

the Mountain Chalice



Unitarian Universalist Community of the Mountains

April 2025

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 just 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 17 for Kid-Centered Activities ...

April: Living Love through the Practice of Joy

April 6 **This Joy that I Have**
Rev. Kevin Tarsa with Gail Johnson Vaughan,
Worship Associate

Really, how do “they” expect us to feel our joy right now? Is it even okay to feel joy with what we are going through? Well, let’s look more deeply. Some say underneath everything, joy waits as a patient foundation of our being, sometimes covered with woe, sometimes hidden beneath pain and fear, but always available to support our wholeness and action. And always ready to surprise us like the sun breaking through the clouds. Join us as we enter this month of exploring the importance of joy as a tool to soothe, sustain, and empower us. Just “maybe that’s the way light leaks into our weary world.”

April 13 **Disobedient Joy and Pleasure Activism, Oh My!**
Rev. Kevin Tarsa with Gail Johnson Vaughan,
Worship Associate

adrienne maree brown notes that “pleasure is a measure of freedom” and advocates “pleasure activism” not as an escape or spiritual bypass, but as a path toward personal and collective liberation. In a similar way, Shannon Willis encourages “disobedient joy” by which we “reject the narrative that fear should dictate our actions, that isolation is the price of survival.” Both visionaries try to help us realize that joy “reminds us that another world is possible.”

April 20 **Saving Paradise**
Rev. Kevin Tarsa with Gail Johnson-Vaughan,
Worship Associate

With this Easter Sunday and Earth Day in such close proximity, in this month that asks what joy has to do with anything and everything, we’ll let the first thousand years of Christian imagery – not portrayals of crucifixions, but instead lush scenes depicting this world as paradise – speak to us of joy, and the stones we may need to roll away to meet it.

April 27 **Flower Communion - Planting Seeds of Joy**
Gail Johnson Vaughan and Tracy Pepper,
Worship Associates

Service Description continued on Page 4...

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Rev. Kevin Tarsa
UUCM Minister

From the Minister

Living Love through the practice of Joy. Hmm...

I grew up in a tradition that uses a lectionary, a collection of sacred readings designated to be read or otherwise used on specific days or occasions. That meant that for each Sunday or weekday Catholic mass there were specific readings from the Hebrew Bible, the Psalms, the epistles (letters) of the Christian "New Testament," and the Christian Gospels. Various Jewish traditions, too, designate weekly portions of the Torah to be read and studied and reflected upon.

The blessing and the burden of having designated texts is that one is forced to find relevance and meaning in those texts for the current moment. Sometimes you have to dig very deeply and get very creative to do so. I've witnessed religious leaders doing extraordinary gymnastics trying to draw relevant contemporary meaning out of an obscure or confounding passage, or to find connecting threads in a disparate set of readings, not always successfully, I will add.

But while the forced experience of needing to work with a prescribed passage can make it seem like an unfortunate or impossible obstacle, for that very reason it can become a remarkable window to new insight. It forces one to move beyond the easy, familiar meanings and metaphors and to look for new vantage points. The journey can open up entirely new paths of awareness. Plus, to have to keep coming back to the same passages again and again requires looking for yet more or new meaning in them each time. We sermonizers sometimes refer to this as

having to think or write our way out of a corner. As I said, both blessing and burden.

This is the reason we invite choosing a word for the entire year (How's your conversation with your word going?). It keeps asking us to find its relevance now, its meaning now. Again, and again.

In Unitarian Universalism, we do not have a lectionary. We are free to draw wisdom and words from wherever we can find them. Colleagues and I are often grateful for this, but we also sometimes playfully lament it. The open-endedness in our tradition demands another kind of effort. To find and choose texts requires time and energy and heart.

At UUCM, we have for several years now subscribed to a resource (Soul Matters) that establishes a set of monthly themes with input from all the congregations that also subscribe. It is our voluntary equivalent of working with a lectionary. It's the monthly theme that is "prescribed" and through which we are forced to find meaning.

I take time to say all that because the theme of Joy is not necessarily the theme we would have chosen for this month, given the state of the national political energies and so many people's understandable anxieties. And this is exactly its gift - the "requirement" to contemplate, interrogate, and maybe find room for joy in the midst of the current moment, no matter what else is happening in and among and around us.

That's our journey this month, to stay in conversation with joy, to maybe back ourselves into a corner and have to find a way out, and to see where our conversation with joy decides to take us. May we be wonderfully surprised.

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



Taylor Carey, President,
UUCM Board of Trustees
President@uugrassvalley.org

Board of Trustees

Money. Not wealth, not security; money. I grew up on the bottom rung of the middle class. No one worked harder than my dad, but no matter how he tried, we never seemed able to rise high enough to see over the edge of the pit.

My folks grew up during the Depression, my mom a Dust Bowl preacher's kid. Food insecurity, as we call it now, shared their dinner table. My dad's family was better off. His father worked for the Union Pacific Railroad System. They were okay.

Dad fought in WWII, a skipper of a PT boat in the South Pacific. His boat was not sawed in half by a Japanese destroyer, and he survived the war physically unscathed. I wonder, though, whether despite his tales of adventure, he wasn't scarred in other ways. He came away from his wartime experiences hating both the military and authority. But, like so many of his attitudes, there were contradictions. He loved air shows, where the military's latest hardware was on full display.

Money eluded him. War time left him unable to work for others. He had to work for himself. He turned his talent for making things into a small custom home construction business in Southern California, of all places. Yet, he still couldn't make a dime. Swallowing his pride, he took a job with a major construction corporation, and we began chasing the money from one state to another, almost like military kids. Eventually, he started up another construction company. This one worked. He made a decent, not lavish living, and settled in one place for the rest of his life.

But I grew up hating money with the same semi-rational passion that Dad had for the military. It represented the worst

days of my childhood. Listening to my parents fighting over money tore at my heart like nothing else.

When I became a lawyer, it was never about the money. Money represented a necessary measure of the extent to which I acquired peace and security, but I never learned to love it. Public service gave me the best balance of security and peace without devoting myself entirely to the pursuit of the filthy lucre.

