

the Mountain Chalice



Unitarian Universalist Community of the Mountains

February 2024

UPCOMING SERVICES

Our Sunday Services are at 10:30 AM in person and via Zoom.

If you've been exposed to Covid, RSV, the flu, or are not feeling well, please attend online.

To JOIN THE ZOOM SERVICE AT 10:30 AM ON SUNDAYS:

Online via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/746107217>

Meeting ID: 746 107 217 # • Passcode: 688010

Audio by phone: Dial in: 1 669 900 6833 or 1 408 638 0968

Meeting ID: 746 107 217 # • Passcode: 688010

... See Page 13 for Kid-Centered Activities ...

FEBRUARY THEME: *The Gift of Justice & Equity*

February 4 Joy Unspeakable

Worship Leaders: Tracy Pepper & Gail Johnson
Vaughan, Special Guest Musician: Erica Macedo

JOY! Yes, joy... perhaps not where you would expect us to begin this month's theme Exploring the Gifts of Justice and Equity. Join us this Sunday as we weave together a service of music, poetry and prose that invites us to glimpse how "joy unspeakable" has sustained Black people in America through suffering and survival. Therein lies an invitation to contemplate how Unitarian Universalist joy allows us to fulfill our mission to create a world more compassionate, sustainable, and just.

February 11 To Claim a Life of Joy and Justice

Rev. Kevin Tarsa,
with Gail Johnson Vaughan, Worship Associate

Lest we imagine that claiming joy, investing in equity, and fortifying justice are someone else's journeys, we'll pick up and follow some of the threads woven through last Sunday's service, maybe even leading to the center of our own hearts. Come, consider ways to nurture our own blends of presence, peace, and resilience, as we bring our unique voices to the choir that longs for a world more compassionate, sustainable, and just.

February 18 To Be Loved as to Love

Rev. Kevin Tarsa,
with Gail Johnson Vaughan, Worship Associate

The Enneagram 2-ness in us (The Helper, the Altruist, The Lover) is the part of us that longs to be loved, and loved for exactly who we are. This can be the part of us that is most genuinely and

generously helpful to other people or, sometimes, the part of us that is most highly invested in seeing ourselves as helpful. In our pursuit of justice and equity – and in so many other areas of our lives – we and those around us benefit when we're able to know and notice the difference.

February 25 An Egg in the Hand

Rev. Kevin Tarsa,

with Gail Johnson Vaughan, Worship Associate

These days, some students learn to practice the realities of parenting by tending to fancy simulator babies for a time. Earlier, a lower tech teaching tool reigned: students were handed an egg or a hollow eggshell and asked to keep it with them and to keep it whole and safe for somewhere between two days and two weeks. Results varied.

This Sunday, the morning after our lively Stewardship kick-off dinner, we consider the precious egg in our own hands.

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Rev. Kevin Tarsa
UUCM Minister

From the Minister

With the arrival of February, our monthly Soul Matters theme guides our focus toward another kind of liberation, “the gift of Justice and Equity.”

Annnnnnd about now I can feel some people leaning in for more, and other people giving this another three sentences, max, before tuning out. I’m still trying to figure out how to help people bridge the supposed spirituality/justice or personal/political divide. Know that underneath it all, the theme this month is meant to support your own liberation, your empowerment, your understanding, and your deepened compassion and clarity (to draw on a book description in our Soul Matters packet of resources).

Justice is love writ very large.

Politics is community and relationship writ very large.

And spirituality, including our strongest sense of what’s true about reality and our strongest sense of what matters, is woven through every bit of both.

We’ve been told that religion and politics are not to be mixed, which has been mistaken to mean that the two have nothing to do with each other, or ought not to, anyway. What’s true about that for me is that a religion ought not be allowed to impose its beliefs on others. Draw on the power of persuasion, yes, with integrity, honesty, and respect. But impose? No. To the extent that religion genuinely speaks to and cultivates spirituality (meaning our deepest sense of what is and what matters), the values inspired by such spirituality (or “perspective,” if you prefer) cannot help but influence our expectations, desires, and hopes for the wider realms of humanity, earth, and all life, and so, the politics that seek to embody those values.

Believing the story that “religion” and politics don’t mix serves to hide that relationship. It cuts off our compassionate, outward-facing impulse to relieve the suffering and enhance the thriving of others (our pursuit of justice and equity) from the spiritual grounding that most fully empowers and sustains it. It allows our spiritual understandings to stay comfortably

sheltered and small, only partially developed and realized. Believing the story that “religion” and politics don’t mix inhibits us from using more of our individual and collective power for collective good. Most conservative religions, with an ordering of values very different from our tradition’s values, do not allow their political influence to be so restricted. Clearly.

And, I know, this gets really messy, especially now, when it comes to family and friends and neighbors. But I think that separating politics from our spirituality is part of the problem here. Trying to engage those we love – or at least those we live around – at the level of politics by itself, is missing the deeper elements of our values and what anchors them. We end up arguing about the particular political expressions of our values rather than utilizing our precious energy to speak the deep values that inspire them, rather than listening for the deep values that inspire others. Until we get there, we are rather hopelessly stuck.

I don’t know if this is helping or making the spirituality/justice divide even stronger in your heart and mind. That the two are inextricably linked is clear to me. And important. This month, let’s tease this out some more together, for the sake of our relationships, our community, our world, and everyone’s children and grandchildren.

