

**LIFE ENRICHMENT Classes, Events, and Affinity Groups
2021 Spring Term
Offered by the UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF THE MONTEREY
PENINSULA
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The UUCMP Life Enrichment Committee offers classes, events and affinity groups to promote learning, fellowship, spirituality, and outreach to the wider community.

We offer three terms each year:

Fall Term - September to December

Winter Term - January to March

Spring Term - April to June

WE INVITE YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE EVENTS LISTED.

We welcome your suggestions for future events.

Classes are offered during the fall, winter, and spring terms for four-to-ten week periods, on a schedule determined by the instructor.

One-time events may be workshops or special programs of wide interest.

Ongoing Affinity Groups and Shared Interest Groups are open to all.

The UUCMP Life Enrichment Committee:

Carol Greenstreet, Chair. (lifenrichment@uucmp.org)

Bud Smith

Lee Hulquist

Rev. Axel Gehrmann

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BOOK DISCUSSION: Unitarian Universalism for our Times - Discussion of *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson (Continuation of Winter Session)

Dates: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, (February 9 - May 25, 2021)
Times: 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. via Zoom

The First Principle of Unitarian Universalism affirms the "inherent worth and dignity of every person." It sounds simple and straightforward, and yet seems maddeningly difficult to actually practice. We continue to live in extraordinary times. The current pandemic, our heightened awareness of racial and economic disparities, and an increasingly polarized political climate provide an abundance of challenges. How can we as Unitarian Universalists best understand and address these issues? Please join Rev. Axel for an 8-session reading and discussion of ***Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*** by the Pulitzer Prize Winning author Isabel Wilkerson, as we grapple with these important questions.

Please acquire a copy of the book and read the introduction and Part One (p. 1-35) for our first session, on February 9.

From the book jacket: "In this brilliant book, Isabel Wilkerson gives us a masterful portrait of an unseen phenomenon in America, as she explores, through immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real people, how America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system, a rigid hierarchy of human rankings... Linking caste systems of America, India and Nazi Germany, Wilkerson explores eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilizations, including divine will, bloodlines, and stigma... She points forward to ways America can move beyond artificial and destructive separations of human divisions, toward hope in our common humanity."

Please contact Rev. Axel (minister@uucmp.org) if you have questions, need help with Zoom, or plan to attend.

CLASS: “Faith and Environmental Justice”

Dates: Four class meetings, 1st and 3rd Mondays beginning April 19 (subsequent meetings May 3, May 17, and June 7)

Times: 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Susan Panttaja, Intern Minister, will lead this six-part class discussing global climate change and environmental degradation continue around the world, affecting both the natural environment and human existence. The impacts on some communities – typically those that are marginalized due to race, economics, gender, etc. – are far worse than on communities with more power and resources. Environmental justice binds together care for Earth and care for humanity, especially those communities most impacted by pollution and climate change.

What drives us to work for environmental/climate justice? Poet Joy Harjo writes, “Remember the earth whose skin you are: red earth, black earth, yellow earth, white earth, brown earth, we are earth.” The 7th Principle states that UUs affirm and promote “Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”

In this class, we will contemplate our relationship with Earth and its inhabitants from the perspective of faith or spirituality. We will also consider how we as people of faith can respond to the call for environmental justice. We will explore these issues through a series of readings, discussions, and your own explorations of the place you call home.

Texts for this class will be *Journey of the Universe* (book or film) by Brian Thomas Swimme and Mary Evelyn Tucker (<https://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/>), selections from *Justice on Earth: People of Faith Working at the Intersections of Race, Class and Environment* (Skinner House Books, 2018), and other readings/videos available online.

Part 1: Faith and Cosmology – Thanks to science, we have a pretty good understanding of the origins of the Universe and Earth. Does that explain how we fit into the picture? Discussion will be centered on *Journey of the Universe*. Before class, please read or listen to the book or watch the film version.

Part 2: Grief, Joy, Hope – Many of us feel deeply connected to nature or place. We may experience rejuvenation, solace, and deep joy in wilderness or our own back yards. We also may experience deep grief, as we observe environmental effects of climate change and human hubris. How do we hold both grief and hope?

Part 3: Justice on Earth. Frontline communities are already being impacted by climate change and environmental damage. Yet too often, their wisdom and experience are ignored when developing strategies and policies for survival.

Part 4: Sustenance for the Work Ahead. We will share our insights and commitments for further engagement.

THE ANTI-RACISM BOOK AND FILM GROUP

Dates: First Tuesdays

Times: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. via Zoom

The Anti-Racism Book and Film Group alternates books and films.

Please email (below) or check the Events section of the website

(<https://uucmp.org/congregation-news/events/>) for the most current information.

Contact: Rev. Elaine Gehrmann (minister@uucmp.org)

WHITES FOR RACIAL EQUITY

Date: Second Saturday

Times: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. via Zoom

For more information, go to Whitesforracialequity.org

Contact: Rev. Elaine Gehrmann (minister@uucmp.org)

ZUMBA CLASS with Elizabeth!