During a very difficult time, when my dad's company took him to Vietnam to work on construction projects, my mom, needing the comforts of church, took us to a service intending to join. I remember the minister's smarmy, unctuous description of the duty to tithe. He said nothing of the spiritual blessings of the church community, nothing of the comfort to troubled souls. He talked about money. I never went back.

Kathryn and I have been UUs for thirty years. We are now in our pledge period here at UUCM. Pledging. Money. Horror.

But not here. Not for me. Never in my three decades as a Unitarian Universalist has pledging involved money. From our very first meeting with our minister at the UU Society of Sacramento, even as he crept into the lion's den of giving, it was not about the money. He wanted us, not our wallets, to join the community. And we did.

We have not given money, instead we have shared our abundant security--measured in dollars, of course--with our spiritual community. Pledging as generously as we can to ensure that our spiritual family can also share in the blessings of our beloved community regardless of their economic circumstances. It may seem like an artifice or self-delusion to parse and split hairs, but the distinction between pledging merely money or the thing it represents makes all the difference to me. I am happy to share with all of you.

-Taylor

UUCM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

JULY 2024 - JUNE 2025

Taylor Carey	<i>President</i>
Carol Richey	<i>Vice President</i>
Gail Schulz	<i>Treasurer</i>
Lin Jovanovic	<i>Secretary</i>

Members at Large:
Chuck Champlin, Jeff Gold & Charlene Dugan

UUCM Committees:
Finance • Governance • Endowment
Nominating

Board meetings are open to all members and friends starting at 1:30 PM on the third Wednesday of each month. An email announcing the meeting and a Zoom link will be sent to the community each month, one week prior to the meeting.

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



Words from the Worship Team

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



Living Love

The monthly Soul Matters themes upon which our services are based have seemed especially meaningful in recent months. Each theme begins with the phrase "Living Love through the Practice of...." We began the year with Story. February and March brought us Inclusion and Trust, and now we are moving into April with Joy. We hope we are literally moving into April with joy because we need to remember that it is within our capacity to find joy whatever the circumstances. This is true for us individually and collectively.

It brings the Worship Team joy to see how many people are attending services regularly, and how many newcomers keep returning. We are especially heartened by the steady presence of a number of young adults and young families. We need their energy and perspectives to keep us open-minded and relevant, while holding on to what is timeless about our tradition.

Several newcomers have already served as readers and participants in services, bringing fresh faces and voices. We will continue to cast a wide net in our service planning and welcome your ideas for what you would like to see in the coming weeks.

We're all in this together. Joyfully!

- Cheryl & Carol

Soul Matters Themes



Soul Matters Themes for 2024-25 Living Love through the Practices of...

April: Joy
May: Imagination
June: Freedom



Upcoming Services

Continued from page 1...

April 27 **Flower Communion - Planting Seeds of Joy**
Gail Johnson Vaughan and Tracy Pepper,
Worship Associates

You are invited to bring a flower to this beautiful Flower Communion. There is much to learn about joy from delicate blossoms whose seeds can sprout and blossom even on barren rock. It is as if their seeds are seeds of joy. We too have those seeds within us. They can sprout in the most barren of times - watered not just by April showers, but also through our salty tears. Join us as we cultivate our seeds of joy.

Monthly Evening Service

Join us for an Evening Contemplative Service

SECOND THURSDAYS OF EACH MONTH, 7:00 TO 8:00 PM
GENTLE MUSIC BEGINS AT 6:30 PM

This month's service: Thursday, April 10 at 7:00 PM

It's a simple but moving service. We will sing hymns, join in meditation, and take part in a Joys and Sorrows ritual where all are welcome to share aloud with the group the joys and/or sorrows in their hearts that night.



Strategic Planning Group

Update on our SPG Retreat

Jeff Gold hosted a productive mini retreat at his home on Saturday, March 15. The meeting aimed to further sharpen our focus as we develop a five-year plan to guide our future efforts. Lindsay Dunckel led the team in Mind Mapping, a technique to enhance creative thinking and organize ideas. Using crayons and colored pencils, participants drew images representing UUCM's mission, while listening to Kevin's piano music.

The group then applied this creative energy to map themes from January's congregation-wide planning workshop, centering on visions that fulfill our mission statement.

- **Nurturing connections within the congregation:**
Sustaining worship services, programs, fostering events for younger members, and developing diverse offerings to meet various interests.
- **Community collaboration:**
Enhancing outreach to partners, building support beyond our walls, and nurturing UUCM as a 'vibrant community hub' for educational, spiritual, and social justice programs.

- **Building our Foundational Stones:**
Strengthening infrastructure with financial stability, appropriate staffing, and a welcoming, accessible space for growing membership.

The retreat was a significant step in our planning process. The use of Mind Mapping provided creativity, emerging clarity, and direction. We will continue with this process as we elaborate on the three main themes. We look forward to having a strategic framework to navigate the coming years, ensuring our efforts are aligned and targeted towards achieving our collective vision and living our mission.

We anticipate the ongoing collaboration in our strategic planning process and value the congregation-wide input as we develop the draft plan.

The Strategic Planning Committee Members:

Lesley Champlin, Charlene Dugan, Lindsay Dunckel, Jeff Gold, Laura Harter, Carol Richey, Allison Rivers, Rev. Kevin Tarsa, Alan Weisberg

Exciting Adult Learning Opportunities at UUCM!



UU HISTORY

There's two more sessions left in the UU History series that introduces concepts and people from our history. In this series, part of a Faith Forward program Rev. Kevin is sampling, we're approaching history

from the starting point of compelling stories and personalities. We've been exploring the questions those people faced and making connections with our own lives and the world around us today. The overarching question is: how can history be translated into our religious life and practice?

CLASS SCHEDULE AS FOLLOWS:

We've reached the last two weeks of the series...Drop-ins welcome, and it's okay to mix and match Tuesdays and Thursdays. Please sign up here: [UU History](#).

- Apr 1 @ 6:30 PM or Apr 3 @ 1:00 PM - A Question of Identity
- Apr 8 @ 6:30 PM or Apr 10 @ 1:00 PM - A Question of Calling

UU Elevator Speech Class:

WHAT DO YOU SAY WHEN...?