With care,

– Rev. Kevin

MINISTER'S OFFICE HOURS

*Rev. Kevin's office hours are usually held
Tuesday through Thursday afternoons.*

Email Admin@uugrassvalley.org
or call the office at (530) 274-1675
to schedule an appointment





Board of Trustees

*René Wiley, President,
UUCM Board of Trustees*
President@uugrassvalley.org

I submit to you the mid-year President's report on the governance work of your Board of Trustees.

In July, we gathered at the Board retreat to celebrate renewal, reconnect, and embrace the future with a citizen/owner model. Rev. Kevin, having just returned from his sabbatical, shared skillful Enneagram knowledge for a fun exploration of our individual leadership styles. We confirmed that the eight of us have a hardworking balance of pragmatism and idealism. We also took on the book *Trusting Change – Finding Our Way Through Personal and Global Transformation* by Karen Hering as a Board read. We understand the importance, in this transformative time, of remaining open to change. The Board is sharing and building the skills necessary to live on our thresholds, both individually and as leaders of this community.

In these years following a pandemic of grief, UUCM has shown remarkable commitment and resilience. We are reconnecting to one another and deepening our purpose. To meet the community where it is, the Board changed its approach to their goal setting process. Previously, governance and ministry goals were arrived at separately. This year, the Board goals were developed jointly with Rev. Kevin's ministry goals, but with separate governance and ministry tasks. In this way, the Board is collaborating to meet the future while being grounded in our mission and covenant. We hope that by focusing on our shared goals, UUCM will be strengthened beyond measure.

The first goal: cultivate the "ownership/citizen model" with UUCM members and renew and strengthen member connections through explicit invitations and opportunities. This concept reaches into practically every aspect of community life as we experiment with new ways for mutual collaboration among members, teams, and committees. The Board has been inviting more member involvement to simplify governance policies and procedures so that they more

realistically fit our small-ish congregation. We will continue to actively listen to member feedback as we seek to "right-size" the governance model where possible. A committee of wonderful folks planned and carried out the Board's Open Questions workshops to invite sharing on who we want to be for each other at UUCM, and who UUCM wants to be in the wider community. The Board will listen to the results you've shared, and these results will directly inform next year's goals. Another way that the Board is involved in collaboration is by expanding the Ministry Council to include Board committee leaders. This leadership sharing circle is increasing communication with one another, and interconnection and collaboration about the shared goals.

The second goal of the Ministry and Board: create a new process for a successful Stewarding year. In the past, Stewarding depended too much on the small Stewardship team tasked with the monumental responsibility of meeting UUCM's financial budget. This work was unsustainable, and the very dedicated members were suffering, so they suggested that the Board reorganize Stewarding. With representatives of the Board, Finance, Membership and other visionaries, the Stewarding Guidance Group was formed. Rooted in a citizen model of being stronger together, they are creating a process for Stewarding with shared tasks among many folks. We hope that all will attend the Congregational Dinner—after a four-year hiatus—on Saturday, February 24.

The third goal: reach out to the wider community by emphasizing communications and social media channels. One example is the Board's support of the Justice ministry team's project to assist the Andou-St. Fort family in their effort to reestablish their lives away from Haiti. UUCM members were encouraged to create a network of generosity, which they did with time and financial resources. The Board also set up a nationwide crowdsourcing campaign using the Faithify crowdfunding app. We will continue to support ways

UUCM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

JULY 2023 - JUNE 2024

René Wiley	<i>President</i>
Pam Kisor	<i>Vice-President</i>
Gail Schultz	<i>Treasurer</i>
Janet Dunstan	<i>Secretary</i>

Members at Large:

Chuck Champlin, Jeff Gold & Lisa Haden

Board meetings are open to all members and friends starting at 1:30 PM on the third Wednesday of each month.

If you wish to address the board, please give at least two days notice so the agenda timing can be adjusted.

Board of Trustees

for UUCM to reach out to the wider community to be known, inviting, and welcoming, as well as to serve.

I want to express deep gratitude to all UUCM members and friends on whose behalf we work. With special thanks to all who were able to attend the January 21st Mid-Year Community Business Meeting. By the skin of our teeth, we reached a quorum of 40% of members, which enabled a vote on simple by-laws changes, two acts that helped streamline governance. We also voted to renew the ongoing work of the Nisenan Task Force as well as the Bending the Arc Toward Racial Justice Task Force. We also cheered the work of the Stop the Mine Task Force and thanked all those, especially Jim Bair and Martha Turner, who dedicated themselves to this critical justice work.

Your Board has been hard at work embracing collaboration and change to meet the future while grounded in our mission and covenant. As stated above, we hope that by focusing on shared goals, together UUCM will be strengthened beyond measure.

Respectfully submitted,

René



Membership



Laura Harter
Leader, Membership Team
membership@uugrassvalley.org

UU 101

Our monthly UU101 workshops continue to draw newcomers and members on the first Sunday of each month. Feel free to sign up online or drop in. The next UU 101 will be held on Sunday, February 4 from noon to 1:30 PM. Meet in the sanctuary.

