say, "Welcome home."

As physicists tell us, contemplation of the vast universe doesn't make them feel smaller, it makes them realize the larger story of which they are a part. We are stardust, as they say. From the vastness we came and to it we will return again. In other words, to be a people of awe is not so much about feeling small; it's about feeling connected.

And not just connected to the stars, but also to each other. Awe reduces our size in order to make room for something more than our personal needs, wants and worries. With our narcissism shrunk down to a reasonable proportion, it becomes possible to notice that we are not the only ones up there on the stage. It's in this way that looking up into the cosmos allows us to look across at each other. And it's a huge gift, because while being center stage and center of the universe can feel powerful, it's also a very lonely place to stand.

So friends, don't just look up at the stars this month. Let that looking up also lead to you looking across. And in doing so, may you - like our friend G.K. Chesterton - not simply be astonished at the universe but also feel at home in it.





## Adult Religious Exploration



*Cultivating our spiritual, emotional and intellectual strength to create a world more compassionate, sustainable and just.*

### BOOK GROUPS

#### FIRST SUNDAY BOOK GROUP - DECEMBER 1, 1:00 PM CHANNING ROOM

Sunday Book group will discuss Ben Sasse's *Them* on December 1 at 1:00 PM, in the Channing Room with Jo Waters facilitating. On January 5, Theresa and Joel Houtman will lead a discussion of *A Primate Memoir* by Robert Sapolsky.

#### THIRD WEDNESDAY BOOK GROUP - DECEMBER 18, 2:00 PM HOUTMAN RESIDENCE, 418 CHAPEL, GV

We meet to discuss *Beneath the Starlit Sky* by Mark Sullivan at 2:00 PM on December 18, with Karyn Packard facilitating. We will also choose books for next three months.

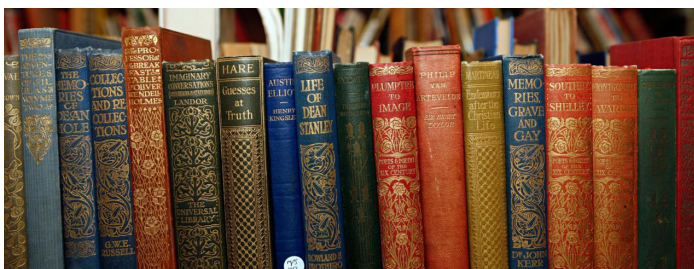
Readers are welcome to attend either or both groups at any time. Contact Theresa Houtman, [therosa48@sbcglobel.net](mailto:therosa48@sbcglobel.net) to RSVP or with questions.

### SPIRITUAL PRACTICE SAMPLER

#### SECOND SUNDAY SPIRITUAL PRACTICES SAMPLER SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1:30-2:30 PM

##### The Practice of Kindness with Tom Wilson

Have some soup and then join Tom Wilson as he shares his ongoing practice of kindness. Tom notes: It was the Dalai Lama who said my religion is kindness. And Kurt Vonnegut was in depression and despair about what to do with his life, when his son who was a physician said, "But dad, can't we just be kind." It turned his life around.



## Endowment

### That Giving Time of Year

By Lesley Champlin, Chair, Endowment Team

It's the giving time of the year and, as they say on the airlines, "we know you have many choices when you fly [give!] . . . so, thank you for choosing UUCM.

Perhaps you are reviewing your finances as the tax year ends and find you could benefit from an additional deduction. Consider a Simple Gift: just write a check to UUCM in the name of someone you want to honor or, as Anita Wald-Tuttle has taken to doing, donate on your birthday in the amount of your age. For some of us, that's a generous donation!

Perhaps you must take a required minimum donation (RMD) from a retirement account this year and that additional income could put you into a higher tax bracket. Consider redirecting all or part of the distribution to UUCM; tax avoidance and a charitable deduction for you, a generous gift to our community. Win-win!

And perhaps you are looking over or making new estate plans and thinking about the legacy you want to leave. Consider paying your legacy forward to UUCM. It doesn't have to be a large amount to be pledged to the UUCM Endowment Fund, and it can be structured in creative ways. Your pledged generosity will be forever remembered.