A THREE-SESSION SERIES OR A ONE-AFTERNOON WORKSHOP

UU Elevator Speech, with Rev. Kevin, guides participants through developing a short speech about our Unitarian Universalist faith. It is called an "elevator speech" because, on an elevator ride when someone asks you "what is Unitarian Universalism?" you only have a short time to make a meaningful statement!

Offered on-site as well as on Zoom, choose either the Three-Session Series:

**Tuesdays April 22, 29 and May 6 from 1:00-2:00 PM
or the One Afternoon Workshop:**

Saturday, May 17 from 1:00-4:30 PM

UU Elevator Speech helps us understand the commonalities we share as Unitarian Universalists, and how to explain our faith better and more succinctly. Get ready to be UU in public and help spread the word in a way you feel good about!

Sessions include: It's Not A Credo, Writing Your UU Elevator Speech, Sharing Your UU Elevator Speech

Register [HERE](#). For more information, contact Rev. Kevin at minister@uugrassvalley.org

Stewarding Guidance



Pledge Campaign is Closing

PLEDGES ARE DUE BY MARCH 30!

The 2025-2026 pledge campaign is coming to a close, and your pledges are due! Grateful thanks from Stewarding Guidance to those of you who have made your pledges early.

Thank you to all who attended our cottage meetings. We had a great turnout and some wonderful conversations about what drew us to our wonderful community, and what keeps us coming.

Ways to Pledge

Pledge cards are available in the office, or you can make your pledge online now at <https://www.ugrassvalley.org/pledge-25-26> or scan the QR code below with your smart phone or tablet to get to the pledge page.



Thank You!

UUCM Auction

Save the Date for the UUCM Live Auction & Please Donate!

WHEN: SATURDAY, MAY 3, 2025

WHERE: THE SANCTUARY (AND OTHER DOWNSTAIRS ROOMS)

TIME: 3:00 TO 6:00 PM

We're taking donations now, so think of what you'd like to offer. Get creative! Brainstorm the kinds of things that bring folks together, like...

SERVICES:

Paint a room, train a dog, airport rides, music lessons, pet-sitting, garden help, home repairs...

MEALS:

Brunch, lunch, theme dinners, high tea...or?
Game nights, movie dates,
Excursions and day trips, hikes, picnics
Stays in special places
Specialty foods, preserves, and baked goodies
Arts and crafts, vintage and antique items
What else can you think of?

QUESTIONS? NEED SOME INSPIRATION?

Contact any member of the Auction Team below!
Laurie Bell, Lesley Champlin, Keith Johnson, and Susan Merrill



Endowment

Kathryn Young
Endowment Committee
Endowment@ugrassvalley.org



Simple Gifts are always a great way to honor special events in your life, or the passing of friends, family, and fellow UUCM-ers, or anything you feel like acknowledging with a special contribution.

We would love to talk with you about other kinds of Endowment Gifts, too. We have brochures and packets to give you more details on **Legacy Gifts**...please let us know if you would like one.



Membership Team News

Laura Harter
Leader, Membership Team
membership@uugrassvalley.org

ZOOMERS! WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT UUCM AND GET CONNECTED? NOW THERE'S A ZOOM-ONLY EDITION OF UU 101!

**SPECIAL ZOOM-ONLY UU 101 SESSION,
SUNDAY APRIL 13, 12:00 -1:30 PM**

Calling Both New and Experienced Seekers!

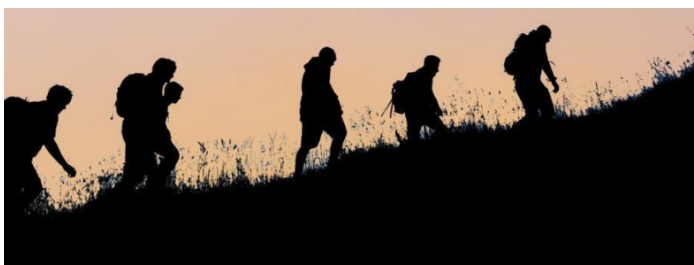
If you've been Zooming services or checking out the website and are curious to find out more, or if you are already a member and wanting to renew your sense of community and of this religious tradition, join in for meaningful and fun connection as well as information.

Start by participating in a single-session UU 101 via Zoom. It's an interactive, introductory session in which we'll touch on the history and values of Unitarian Universalism and our congregation's mission statement. There will be time for questions and discussion, because, after all, UU is a denomination where questioning is highly encouraged!

If that session piques your interest, you are invited to continue with a deeper look – [Starting Point](#), five rich sessions of connection and learning offered 3-4 times per year. (The **Starting Point** series asks for a commitment to attend all five sessions.)

Throughout both **UU101** and **Starting Point**, we'll approach Unitarian Universalism and membership at UUCM as ongoing journeys. And rather than simply hearing about Unitarian Universalism, participants will have a chance to experience Unitarian Universalism, with awareness that each person brings important insight, experiences, and perspectives to this shared journey.

UU101 sessions are offered onsite the first Sunday of each month, depending on registration. Zoom editions are offered periodically. For more information, contact us at: UU101@uugrassvalley.org.



What is the UUCM Guide Program?

Did You Know? UUCM has a Guide Program to help new members navigate their first year. I am pleased to bring you up to date if this is surprising news.

Susan Merrill and Lesley Champlin approached the Membership Team in March of 2023 about providing guides to new members. It was clear to all how helpful this might be. Susan launched the pilot program, and we are coming towards the end of year two. It has been a quiet success, and we are eager to share it with you.

HOW IT WORKS: New members are offered a Guide during their first year to help answer expected and unexpected questions that arise with new membership. Guides are there to ease the transition from 'feeling new' to feeling secure and at home. Guides might make introductions, suggest an activity or group that may be a good fit, or encourage a new member to start their own activity for others to join. For new members who choose to have a Guide it means having a friendly special someone to go to.

Thank you, Susan and all the other wonderful Guides: Laurie Bell, Cynthia Burton (who had a Guide for her first year and then became a Guide), Chuck Champlin, Ruth Edwards, Gene Gilligan, Lin Jovanovic, Corrie Silva, and Kathryn Young! Your generous care and support of our newest members has made such a difference!

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a Guide please contact, Susan Merrill at GuideProgram@uugrassvalley.org. Being a Guide can fit anyone's schedule and is a fun, easy, and rewarding way to offer support and connection.