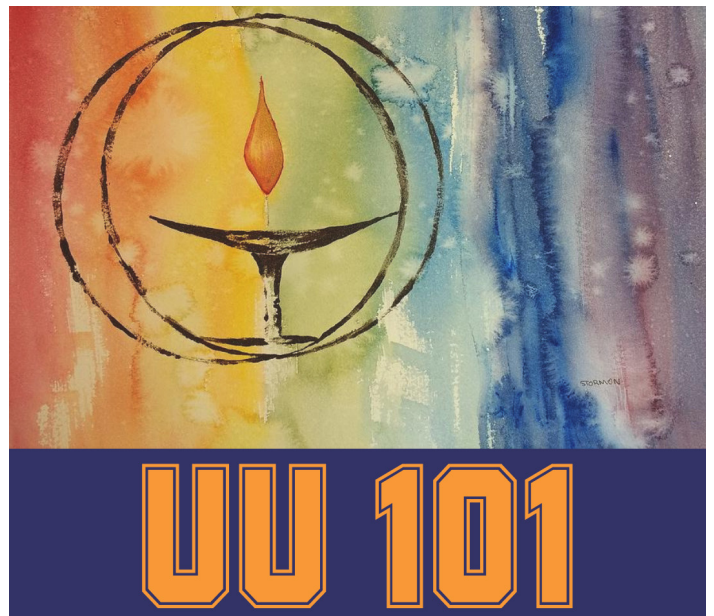
STARTING POINT

Our first Starting Point series of 2024 has started. Five members along with four newcomers are attending with Kate Canan and Rev. Kevin. Starting Point is a wonderful way to explore what brought you to Unitarian Universalism and what keeps bringing you back. It is also a good time with old and new friends.

LET'S DO LUNCH

Our first 'Let's Do Lunch' potluck was held on January 21. Two more lunches are scheduled for Monday, February 12 and Tuesday, March 19. They are filling up so be sure to let us know if you are interested.

We encourage you to sign up for all events and workshops on our website by going to the Event page or to the Calendar. If you need help navigating sign-ups, call Siobhan or Laura or send us a message at Membership@uugrassvalley.org. Always, we welcome your feedback, energy, and ideas for fun and engaging events.





Words from the Worship Team

Cheryl Morris and Carol Nimick
Worship Team Co-Leaders
Worship@uugrassvalley.org



One of the interesting aspects of serving as Worship Team leaders is learning about the breadth and depth of UUCM. Both of us are relatively new to UUCM and joined the team soon after becoming members, attracted by the quality of the services and the desire to be part of the team that produces them with such consistency week after week. Serving on the team has been every bit as challenging and rewarding as we anticipated.

What we didn't realize was how much we had to learn! While we view the weekly services as perhaps the heart of community life, the number of activities, committees, and opportunities for service across UUCM have been eye-opening. Developing an understanding of the structure and functioning of the church as an organization has been as challenging as working on Sunday services.

If part of our work as leaders has been learning about all the various aspects of church life, we now hope to bring this learning actively into worship planning. We want to sync the services closely with what else is going on, weaving in stewardship, for example, throughout the year. We understand that it is not a one-time thing, or the responsibility of a few designated stewards. It can be seen much more broadly as everyone's responsibility to develop a healthy foundation for UUCM, financially and otherwise.

Likewise, the work of the Justice team. The February theme is Justice and Equity, but that's not to imply that it's the only time we hold it as a focus. Under Kevin's leadership we try to address each monthly theme through various lenses, typically those of the individual, UUCM, and the wider community, including our social justice values and actions.

As always, we want your input, reactions, and suggestions. We invite you to join us in learning more about all that UUCM has to offer and where you want to put your time, talent, and treasure.

- Cheryl & Carol

Special Service

Democracy Vespers and Vigil

On Saturday, February 3, 4:00 PM, launching our February theme of Justice and Equity, Rev. Kevin will host a Democracy Vespers and Vigil at UUCM, a gentle, reflective opportunity to acknowledge and speak to the grief, fear, resilience, hope, and commitment in our hearts and souls. A one-hour indoor vespers service of words, silence, music, and ritual will be followed by a candlelight or glowstick vigil outside, weather permitting.

You are invited to bring an object for the altar, something that represents to you the value and the promise of democracy. You are also invited to spread the word and to bring a friend. Oh, and warm clothing for the vigil at the end.

Help Design a Service

JOIN US FOR A BRAINSTORMING SESSION
FEBRUARY 25 FROM 12:15 TO 1:00 PM

Rev. Kevin invites anyone who wishes, to work together to imagine, design, plan, prepare, and implement (with support) a Sunday service that will happen in May.

The process begins with a soup-graced brainstorming session after the service on Sunday, February 25. With Rev. Kevin and some members of the Worship Team, and both onsite and via Zoom, we'll dive into a freewheeling, unencumbered brainstorming around the theme of "pluralism." All are welcome, whether or not you continue with the service planning process. Before the session ends, we'll note any clusters of ideas that are beginning to emerge.

In March, after a chance to mull on the brainstorming ideas, we'll gather to find a clear focus for the May service. By early April we'll get way more specific, mapping out the entire service, and then as a team, we'll set it all in motion, inviting any needed participants.

Ever had ideas for what a Sunday service could be or been curious about this whole service planning process? Want to have a great, fun, creative time with others? Looking to give the congregation a wonderful gift? Please join us!

