



Volume 1
July 29, 2026

A Place for You

Unitarian Universalist Community of the Mountains

Moving forward

Following months of work, we are finally settled into our new home. And now another chapter begins as we continue to make needed repairs and work to bring some of your wonderful ideas to life.

The Facilities Committee is a new group tasked with prioritizing and overseeing projects and purchases related to the Squirrel Creek campus. We will work with the Board of Trustees to determine how to spend both the remaining funds from UUCM's recent capital campaign and, where it relates to our facility, annual operating funds.

We are launching this periodic newsletter for two reasons: to keep you informed about our work and to let you know where help is needed.

Committee members include Jeff Gold, Gail Schulz, Heidi-Lynn Tayler, Alec MacLean, Marlene Bottenfield, Shannon Dooley-Miller, Ellen Goodwin, and Beth Karow.



Where we are today

Prior to disbanding, the group that oversaw the extensive work needed to prepare Squirrel Creek for our occupancy created a list of remaining projects. The list included more than 100 items and ranged from minor jobs, such as installing a hook in a utility closet, to major projects, such as dealing with dry rot on the building's exterior walls.

The new Facilities Committee recently tackled the job of prioritizing this long list. We decided to focus on safety, preservation of the facility, long-term cost reduction, and enjoyment.

We hope to complete the entire list—and possibly a few additional projects—over the three-year period covered by our capital campaign. Members and friends who made a capital campaign pledge were asked to pay over the three-year period. We are currently in the first year, which runs from March 2026 to March 2027.

A few of the projects we will tackle first involve improving acoustics in the social hall and music room, developing the overflow parking lot, creating a small patio outside the social hall, and addressing septic and drainage issues. Some projects will require outside contractors, and some will need volunteers. We have listed a few volunteer roles on the next page.



Questions or Comments for the Facilities Committee?
Contact us at FPC2@uugrassvalley.org.



Many hands make a community



Can you help?

Love working with a screwdriver, drill, and tape measure? Need a sense of fulfillment? Looking for a way to serve our community without sitting in a meeting? We have just the solution!

Our new home has many jobs that can be handled by volunteers. We have listed several below, and we will share more in the coming weeks.

If you are unsure about the scope of a particular task or role, feel free to contact the team at FPC2@uugrassvalley.org. It's okay to inquire about a task and decide it's not for you!

Facilities Contact: In this role, you will respond to emails from people interested in particular jobs. In consultation with the Facilities Team, you will answer questions about what is needed, including whether the volunteers will need to provide tools or possess certain skills. Estimated time: 2-3 hours a week.

Adjust Credenza Doors: The doors on the credenza in the social hall need some work. Estimated time: 2-3 hours.

Remove Nails: We have some unneeded nails up high on the social hall walls. Estimated time: 2-3 hours.

Get Utilities Marked: Contact PG&E to schedule a time for them to mark their utility lines on our property, be present when the work is done, and work with the Facilities Team to make sure the lines are marked on our site plan. Estimated time: 3-5 hours.

Repair Sliding Glass Door: Obtain quotes from local companies, share these with the Facilities Team, and then schedule and be present for the work. Estimated time: 3-6 hours.

Install Sanitary Waste Containers: In order to spare our septic system, we need to install sanitary waste containers in all the bathroom stalls. Estimated time: 2-3 hours.

Install Door Stops. We need to install door stops on 33 doors. You can sign up to take care of a few stops or all of them. This job requires basic carpentry skills. Estimated time for all 33: 16-18 hours.



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Introducing the Land & Grounds Team



Over the last five months, the Land Crew made great strides in beautifying our new home and creating a safer, firewise space. Beautiful flowers now greet us each Sunday outside the sanctuary, grasses and weeds have been trimmed back, the brush along the sanctuary walls has been removed, the cypress trees in front of the sanctuary have been cut down for fire safety, and wood chips from the recent tree removal are being spread throughout the beds.

The Land Crew completed the initial landscaping work and now we are transitioning into an ongoing Land & Grounds Team.

We are dreaming big and want you to dream and create with us. Maybe walking trails, a labyrinth, a ceremonial area, flower beds for the altar arrangements, a fruit and vegetable garden, a picnic area, more parking? Let's dream together and then let's roll up our sleeves and create together.

You might have noticed chairs and tables that have been placed in front of the social hall and in front of the sanctuary. We are hoping to add a couple more benches and picnic tables soon. The area outside the social hall will soon be getting new pavement.

We have an amazing neighbor, Peter, who has been helping us care for our new home. He arrived one day, loppers and Sawzall in hand, and introduced himself—no big flag waving, no expectation of any kind of recognition, just “Hi. I’m Peter. I live down the street and I’m here to help.” Since joining our team, he has cleared brush, helped remove stubborn roots, and is now bringing his tractor over to move the wood chips for us. If you see Peter around, be sure to thank him!



Our team of volunteers has worked hard in recent months. Thanks to Paul Elias, Jim Bair, Karen Wcislo, Steve Danner, Steve Temple, Rod Tayler, Gail Johnson-Vaughn, Martha Turner, Shannon Dooley-Miller, Andy Dooley-Miller, Carol Nimick, Patricia Wolfe, Theresa Houtman, Lin St. Jacques, Cynthia and Mark Burton, Ryan Fonbuono, Rorie Gotham, Keith Andre, Gene Gilligan, Reine Thibeault, Betsy Haydon, Eileen Hale, Scottie Hart, Christie Barden, Krishan Kaur and students, Marlene and Cliff Bottenfield, Bodhi Busick, Eduardo Hernandez, Chuck, and Nan.

Cliff has retired from the lead role, and Shannon has stepped up to lead the team along with Marlene.

We meet monthly on the third Saturday from 9-11 a.m. We invite you to join us! We're a fun group of people who enjoy being outdoors.



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