Have you Met Our New Members?

Welcome to our newest members in 2025: Yvonne Bartlett, Cliff and Marlene Bottenfield, Sandy Sturtevant, Viv Tipton, Joyce Wilson, and Patricia Wolfe. They joined Maryann Currington, Carol Grant, Betsy Haydon, Janet Johnson, and Jax Peigare who signed the book in 2024. The Membership Team is excited for each of you as you deepen and broaden your connection, and as you explore UU values and living UUCM's mission.

As always, if you have other questions or suggestions for the Membership Team, please email me at membership@uugrassvalley.org.

Laura Harter, Leader,
Jim Bair, Laurie Bell, Ruth Edwards, and Susan Merrill

Membership Team Meets
the fourth Wednesday of each month at 2:00 PM at UUCM.



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,
Anne Lyon, Cheryl Morris



Lay Pastoral Care Team

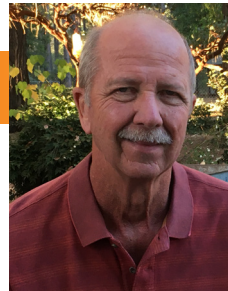
Are You Facing a Life Challenge?

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 Grant, Sue Gregory, 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



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

Art and Aesthetics Team

MEET PHIL HORNING

Horning Exhibition Continues; Reception Scheduled

Our latest exhibition, featuring the paintings of Phil Horning, opened in March and will grace the walls of our library for the months of April and May. The Meet the Artist reception will be held Sunday, March 30 in the library after the service.

Here is more about Phil in his own words:



PRESENTING *Phil Horning* ART EXHIBIT

IN THE UUCM
LIBRARY GALLERY
MARCH THROUGH MAY

ART RECEPTION:
SUNDAY, MARCH 30
AT 11:30 AM



I grew up back east in Pleasantville, New York, a suburb of New York City. My mom taught nursery school and did oil paintings as a hobby. As a kid I liked to draw and did a few paintings. In high school I worked for a neighbor down the street and built a dry wall and installed landscaping. The interest in art and landscaping led me to pursue Landscape Architecture as a profession.

After graduating from Syracuse I joined the Peace Corps in Iran and worked there for four years designing and building city parks in Gonbade Kavoods and then worked for the Iranian National Park Service in Tehran. During this period, I did drawings when there was time and continued this when I traveled for nine months through most of Asia.

Upon my return to the United States, I worked for the U.S. Forest Service on four different forests in California and took a special assignment to Tasmania, Australia, to set up a visual management system for the Tasmanian Forestry Commission. Throughout my career I have had the opportunity to hike and ski in a wide range of mountainous and forested areas and these experiences have been an inspiration to me.

Now that I am retired, I paint scenes that I hope capture some of the experiences that I find inspiring. Some of those experiences include my time as a Peace Corps Volunteer. In those cases, I take pictures of my 50-year-old slides projected on a wall and then store them digitally. Sometimes it is the special lighting as the sun sets, sometimes it is the composition of ridges and mountain peaks that attracts me. One of my favorite activities is downhill and cross-country skiing so you will see several snow scenes.

Typically, my photos of snow capture the bright white during the middle of the day, so I change the shade and lighting in the paintings to create more interest. In other cases, it is the vivid colors of fall, or the dramatic motion associated with a large waterfall that I capture. It seems to me that Mother Nature provides endless opportunities, both dramatic and subtle, to observe amazing colors, shapes, textures, and compositions, and I just try to paint a few of these examples to share with others. Please enjoy."

- Phil Horning

Have I Heard These Words Before?

A Profile on Viv Tipton by Jenny Dewey

"I was looking for a place where integrity and dignity are valued. My very first time here I felt connected. I feel safe here. I feel included. I am among like-minded people who believe in the dignity of all human beings."

These words are a quote from Viv Tipton, a new member of the UUCM community. My first question when profiling newcomers and old-timers alike is how they chose to come to UUCM. The quote from Viv Tipton is almost word-for-word the answer I get from everyone.

Viv comes to the Thursday afternoon writing sessions. Her enthusiasm, writing skills, and optimistic view of life are exciting and, of course, infectious. She comes from a large, Catholic family. When she was still very young, she knew she could not commit to the Catholic creed, with the threat of Hell if you were bad, the promise of Heaven if you were good.

Viv is one of seven children, five girls and two boys. Joe, the younger of her two brothers, helped her get a library card when she was four and could not yet write her name. She has been an avid reader ever since. And a writer as well.

She is writing a memoir in collaboration with Walter, her eldest son. They share the loss of a son and a brother. Their collaboration will allow each to express the effects

of this profound loss, and the growth and restoration of spirit that have followed.



Meet Viv Tipton

Viv's story is not an easy one, and yet there are bright spots. One is how close she and her siblings are today, having come through some difficult childhood experiences. Children from dysfunctional families often repeat the trauma of their childhood. This is not the case with Viv and her sisters and brothers.

Given the ups and downs of Viv's life experiences, she could have dropped into a darkness impossible to emerge from. Darkness exists for all of us, but those who emerge, those we

call survivors, are all the stronger for what they've been through. Viv is a survivor, and she is a great deal more.

The UUCM community is, indeed, a refuge, a safe place, and a place where the dignity and integrity of every individual is honored. It will always intrigue me to ask the question of what brought someone to UUCM – and what keeps them around. We have the answer in Viv's words, and the words of others who have come through the front door and stayed.

Welcome, and make yourself at home, and know you are in exactly the place you were looking for.



Ruth Edwards
UUCM Historian

UUCM History Corner

Celebrating Our 30th Anniversary

This article is the first one written by the UUCM Historian for the Mountain Chalice. My work as historian and the work of those before me documents, in detail, the story of UUCM. Most of this work is done behind-the-scenes. There is now an opportunity in UUCM's 30th year to use this documentation to celebrate UUCM's accomplishments and honor those who were brave enough to form UUCM. To this end there will be an article each month for the remainder of the year as UUCM celebrates its 30th year of existence.

To set the stage I have included the front page article of the UUCM newsletter (known as Nevada County News) by an unknown author summarizing the work done as of May 1995 to create UUCM (known at the time as Nevada County UU).