Stewarding Guidance Group

Introducing our 2024 Stewardship Campaign

Did you notice the name change? The Stewardship Team is now the Stewarding Guidance Group, made up of volunteers with a mix of special talents and experiences. The Stewarding Group has writers, Board members, seasoned stewardship veterans, a Membership team member, and Finance. We like the word “stewarding” because it sounds more like actively caring for, and that’s what stewards do. Ultimately, we are all stewards of UUCM, supporting and caring for the community we love.

It is time once again for the annual Stewardship Campaign, and our theme is ***Creating Community in an Ever-Changing World***. The words “Creating Community” reflect our collective energy for building new connections with those around us. But we include in this theme “... in an Ever-Changing World,” recognizing the vital importance of those connections, as current circumstances pose real challenges for maintaining a healthy path with one another and for the whole planet.

This year is auspicious because we celebrate the 30th anniversary of UUCM’s founding days in 1994. It is a good time to acknowledge our contributions, to express gratitude for all that has preceded us, and to take mindful stock of our shared resources.

The campaign will include these key events:

- February 17 – a presentation for Visiting Stewards and others interested in stewarding by our UU consultant, Kay Crider
- February 24 – the Congregational Dinner, back by popular demand to celebrate how far we’ve come, with hosted music and festivities for all members
- March (all month) – one-on-one conversations with Visiting Stewards, a time for in-depth discussions about your UUCM journey, our current programs, and future directions
- June 2 – the bi-annual meeting of the Congregation with a report on the campaign

Please watch your email and the e-Chalice for more details about these events.

With gratitude,

Your Stewarding Guidance Group:
Lesley Champlin, Jeff Gold, Laura Harter,
Keith Johnson, Pam Kisor, Bob Miller,
and Carol Richey



Ways to Give to UUCM

- You can give through [UUCM's Online Giving](#) page. (Choose ***Share the Plate***, General Donation, or Pledge.)
- You can mail in a check for your current pledge or plate offering to: UUCM, 246 South Church St, Grass Valley, CA 95945. (Please designate in the memo line whether your check is for your pledge, including the pledge year, general donation, or ***Share the Plate***.)
- You can give through PayPal at: paypal.me/uucm (Please leave a note as to whether your offering is for your pledge, general donation, or ***Share the Plate***.)
- For a general offering donation, you may text your amount to (833) 579-0483. 25% will automatically go to our ***Share the Plate*** partner.





A & A Team

Linda Siska, Leader,
Art & Aesthetics Team
art@uugrassvalley.org

Selections From CHIRP's Visibility Through Art Collection

By Eileen Hale

From January 18 to March 15, the UUCM Library and Art Gallery will show an exhibit of works from the Visibility Through Art project, produced by the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe.

CHIRP's Visibility Through Art Initiative (VTA) is inspired by the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe's desire to engage local artists to create artwork that authentically represents the Nisenan and their rich but nearly forgotten history here in Nevada County.

VTA is a community art initiative produced annually as part of CHIRP's Arts and Culture Program. This intentional and informed collaboration includes hours of consultation with the Tribe, and each year a theme is produced to best address their visibility needs. Beginning in 2017, VTA has exhibited over 150 original artworks created through the project. This VTA exhibit includes artworks by artists Alyssa Walz, Andy Cerrona, Ashely Foreman, Brianna French, Chula Linda Gemignani, Ginger Covert, Ember Amador, Lorena Davis, Lori Lachman, Mira Clark, and Sarah Thomas.

VTA is intended to generate cultural awareness and specifically build an understanding of the Nisenan through art. The VTA project requires continuous navigation of the sensitive topics of cultural appropriation, privilege, and erasure. For more information about CHIRP's Visibility Through Art program, go to chirpca.org/visibility-through-art.

ABOUT CALIFORNIA HERITAGE: INDIGENOUS RESEARCH PROJECT (CHIRP):

CHIRP's mission is to preserve, protect, and perpetuate Nisenan Culture. CHIRP develops and implements projects that advance this mission for the good of the Nisenan people as well as providing important education to the larger California community. Learn more at chirpca.org:

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If you want to display art in the library contact us at:
Art@uugrassvalley.org.

We are looking for new artists for 2024.



Endowment

Kathryn Young
Endowment Committee
Endowment@uugrassvalley.org

Simple Gifts Thank You

The Endowment Committee received three Simple Gifts honoring birthdays in January – from Taylor Carey, René Wiley and one from someone who wished to remain anonymous.

Thanks to each of you!

The Simple Gifts "Birthday" contributions have been coming in steadily, and we are excited to let you know that we are now LESS than \$1000 away from our \$50,000 base from which we can start using earnings towards special programs at UUCM.

The Endowment Committee would like to encourage members and friends to help sustain UUCM as a vibrant and vital force for liberal religion for generations to come by making a Legacy Gift, if you can, or Simple Gift of any amount, whenever the spirit moves you!

We have new brochures available to help explain these programs, and we would be delighted to speak with anyone who is interested in finding out ways to set up contributions through their wills, trusts and other final plans. Please contact us at: Endowment@uugrassvalley.org with your questions!





Parish Care

Gwen Eymann
Leader, UUCM Parish Care Team
Caring@uugrassvalley.org

We all need extra care sometimes on our journey through life.

The UUCM Parish Care Team is here to help organize practical support for members and friends through times of need, offering support such as home or hospital visits, transportation to local appointments, a ride to UUCM on Sunday, preparing or delivering a meal, shopping, and essential errands. The Parish Care Team also sends cards of caring and celebration, makes friendly phone calls and visits, and assists with hosting and refreshments at memorial services.