Look for me at services – I'm the one with "Ask me about a UUCM Endowment" on my name tag—or email or call me if you'd like to discuss the many ways you can give now and beyond. [lesleyp723@hotmail.com](mailto:lesleyp723@hotmail.com), (805) 403-5340

#### Long Live Your Values!



# December 2019 Calendar of Events at UUCM

DATE	DAY	TIME	EVENT DESCRIPTION
<b>DECEMBER 2019</b>			
1	Sunday	9:00 AM 9:30 AM 10:40 AM 10:50 AM 11:30 AM 1:00 PM	First Sunday: <b>Bring Food to Donate!</b> Full Community Gratitude Service Social Time Drop-in Support Circle Full Community Gratitude Service Book Group
2	Monday	6:30 PM	Soul Matters Exploratorium
3	Tuesday	8:30 AM 9:00 AM 4:00 PM	Walking Group (Meet at Houtmans) Morning Meditation Caring Team Meeting
4	Wednesday	8:30 AM 10:30 AM 6:30 PM	Men's Group Humanism Discussion Group Choir
5	Thursday	8:30 AM 8:30 AM 10:30 AM 7:00 PM	Men's Group at BriarPatch Coop Walking Group (Meet at Houtmans) Writers' Group Singing Meditation Circle
7	Saturday	7:00 AM 3:00 PM	Holiday Bazaar set up Christmas Tree Decoratng
8	Sunday	9:30 AM 9:30 AM 10:30 AM 10:30 AM 10:40 AM 10:50 AM 11:30 AM 12:30 PM 12:30 PM 1:30 PM	Sunday Service Classes for Children OWL Classes UUCM Holiday Bazaar Social Time Drop-in Support Circle Sunday Service Second Sunday Soup Potluck UUCM Holiday Bazaar Spiritual Practices Sampler
9	Monday	6:00 PM	Women's Circle Potluck at UUCM
10	Tuesday	8:30 AM 9:00 AM 4:00 PM	Walking Group (Meet at Houtmans) Morning Meditation Stewardship Committee Meeting
11	Wednesday	8:30 AM 11:00 AM 4:30 PM 5:30 PM 6:30 PM	Men's Group Habitat for Humanity Lunch Prep Finance Committee Meeting Social Justice Committee Meeting Choir
12	Thursday	8:30 AM 8:30 AM 5:30 PM	Men's Group at BriarPatch Coop Walking Group (Meet at Houtmans) Worship Team Meeting
14	Saturday	3:00 PM	David Edwards Memorial Service and Vegetarian Potluck

DATE	DAY	TIME	EVENT DESCRIPTION
15	Sunday	9:30 AM 9:30 AM 10:30 AM 10:30 AM 10:40 AM 10:50 AM 11:30 AM 12:30 PM 12:45 PM	Sunday Service Classes for Children OWL Classes UUCM Holiday Bazaar Social Time Drop-in Support Circle Sunday Service UUCM Holiday Bazaar Family Ministry Team Meeting
17	Tuesday	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Walking Group (Meet at Houtmans) Morning Meditation
18	Wednesday	8:30 AM 4:00 PM 6:30 PM	Men's Group Kindergarten play rehearsal Choir
19	Thursday	8:30 AM 8:30 AM 10:30 AM 2:30 PM	Men's Group at BriarPatch Coop Walking Group (Meet at Houtmans) Writers' Group Board of Trustees Meeting
20	Friday	4:00 PM 7:00 PM	Dinner Prep at Utah's Place Solstice Eve Celebration
21	Saturday	9:00 AM	Building and Grounds Work Party
22	Sunday	9:30 AM 9:30 AM 10:40 AM 10:50 AM 11:30 AM 12:30 PM	Sunday Service Classes for Children Social Time Drop-in Support Circle Sunday Service UUCM Holiday Bazaar
24	Tuesday	5:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM	Christmas Eve Family Service Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Christmas Eve Meditation Service
25	Wednesday	2:00 PM	Christmas Day Potluck & Carol Singing
26	Thursday	8:30 AM 8:30 AM 5:30 PM	Men's Group at BriarPatch Coop Walking Group (Meet at Houtmans) Worship Team Meeting
29	Sunday	9:30 AM 10:40 AM 10:50 AM 11:30 AM	Sunday Service Social Time Drop-in Support Circle Sunday Service
31	Tuesday	8:30 AM 9:00 AM	Walking Group (Meet at Houtmans) Morning Meditation



## Unitarian Universalist Community of the Mountains

246 South Church St., Grass Valley, CA 95945  
Telephone: 530.274.1675      Website: [www.uugrassvalley.org](http://www.uugrassvalley.org)

**Two Sunday Services:** at 9:30 AM and 11:30 AM

**Office Hours:** Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

### Rev. Kevin Tarsa Office Hours:

Tuesday: 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM  
Wednesday: 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM  
Thursday: 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

### UUCM STAFF MEMBERS

Reverend Kevin Tarsa, *Minister*  
Carol Fulkerson, *Office Administrator*  
Jordan Thomas-Rose, *Music Director*

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**Mountain Chalice Newsletter Submissions are due by the 20th of the month prior to publishing.**

Submit by email in Word/Pages format (not as a pdf) or simply by typing directly into an email to:

**[MtChaliceTeam@uugrassvalley.org](mailto:MtChaliceTeam@uugrassvalley.org)**

All images should be sent as good quality jpg files separately... not imbedded in your text document.

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