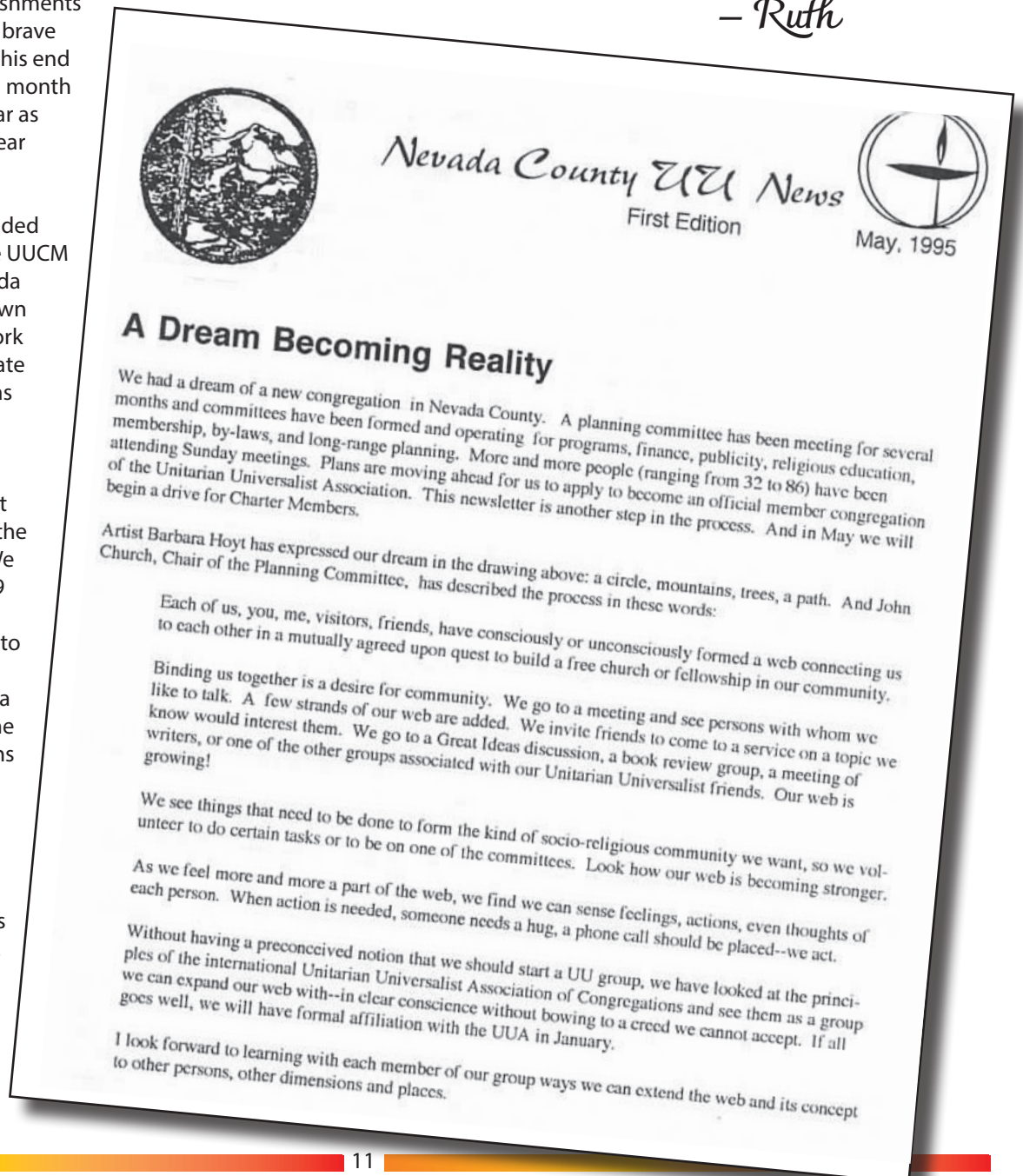
Next month on May 16 we will be honoring the newest members of UUCM during the Sunday morning service. We will also be honoring the 29 members who took up the challenge of being the first to sign the Membership Book on May 21, 1995 and make a pledge. At that point in time UUCM was still eight months (and a lot of work) away from becoming UUCM and affiliated with the UUA.

Next month's article will reveal and add some details about these 29 first signers. UUCM, at that time, was opening membership signing through the summer. These signers would become our Charter Members.

In honor of these Charter Members, all current members will have the opportunity to sign again into the UUCM community. There will be tables with pages from a 30th Anniversary Booklet for each of you to sign beneath your printed name. The names will be in alphabetical order and members will be there to help you. There will also be opportunities for Zoom members and other members who cannot come to church. This additional signing is an honorary, celebratory signing and has no effect on your original signing.

Please learn more by reading next month's article in the Mountain Chalice.

— Ruth



UUCM JUSTICE TEAM PRESENTS

Folksinger, Songwriter & Producer

George Mann

George Mann is a songwriter's singer who would just as soon share stories and songs from the long history of folk music as sing his own songs.

His concerts are singalong sessions and history lessons including stories from his real life experiences as a union organizer and educator.

www.georgemannmusic.com



◆ Opening with **Bodhi Busick & Friends** ◆

Saturday, April 12 @ 7 PM

\$10-20 suggested donation at the door

• ALL WELCOME • NO ONE TURNED AWAY FOR LACK OF FUNDS •

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. - Refreshments Available

UU Community of the Mountains
246 South Church St., Grass Valley, CA 95945

FOR MORE INFO:

shannondooleymiller@uugrassvalley.org or 530.274.1675

THE UUCM JUSTICE TEAM PRESENTS A CONCERT BY GEORGE MANN ON SATURDAY, APRIL 12

George is a singer songwriter from Ithaca, New York, who's currently on a West coast tour. He has been to Nevada County many times, including doing a benefit concert for Hospitality House. In addition to singing his own songs, George covers songs by Si Kahn, Utah Phillips, Woody Guthrie, and Pete Seeger; he likes to do songs that people can sing along with.

A former union organizer, George has made labor and protest music for more than 20 years. He has worked with and produced albums featuring such folk music legends as Utah Phillips and Pete Seeger. George brings his experience as a union organizer and educator to his concerts with stories and songs about real events and the struggle for a better life.