As Unitarian Universalists we believe that we all share in the responsibility for one another's care, and we invite all members and friends of UUCM to become actively involved in this wonderfully important opportunity for service. If supporting this work interests you, please fill out this brief [Parish Care Team Volunteer Survey](#) to identify tasks you would be willing to do on occasion. The Parish Caring Team will contact you as needs arise.

For more information, to request care, or to share word of someone in need of care, please contact us at: Caring@uugrassvalley.org



PARISH CARE TEAM MEMBERS:

Gwen Eymann, *chair*,
Jenny Dewey, Robin Hart, Carol Hyndman,
Anne Lyon, Cheryl Morris



Lay Pastoral Care Team

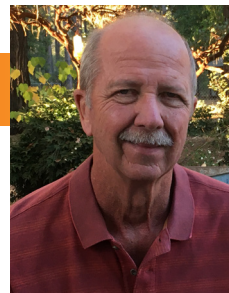
Are You Facing a Life Challenge?

UUCM's Lay Pastoral Care Team (LPCT) offers a confidential, caring presence to congregants undergoing stressful life challenges. With the support and guidance of the minister, team members commit to be available for weekly caring conversations of up to one hour, and for the duration of a congregant's current challenge or until a time of closure arises naturally.

Please contact a member of the Lay Pastoral Care Team when you are facing difficult and stressful portions of your journey and if you feel that a companioning presence from one of our team members might be helpful to you.

LAY PASTORAL CARE TEAM MEMBERS:

George Dunstan, Carol Richey, Corrie Silva,
and Tom Wernigg, or you can email the whole team:
LayPastoralCare@uugrassvalley.org



B & G Team

Wally Holtan, *Leader*,
Building & Grounds Team
B-G@uugrassvalley.org

Getting Stuff Done While Having Fun!

The Building & Grounds Team manages our day-to-day facility needs and goals for improvements for our church's physical environment. We seek volunteers that are willing to help us meet those needs through work parties and project development. These are individuals who like doing projects, repairs, cleaning, or working outside in gardens and yards. There are no requirements for joining, other than enjoying hands-on tasks and working with others.

Whether you are new to UUCM or have been a part of it for a while, if you would like to meet people while doing some fun and interesting things, the UUCM Building & Grounds Team is a good place to start.

-Wally

Nancy Finlay and the “Golden Mean”

A Profile by Jenny Dewey

Nancy Finlay says she is an optimist and explains that her optimism is (in her words) “an ability to relish the moment.” Nancy has dealt with serious illness for decades. She has experienced grief and sorrow, and she is aware the future is unknowable and unpredictable.

At age thirty-seven Nancy was diagnosed with Lupus, an auto-immune disease with no known cure. Lupus is a disease where the body attacks vital internal organs, such as the kidneys, the heart, and the lungs. Someone with Lupus lives with chronic illness. Nancy has had many surgeries, and she has faced death. Based on illness and physical suffering, no one would be surprised to hear Nancy call herself a pessimist. No one would blame her. She is a realist and accepts the reality of her situation, yet this does not make her a pessimist.

Philosophers through the ages have suggested that optimism and pessimism are essential for survival and that the ideal is to find a balance between the two. This balance, or stability, is called “the golden mean.” The “golden mean” is the middle ground between two extremes.

People say an optimist is a person who does not accept reality while a pessimist is someone who does. This is simplistic. To say someone is an optimist versus a pessimist suggests the two traits are not intertwined.

Nancy was thirteen when one of her sisters died, leaving a three-year-old boy behind. Though still a child herself, Nancy embraced her role caring for the boy. Around this time, she started baby-sitting. What most kids her age considered a necessary evil was something she loved.

She became a pediatric nurse because in her words: “Working with children is more important than anything.” She goes on to say neither she nor her co-workers ever lost hope treating sick children.

Nancy walks every day. She has loved walking all her life. She and her husband, Allan, walk to the pond on their property where five geese live (Nancy calls them “Our geese”). There are ravens, too, and Nancy counts them, and wonders why one or another goes missing from one day to the next.

Nancy is not an enigma, while at the same time she is. The word enigma means mysterious. She is not mysterious, but how has she survived living with chronic illness

and maintained a capacity for joy? Perhaps there is no answer to this question. Maybe the “golden mean” is unobtainable, a philosophical construct having nothing to do with human experience.

Never mind optimism versus pessimism. Never mind “the golden mean.” Get to know the person who appears enigmatic and make all sorts of wonderful discoveries. You will be glad you did.



Nancy Finlay and her beloved sister Barbara Chestnut

Bending the Arc Task Force

DEMOCRACY ON THE BALLOT

By Gail Johnson Vaughan

Make no mistake, the stakes for the 2024 elections are frighteningly high! The unthinkable demise of democracy could actually happen if democracy defenders like you do not step up to get out the vote.



Your Bending the Arc taskforce members are busy preparing packets of 20 postcards, stamps, address lists and scripts for our 3rd Reclaim Our Vote postcards campaign. Our goal is 14,000 postcards (700 packets) to be sent to Black voters in voter suppression states. *The first set of packets will be available March 3 at UUCM.*

To make the coordination of this effort sustainable we are reconstituting our Get Out the Vote Postcard Club. This lets us order and assemble adequate numbers of cards, addresses, stamps, etc. needed to have packets ready to go when you need them.