Dates: Most Tuesdays, April 5, 2021 to June 28, 2021

Most Thursdays, April 8 to June 24, 2021

Time: 5:00 p.m. on Tuesdays; 5:30 p.m. on Thursdays

Join Elizabeth for Zumba Livestream class every Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. and Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. Check the UUCMP Wednesday E-News each week for the class link. You can check out a short Zumba introduction video in the weekly news email to see if this appeals to you.

We take the “work” out of workout, by mixing low-intensity and high-intensity moves for an interval-style, calorie-burning dance fitness party. No experience needed! All fitness and dance levels are welcome. It's not about getting the right moves. It's about moving, having fun, and getting some exercise in. All moves can be modified and you're always welcome to take breaks. Many people enjoy Zumba while in their chair. Do what you can and most importantly get ready to have some FUN! Don't forget your water bottle and a towel for the sweat!

Benefits: A total workout combining all elements of fitness – cardio, muscle conditioning, balance, flexibility, and boosted energy, A serious dose of awesome each time you leave class.

WOMEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP

Dates: Second and fourth Thursdays

Time: 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. via Zoom

This is an ongoing group for women who are free in the afternoon, as a way of building friendships and enlarging knowledge. The wide-ranging programs are about books, travel, personal enthusiasms, and much more. Discussions are led by a group member's interest-based presentation. Presentations have ranged from "favorite job ever held" to personal definitions of the meaning of love. All women are welcome.

Contact: Nancy Baker Jacobs. (pgauthor@comcast.net)

SANGHA GROUP: AWAKENING THE BUDDHA WITHIN

Dates: Wednesdays

Time: 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. via Zoom

Buddhism is a path of self-discovery. Through the practice of meditation and mindfulness we cultivate compassion, decrease suffering, and lead a more balanced life.

The purpose of the group is to provide "Sangha" (spiritual community) for everyone interested in practicing meditation and learning about the "Dharma" (the teaching of the Buddha). Our Sangha is a self-led group that has no affiliation to any particular Buddhist school of tradition. All are welcome to attend.

We sit in silent meditation from 7:00 to 7:20 p.m., followed by brief individual sharing about our practice. Then we listen to Dharma talks recorded by noted Buddhist teachers with group discussion afterwards.

"We are shaped by our thoughts; we become what we think. When the mind is pure, joy follows like a shadow that never leaves." - The Buddha

Contact: Dennis Hamilton. (revdennishamilton@mac.com)

CHALICE CIRCLES

Chalice Circles consist of 6-10 people who meet at least once a month for about two hours to explore meaningful topics together. A typical meeting begins with opening words and a check-in, followed by sharing and discussion on a specific topic. The meeting often concludes with a check-out and closing words.

The format of the meetings helps participants set aside daily distractions, reflect on their lives and beliefs, and make meaningful connections with one another.

Chalice Circles provide an opportunity for members and friends of the church to develop deeper connections and wider service within our community through small-group conversation. Similar groups have been called Covenant Groups or simply small group ministry.

For the time being, the Chalice Circles are conducted via your computer or phone line. Our current groups include:

Dorothy's Group

Meeting time: First Thursdays, 2:00-4:00 p.m., via email
Contact: Peggy Hansen, phansen@redshift.com

Louise's Group

Meeting time: Second Mondays, 1:30-3:00 p.m., via Zoom
Contact: Carol Meyer, meyer044@gmail.com

OMNIA Chalice Circle

Meeting time: Fourth Mondays, 6:45-8:45 p.m., via Zoom
Contact: Sharon Miller, bmcclane@redshift.com
and Kerry Sisseem, kerrysisseem@earthlink.net

Canterbury Group

Meeting time: Second and Fourth Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00 p.m., via Zoom
Contact: Craig Scott, craigscottuu@gmail.com

Susan P's Group

Meeting time: Second Mondays, 7:00-9:00 p.m., via Zoom
Contact: Susan Panttaja, intern@uucmp.org

Join a Chalice Circle!

If you would like to inquire about joining a current Chalice Circle or forming a new one, sign up here [Chalice Circle Form](#) or contact the ministers, Revs. Axel or Elaine, at <minister@uucmp.org>.

SHARED INTEREST GROUPS

Shared Interest Groups are a new idea generated from a church-wide survey earlier in 2020. These are informal, peer-led interest groups for people who share and want to connect around a common interest. They have no designated "coordinators" unless someone steps up. Some are quite active, and have contacts listed. Some need coordinators to initiate action with ideas; if you are interested, please contact Maren Martin, marenmartin@sbcglobal.net.

Garden Club Shared Interest Group (Soil Mates)

Dates: 3rd Saturday at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom

Contact: Lee Hulquist, (hulquist@redshift.com)

Book Lovers Shared Interest Group

Dates: N/A, this is an email thread.

Contact: Maren Martin, (marenmartin@sbcglobal.net)