Bodhi Busick, who will open for George Mann, is a Nevada County singer-songwriter who combines activism with his work as a musician. Playing with Utah Phillips back in the day, they founded the Peace and Justice Center of Nevada County. Bodhi has been described as a "fine, clear-voiced poet who grows off the vine with his original and traditional roots music."

Get out the Vote Postcard Update

By Gail Johnson Vaughan, Bending the Arc Task Force

40% INCREASE IN POSTCARD STAMP PRICE!

UUCM is a major champion in combatting voter suppression through our partnership with the center for Common Ground's Reclaim Our Vote campaign to Get Out the Vote in voter suppression states.

When we began three years ago, postcard stamps were \$.40, and the postcards themselves were \$.02 if we bought them in bulk. And of course, there were the county info labels and printer ink, paper, and more. To cover the costs, we asked writers who could afford it to reimburse UUCM \$10 per packet.

Now postcard stamps cost \$.56, and the postcards bought in bulk cost \$.03, and it still feels right to keep the reimbursement amount at \$10 per packet.

HERE'S THE MATH:

THEN:

20 stamps @ \$.40 = \$8.00

20 postcards @ \$.02 = .40

Labels, ink, paper, etc. = .04

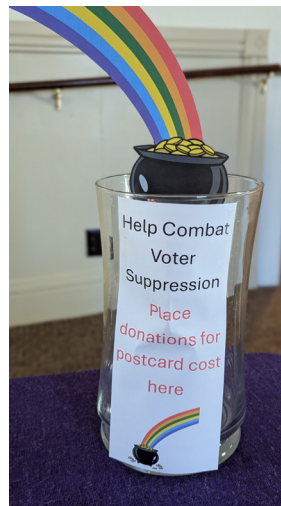
NOW:

20 stamps @ \$.56 = \$11.20

20 postcards @ \$.03 = .60

Labels, ink, paper, etc. = .07

Old cost per packet = \$8.44 New cost per packet = \$11.86



Obviously, we have a postcard sustainability problem. Maybe you'd like to help keep this important work going by dropping a couple dollars or more in our postcard donation jar from time to time.

We have written 54,000 postcards since we began in 2022. We are not just making a difference to those voters, we are giving a sense of purpose and belonging to all our writers and funders. Every postcard and every dollar donated matters. Thanks for being part of this amazing work.

Contact GOTV@uugrassvalley.org if you are new to postcarding and would like to receive info on how to get involved. Those of you who are on the postcarding distribution list heard from Gail Johnson Vaughan in March, and the packets you committed to are in the UUCM entry.

A Gentle Invite for Financial Support for our Haitian Family

By Martha Turner

There is an ocean of needs in our world, in our communities and within our circles of life. How we, as concerned and caring persons, might help with these needs is something many of us consider every day. We may have local and/or international charitable organizations and causes, near and dear to our hearts, that we give our money and time to. It is from our hearts, we invite you to consider one more, which may turn the tide for one local family facing a potentially devastating deportation.

The new President of our nation has made it loud and clear that deportation of both undocumented persons and those who are in the U.S. under legal humanitarian and asylum programs are going to be sent back to their countries of origin. This has started and so many are now living in fear.



There is a family of four, a mother, a father and two young sons who live in our community, who are here on the Humanitarian Parole program and are at risk of deportation back to their unstable and dangerous homeland of Haiti. They arrived in 2023, leaving behind the horrific violence where every single day their lives were at risk. They are working hard to integrate into life where there is hope for a future and the well-being that we all seek: shelter, sustenance, productivity, fulfilling work, self-sufficiency, purpose, meaning and a sense of belonging to one's community.

This family is in need of a financial helping hand to keep them housed while at the same time pursuing permanent asylum status, with substantial related legal costs. There is no knowing if or when this specific family will receive a knock on the door by a government official with a deportation order, but the possibility is very real. The cost of living even very modestly in our country is daunting. Keeping a roof over their heads, the utilities paid, making sure there is food in the

cupboard, and keeping a car in working order to get to work and to school, takes enormous effort and resources. While this family is working hard to be self-sufficient and recognizes and appreciates all that is possible here, they need a helping hand right now to prevent them from becoming homeless and losing all they are working toward.

Can you help with a donation toward their rent, utilities and legal fees? Any amount would help. Particularly helpful would be a monthly charitable donation to the "Help our Haitian Family" fund, managed by the Unitarian Universalist Community of the Mountains. How long this campaign will be needed? This is uncertain. Their future continues to unfold.

HOW TO GIVE:

To give, whether ongoing or one time, please visit the Give page at uugrassvalley.org/give and find the "Help Our Haitian Family" link.

Please contact minister@uugrassvalley.org with general questions and admin@uugrassvalley.org or call UUCM's office at (530)274-1675 if help is needed to make a donation. Please note that these donations are not tax deductible.

Blessings on the work we all do to help those in need in these tumultuous times.

This letter was written by Martha Turner, with collective input from Nancy Finlay, Gail Johnson Vaughan and Rev. Kevin Tarsa. Please feel free to share this invite with your extended circle of caring people! Thank you!

Nisenan Task Force Update:

SO, WHAT THE HECK IS HAPPENING WITH THAT NISENAN TASK FORCE ANYWAY?

I know it took many of you by surprise when we announced our transitioning status at the business meeting, and I apologize for that confusion.

We had already spent several months trying to work out a new designation within UUCM's structure, and to figure out what that might look like, since we seemed to be in a new and unique category as a team. There wasn't a pre-existing designation that fit how we've been coming to see ourselves.

In short, we were, and still are, figuring it all out; but the time when we would normally need to apply for renewal was coming up rapidly, and we needed to say something to let everyone know that we were not just disappearing. So, here's what we, the team formerly known as the Nisenan Task Force, want you to know: we are not renewing as a task force, but we are not going away, and our new shape is in development.

Why are we not renewing as a task force? It feels out of sync to have to ask to renew the task force every year, compared with the uninterrupted millennia-long time that this land where our church sits, has been the homeland of the Nisenan, and specifically of this branch now known as the Nevada City Rancheria (NCR) Nisenan tribe. But task forces have to ask to renew, because they're intended to be short-term and goal-oriented, not ongoing and wide-ranging. So, we needed a different designation.