Members commit to writing at least one packet of 20 postcards per month March – July.

If you plan to participate please click on the link to access the [Club Sign Up Sheet](#) and additional useful details.

You can choose from three types of memberships:

- Write/funder (covers the \$10 cost of the packet contents);
- Writer-only (writes postcards but need help covering the cost);
- Funder-only (unable to write postcards so contributes funds to help cover packet costs)

UUCM received the coveted Good Trouble Congregation award for our postcard campaign in 2022. Please help us do it again. Sign up now!

Address your questions to gailjv@uugrassvalley.org



Group from UUCM Tours New "Bright Futures For Youth" Facility

By Steve Temple

Nevada County Bright Futures for Youth will be our April "Pass the Plate" recipient. On January 16, BFFY Director Jennifer Litton Singer hosted four UUCM members at their beautiful facility, which is housed in the massive Litton Building, located just above Briarpatch Coop.

The mission of BFFY is "to ignite the potential of youth today for a vibrant community tomorrow." Working with less advantaged Nevada County youth is an ambitious goal, but we were thoroughly impressed with the programs and personnel they have assembled, as well as the incredible physical facility. We learned of their recently inaugurated NEO program, as well as the Friendship Club and the SAFE program. The range of assistance is broad, from providing after-school meals, activities, and mentoring, to extensive efforts to help at risk and homeless youth.

The physical space is enormous, well planned, and graciously furnished. Some of the many activity rooms/centers include Crafts, Art, Music, and Games. They boast a large and immaculate "restaurant-worthy" kitchen and offer quality nutritious meals after school. And they serve a large number of Nevada County youth. Before our tour of BFFY, we had not heard much about this impressive NGO, which is offering a vital community service to Nevada County. If you have ten minutes, do yourself a big favor and look at their website and Facebook page, full of photos telling you more than I am able to in a few paragraphs. And then try to get on a list for a future tour!

Justice News and Activities

Share the Plate

UUCM's December *Share the Plate* recipient, [Community Beyond Violence](#) will receive \$771.66, thanks to generous UUCM members, friends, and visitors. These weekly donations add up. Thank you all.

As of this writing, we are currently finishing up collections for our January *Share the Plate* recipient, [Sierra Roots](#).



Our February *Share the Plate* recipient is: [Child Advocates of Nevada County](#)

The mission of Child Advocates is to provide services that empower and protect children. There are three principal programs. Healthy Babies is a home visiting program for new mothers and mothers-to-be. The Child Safety Puppeteers bring a message of personal safety to young children. Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) volunteers are sworn in as officers of the court who advocate for a child's needs in a court setting. UUCM member Lindsay Dunckel is the Treasurer of Child Advocates.

Thank you, each of you, for your continual compassion and justice-centered generosity.



More Help Always Needed!

... IFM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! ...

Drivers • Packing and Sorting
Checkers • Traffic Control Help

More details at

<https://www.interfaithfoodministry.org/volunteer.html>

Hospitality House

Donations for Hospitality House

Keith Johnson, UUCM Justice Team Co-Leader

UUCM is supporting Hospitality House by collecting donations of needed items for the guests. Utah Phillips, the founder of Hospitality House, was a member of UUCM, and UUCM has supported the shelter, named in his honor, since its inception as a nomadic shelter.

The project is on-going, the last Sunday of every month. You may bring your donations during open office hours or on any Sunday morning.

The following items will be useful and deeply appreciated:

- Single sized sheets and blankets
- Towels, new pillows
- Hoodies for both men and women, especially large
- Athletic shoes
- Ponchos
- Toiletries (razors and toothbrushes)

*Warm thanks for your gifts,
Laurie Bell, Keith Johnson, Carol Nimick*

Hospitality with Justice

Café Justo

Get your coffee from the farmers who grow it via Cafe Justo, serving hand-picked coffees from small farms in Mexico, directly from the farmers and their collective. The price is unbeatable! Organic, shade-grown, sun dried:

Regular coffee	\$9 per pound or \$38 for 5 lbs.
Decaf coffee	\$10 per pound or \$43 for 5 lbs.

CHOOSE: Arabica or Robusta
Light Roast or Dark Roast
Whole Beans or Ground

Order through Lin Jovanovic at coffee@uugrassvalley.org



Community Connections – Online & In Person

WEEKLY @ UUCM

[Subscribe to the weekly e-chalice](#) for Zoom links and phone numbers. If you need links, please contact our administrative assistant at Admin@uugrassvalley.org.

Make Connections at UUCM

Please contact the organizers if you are interested in joining!

WALKING GROUP

8:30 AM, TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS, OFFSITE

Email Walking@uugrassvalley.org for info.

We meet on **Tuesdays** at the Wolf Creek Trail/Northstar Mining Museum parking area, and on **Thursdays** at 418 Chapel, Grass Valley. Be sure to ask our Administrative Assistant (Admin@uugrassvalley.org) to include you on our walking group mailing list so you can be informed of last minute changes.

MEN'S GROUP

WEDNESDAYS FROM 8:30 - 10:30 AM AT UUCM

Men gather to enjoy each other's company.