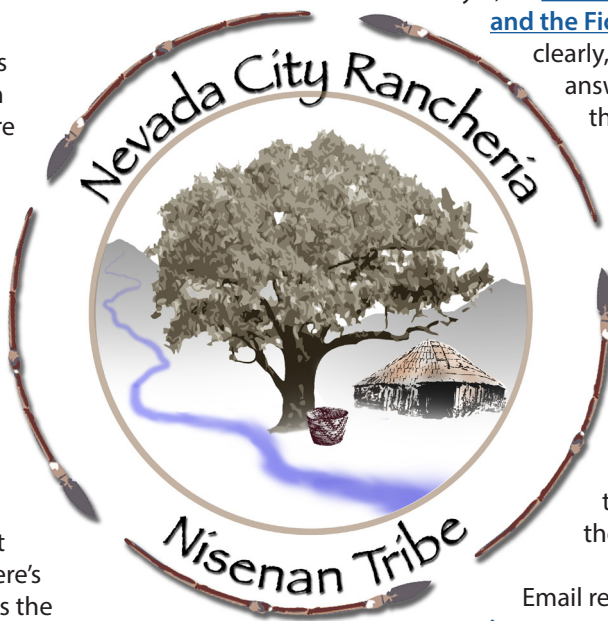
We will always be on Nisenan land, and we will always need to be in responsible relationship with the tribe if we are to stay aligned with our UU values. While we're changing our shape and still figuring out the details of what that will be, we nevertheless expect to remain under the Justice Team's umbrella. Our team is not going away, both because the work (of supporting the tribe, and of educating ourselves) is ongoing, and because the tribe has said how important it is to them that we have a group designated to connect with and support them – how much it means to them. We consider our charge to be to keep relationship and education, with and about the NCR Nisenan, in front of the congregation.

Some folks are still wondering; why do we specifically name this group of people as those we support? The short answer is that we have come to understand that the NCR Nisenan tribe are the original, long-time inhabitants of our specific area. For the long answer to the question — how we came to that conclusion — we highly recommend a presentation by Frank Lawrence, a member of our congregation and the tribe's lawyer, on [“Nisenan Homeland Return: The Facts and the Fictions.”](#) Frank does a beautiful job of

clearly, thoroughly, and compassionately answering the many questions about the Homeland Return campaign, including a clear explanation of the relationships among various local and nearby tribal groups.

One other note about our focus: by far the largest part of our attention and energy goes to the NCR Nisenan, the most local tribe, but we are also aware of and concerned for the wider area, and more distant, and even nationwide, tribes and the events surrounding them.

Email readers should contact nisenan@uugrassvalley.org



Share the Plate

UUCM's February Share the Plate recipient, [Community Beyond Violence](#) received \$1,482, 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 March partner, [Interfaith Food Ministry](#).



Our April Share the Plate recipient is [Child Advocates of Nevada County](#). Child Advocates of Nevada County provides advocacy, education, support, prevention, and intervention services so that our children can grow up free from abuse and neglect. UUCM also partnered with Child Advocates for the Christmas gift program in 2024.

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

Justice News



Green Sanctuary

Green Sanctuary 2030 Task Force

Are you passionate about environmental sustainability and climate justice? UUCM is forming a Green Sanctuary 2030 Task Force, and we need your help! As we work toward earning Green Sanctuary recognition, we'll be developing projects that align with UU values—reducing our carbon footprint, engaging in climate justice initiatives, and fostering a more sustainable and resilient community. Whether you're interested in brainstorming ideas, organizing events, or simply learning more about how UUCM can take meaningful action, there's a role for you.

If you'd like to get involved or learn more, please reach out to justice@uugrassvalley.org. This is an exciting opportunity to make a real impact, collaborate with fellow congregants, and help shape the future of our community's commitment to environmental justice.



Hospitality House Donations

Our continued generous support of Hospitality House is greatly appreciated by the guests and staff! When you are enjoying refreshments after a Sunday service, take a peek into our Hospitality House donation bin - especially towards the end of the month. It is heartwarming to see how many items are in there!

Needed Items Are:

- Towels • Twin Blankets • NEW Pillows
- NEW (unopened) Toiletries - i.e.: Shampoo, Conditioner, Razors, Soap)

Please leave donations in the designated bin in UUCM's Alcott (refreshments) room.

*Thank you for your generosity,
Laurie Bell & Keith Johnson*

2nd Sunday Book Group

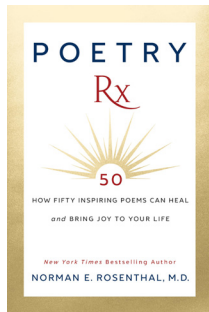
USUALLY THE SECOND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH AT 12:15 PM
IN THE CHANNING ROOM AT UUCM

CONTACT: BookGroupInfo@uugrassvalley.org



April 13, 2025:
Gretel and The Great War
by Adan Ehrlich Sach, 2024, 224 pages
Presenter: Jo Waters

A young girl wanders the streets of Vienna following the Great War. She does not speak. A neurologist concludes the girl has no exposure to language and writes her story for a medical journal, but gets a letter from a sanitarium patient who says he is wrong. The writer is the young girls father and sends along a collection of 26 bedtime stories to tell her of the times in Vienna.



May 11, 2025:
Poetry RX by Norman E. Rosenthal,
2021, 380 pages
Presenter: Judith Gropp

This fascinating book explores the concept of poetry as a healing modality, coupled with poignant bio regarding renowned poets from global backgrounds across the centuries and infused with current vignettes from contemporary issues. This is one of several books I would bring to a desert island.

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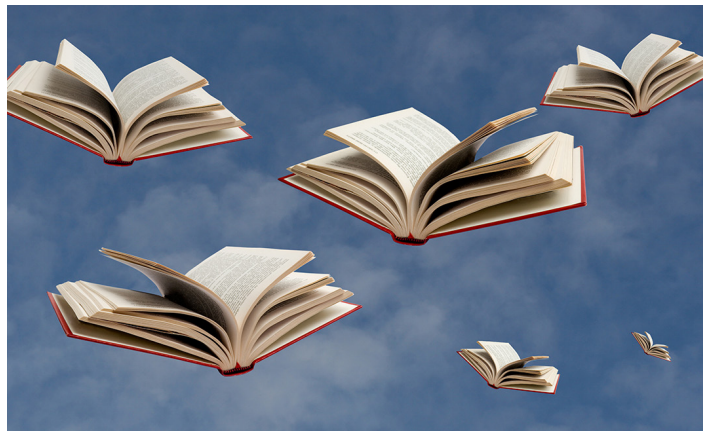
Sunday Book Group Zoom

Meeting ID: 927 1111 8322

Passcode: 472984

.....

Find a list of the next several months of book selections at [UUCM Book Group Selections](#)



Community Connections

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.

SUNDAY SERVICES - 10:30 AM VIA ZOOM OR IN PERSON

Make Connections at UUCM

Please contact the organizers if you are interested in joining!



WALKING GROUP

TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS, OFF-SITE -
MEET AT 8:30 AM

Email Walking@uugrassvalley.org

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, Siobhan (Admin@uugrassvalley.org) to include you on our walking group mailing list so you can hear about 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



WOMEN'S GROUP

MONTHLY POTLUCK –
SECOND MONDAYS, 6:00 PM
AT UUCM

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

Our next meeting is **Monday, April 14 at 6:00 PM at UUCM**. We will be having a potluck and then Mary Wolleson will teach a gentle, fun Zumba for all ages, with a chair option for those who prefer.

For reminders and RSVPs, join the Women's Group email list by sending an email to our Administrative Assistant, Siobhan Boylan, at: Admin@uugrassvalley.org.



HUMANISM DISCUSSION GROUP

FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 10:45 AM

Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday, April 2, at 10:45 AM** at UUCM, and our topic is the effect of the internet on the world - has it made it better or worse?

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.

Our group's purpose is to connect and intellectually explore the issues that touch our daily lives through Humanism's values and principles. Humanism emphasizes ethical living, critical thinking, and social justice while aiming to inspire compassionate action and mutual understanding.

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 would like to take part via Zoom, request the link by emailing Humanism@uugrassvalley.org.

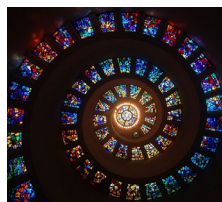
(Please view the UUCM website calendar for the most up to date meeting info.)



ARTS & CRAFTS CIRCLE

2ND & 4TH FRIDAYS, 1:00 TO 3:00 PM
AT UUCM -ALCOTT (REFRESHMENT) ROOM

Come and meet with other UUs on **Friday, April 11 and 25** at 1:00 PM to work on your own art or craft form! Enjoy each other's company while working on independent projects. No teacher or facilitator. Contact: arts-n-crafts@uugrassvalley.org



SPIRITUALITY SHARING CIRCLE

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

Questions? Need a Zoom link? Contact: Spirituality@uugrassvalley.org

The Practice of Joy

By Cheryl Spaulding, Family Ministry Team Member

Our April Soul Matters theme of Joy is a joy in and of itself. Right now, it is providing me with the opportunity to wallow in the joy that our UUCM children, their grownups, and my beloved Family Ministry Teammates bring to my life. I will use the rest of this article simply to itemize a few of the joys that I routinely experience as I serve the families of UUCM.

Joy #1:

As you likely are already aware, we currently serve a group of children ranging in age from 18 months to 10 years old. We run a version of the one-room schoolhouse upstairs. Multi-age grouping of children often brings out the very best in those children lucky enough to experience it. I am filled with joy when I see a 5-year-old boy stop what he is doing to help a toddler with her activity, and then openly states "she is a baby, and we need to help her." Similarly, joy arises for me when I watch a ten-year-old girl spending much of her time upstairs cuddling and entertaining a toddler. Our older children often become nurturers because the younger children are with us. And our very youngest children watch the older children, following and copying them, thereby reaching beyond their current developmental levels in an effort to keep up. I have watched with amazement as children not yet three years old learn how to build our altar by watching their older, more experienced peers do so.

The benefits of having an 8-year range in our children's ages are on full display upstairs on Sunday mornings. Watching our children's interactions play out in the various settings we have upstairs is a constant source of wonder, and yes joy, for me.

Joy #2:

Gradually, the average number of children attending Kids' Connection on Sunday mornings is increasing! A year ago, we were averaging 2.5 kids per Sunday, with some Sundays

having no children in attendance. We are now averaging around 6 children each Sunday, with several Sundays of late having 8, 9, or even 10 children in attendance. I am filled with joy not only because our numbers are on the rise, but also because of why they are on the rise. Several of our long-time, core families have been encouraging their neighbors, friends, work colleagues and extended family members to bring their children to our Kids' Connection program. I am so pleased that these long-time, core families have found the program to be of enough value that they would recommend it to others. And I am especially tickled by the instantaneous connections between the grownups that come along with this version of growth. More and more I see the grownups socializing together when they come upstairs to pick up their children.



I am filled with joy to know that the program is special enough that our families want to share it with others.

Joy # 3.

I want everybody at UUCM to know about the many joys of working with Lindsay, Linda, Corrie, Jenny, and Shannon. These women, who are central not only to Kids' Connection but to UUCM generally, are the sort of people who make other people's lives better, easier, and happier. You can count on them to show up, and to do so with warmth, enthusiasm, creativity, and competence. In January and February, I was sidelined on two separate Sundays when I was scheduled to be upstairs with the children. All I had to do was throw my dilemma out there in an email, and these women came up with a plan to cover for me, twice! I am actually having a hard time finding the words to adequately express the depth of my confidence in, respect

for, and love of these women; they are the foundation of my UUCM life. I can only wish for you and your UUCM life the kind of joy that I have found in my connection with the members of my Family Ministry Team.

Let me just end by saying—if you would like to get yourself some of this Family Ministry joy that I have been describing in this article, please connect with me (Cheryl Spaulding) or Lindsay Dunckel at familyministry@uugrassvalley.org or in person, upstairs or downstairs, whenever you see one or the other of us.



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 - 12:30 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*