Contact for the group: Men@uugrassvalley.org

SINGING MEDITATION CIRCLE

FIRST THURSDAYS, 7:00 PM, ONSITE AND VIA ZOOM

Contact SingingMeditation@uugrassvalley.org

SPIRITUALITY SHARING CIRCLE

FOURTH SATURDAYS, 2:00 - 3:30 PM, ONSITE AND VIA ZOOM

Questions? Spirituality@uugrassvalley.org

New Date and Time for Spirituality Sharing Circle

Starting this month and thereafter, the Spirituality Sharing Circle is changing its monthly meeting to the fourth Saturday of each month. In addition, the action will start an hour earlier, at 2:00 PM. Hope to see you Saturday, February 24, 2:00 – 3:30 PM in the Channing room.

NEW GROUP! 20s-30s GATHERING

SECOND SUNDAYS, NOON TO 1:30 PM

Are you someone in your 20s or 30s who is interested in connecting with other young(ish) adults, maybe looking to get involved at UUCM? Stop by our monthly get-together! **This month, we'll be getting together for an afternoon of games and refreshments.** There will be everything from dominoes to Settlers of Catan. It's a board game 'potluck,' meaning we welcome you to bring any games you'd like to share with the group. But feel free to bring just yourself and your sense of fun! We'll be meeting on **Sunday, February 11, noon - 1:30 PM.**



HUMANISM DISCUSSION GROUP

FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 10:45 AM

Our UUCM Humanism Discussion Group is a gathering for both those who identify as humanists and those who are interested in learning about this philosophy. We gather to explore humanism and how it relates to the various aspects of our lives in today's world while encouraging self-exploration as well as relationship with the group.

The topic for our next meeting on Wednesday, February 7 at 10:45 AM at UUCM will be "A Natural vs a Philosophical approach to Humanism."

Topics for group discussion are chosen by participants and optional readings on the topics are made available prior to the meeting. When health precautions allow, we meet in person at UUCM. If you're not able to attend the meeting in person and would like to participate via Zoom, request the link using the email listed below.

Please view the UUCM Website Calendar for the most up to date meeting information. For questions, please contact:

Humanism@uugrassvalley.org



WOMEN'S GROUP

MONTHLY POTLUCK –

SECOND MONDAYS, 6:00 PM

All UUCM women (and friends!) are invited to any Women's Group gathering. Come make connections with other UUCM women!

Our planning meeting last month was fun AND delicious! Check out the UUCM website to see all we came up with for 2024!

Our next meeting is **Monday, February 12 at UUCM.** Bring a baby photo of yourself for a guessing game, along with a favorite family recipe as your potluck contribution.

If you are not on the Women's Group email list, please send an email to our Administrative Assistant, Siobhan Boylan, at: Admin@uugrassvalley.org and she will add you. You'll get monthly updates and reminders of our meetings, and you can participate in discussions about our activities.

Please feel free to come up to see what we have been up to. Included below are a couple photos of our warm and inviting new room arrangements.

Changes in Kids Connection – Come See For Yourself

By Cheryl Spaulding,

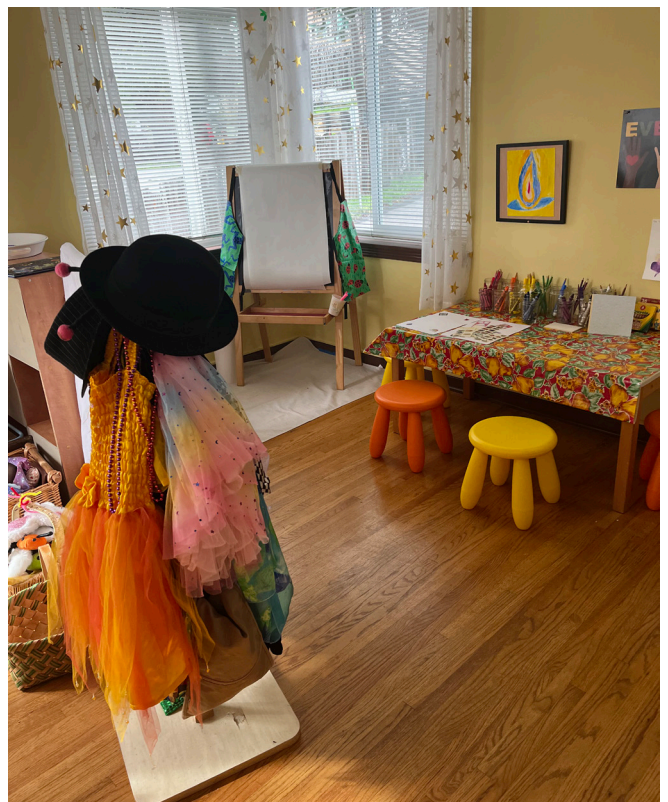
Over the last few months, as we have been redesigning our Kids Connection spaces and rituals, we have been moved to consider how our Kids Connection program might affect our UUCM children in the long run. What will our children remember about their time in Kids Connection at UUCM? How might their memories of Kids Connection influence the people they grow up to be?

To cast these questions in terms of our community-wide theme for February: will experiences in Kids Connection help our children to understand how they can be carriers of justice and equity out into their worlds?

These programmatic questions cause me to reflect on how children learn about what is just, what is fair, what is equal, what is right. Certainly, there are many distinctive learning experiences that lead children toward an understanding of issues related to justice and equity. One that seems especially resonant with what we are attempting to make happen in Kids Connection is captured in the following quote by H. Jackson Brown: “Live so that when your children think of fairness, caring, and integrity, they think of you.” A very slight rewording of this quote might better reflect what we intend as outcomes in our Kids Connection setting— Live so that when our UUCM children think of fairness, caring, and integrity, they think of their time and experiences in Kids Connection.

Our hope is that value for, understanding of, and actions aligned with justice and equity will be learned through immersion in the just and equitable environment that is our Kids Connection program. We believe that our children will learn through the actual connections they make with other children and the adults who show up to co-create Kids Connection for that week. Ideally, our children’s memories of Kids Connection will include how it felt to be in the spaces and with the people who constitute the Kids Connection program at UUCM. Justice, fairness, equity, and integrity should feel good, in the moment and as a future memory!

As I suggested in the opening sentence of this piece, we have made many changes in the physical and ritual aspects of our program over the last few months, always with an eye on helping our UUCM children internalize the principles and values that are the heart of Unitarian Universalism.



Full Community Education



It's Not Too Late to Join a Soul Matters Circle!

You may be thinking it's too late to join a Soul Matters Circle... but we do have three monthly Circles with openings:

- The 3rd Monday from 10:00 AM-12:00 PM
- the 4th Wednesday from 1:00-3:00 PM
- an all-male Circle that meets the 2nd Thursday from 9:30-11:00 AM

Everyone enjoys our Sunday services which focus on a theme for each month. We all come away with a renewed sense of life and purpose. Soul Matter Circles meet once each month for two hours. Members are asked to look and see what grabs them in the monthly packet. Sharing what they have found is a big part of SMC, but it is often profound to listen to what others have found that resonated with them. It will help you to get to know your Circle members and it often helps you to see something unexpected in yourself and in life.

If you're not sure if SMC is for you, reach out to someone in a Circle and ask them what they have learned from being a Soul Matter Circle member, or feel free to reach out to Gene Gilligan: soulmatters@uugrassvalley.org



2023-24 Soul Matters Themes

The Gift of...

February	Justice and Equity
March	Transformation
April	Interdependence
May	Pluralism
June	Renewal

Got a Message in You? Last Call for Sermon-Writing Seminar

Rev. Kevin will once again facilitate a lay sermon-writing seminar beginning in February for a circle of 6-8 people and is looking for a few more interested persons. Maybe you! Please contact Rev. Kevin by February 6. minister@uugrassvalley.org

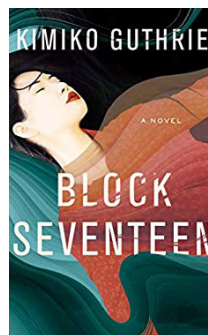
Using a rich and connective process developed by the Rev. Erika Hewitt, each person will gradually develop a complete sermon over eight sessions, with support, feedback, and encouragement from the rest of the circle. Then, willing members will work with Worship Team members and our Music Director to develop a service around the sermon and its theme.

This will be a significant and meaningful commitment, as the group will meet every two weeks for three hours from February to May. The experience will offer a space of learning and self-discovery as well as a chance to build deep connections en route to deep expression in one's authentic voice. Our hope is that participants will later feel ready to share these sermons/messages on a Sunday morning, and so benefit the Community as well. Day and time to be determined by the group.

2nd Sunday Book Group

USUALLY THE SECOND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH AT 12:30 PM
IN THE CHANNING ROOM AT UUCM

CONTACT: Theresa at BookGroupInfo@uugrassvalley.org



Sunday, February 11, 2024*

Block Seventeen

by Kimiko Guthrie

Presenter: Jo Waters

Kimiko Guthrie Akiko "Jane" Thompson, a half Japanese, half Caucasian woman in her mid-thirties is attempting to forge a quietly happy life in the Bay Area with her fiancé, Shiro. Starting with a bizarre car accident, their lives are disturbed by a number of worrisome incidents. Jane wants to ignore

these disturbances until a cry from the past robs her of all peace, forcing her to uncover a long-buried family trauma.

.....
[Sunday Book Group Zoom](#)

Meeting ID: 927 1111 8322

Passcode: 472984



Unitarian Universalist Community of the Mountains

246 South Church St., Grass Valley, CA 95945

Telephone: (530) 274-1675

Website: uugrassvalley.org



MOST UPDATED VERSION OF THE UUCM CALENDAR:

<https://www.uugrassvalley.org/calendar/>



Sunday Services are held at 10:30 AM by Zoom or on-site

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

Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1:00 TO 5:00 PM

(Our Administrative Assistant is available remotely on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.)

Rev. Kevin Tarsa Office Hours:

Rev. Kevin's office hours are currently held by appointment.

Contact Rev. Kevin at (231) 883-1058 or minister@uugrassvalley.org

UUCM STAFF MEMBERS

Reverend Kevin Tarsa, *Minister*

Siobhan Boylan,
Administrative Assistant

Toby Thomas-Rose, *Music Director*

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Minister@uugrassvalley.org

Admin@uugrassvalley.org

Music@uugrassvalley.org

TELEPHONE

(530) 274-1661

(530) 274-1675

(530) 274-1675

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

Submit by filling out the online announcement form on our website, or here:

[Article Submission Form](#)

VOLUNTEER TEAM MEMBERS: *Kathryn Young, Design/Layout; Lesley Champlin, Editing/Proofreading*