



# NUUSLETTER

of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula

October Theme: Courage

Sunday Service at 10:30 a.m. in person and via Zoom online meeting app

October 2

**“Courage, Covenant, and Mission”**

**Rev. Elaine Gehrmann, Annie Scott, and W.A. Bjorn Nilson**

How can courageously living into covenant with one another change ourselves and the world? Annie Scott is Congregational Life Staff for our Pacific Western UU Region and is leading our Covenant Workshop on October 1 on Zoom.

October 9

**“Holy Rage and Sacred Joy”**

**Rev. Axel Gehrmann and W.A. Lauren Keenan**

In our worship services we often seek to create an atmosphere of calm mindfulness and quiet contemplation. And yet if we think about the alarming events and profound injustices evident in the world around us, shouldn't we be moved to a less passive and more passionate response? A call to action might begin with two questions: “Where is our anger? Where is our joy?” (This morning's sermon topic was chosen by last year's Service Auction winner.)

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October 16

**“We Are the Cowardly Lion of Oz”**

**Ray Krise and Micah Forstein**

Being a lion is great! Being a coward is not . . . or is it? They say discretion is the better part of valor; could the cowardly lion be just a misunderstood feline of valor? Join Ray and Micah to delve into our own spiritual perceptions of fight or flight in the land of Oz.

October 23

**“It's Hard to Say I'm Sorry”**

**Rev. Elaine Gehrmann and W.A. Corey Brunson**

Sometimes, even with our best intentions, we mess up, we say the wrong thing, we do something hurtful, we don't follow through, or otherwise act in less-than-ideal ways. At times like these, a sincere apology can be helpful, but often hard to do well. We will explore the various dynamics of relationships, ruptures and repairs, and the courage involved in all of these.

October 30

**“Of Serenity and Courage”**

**Rev. Axel Gehrmann and W.A. Ann Jacobson**

In his well-known prayer, Reinhold Niebuhr asks for the serenity to accept what cannot be changed, the courage to change what can be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference. When we have the capacity to make meaningful change, we need courage to act. That seems clear. And yet, in the course of our lives when we are confronted with events we can't control, don't we also need to be brave? Perhaps accepting our fate requires a different kind of courage.

## Religious Exploration

Children (pre K - 11) and teens (12-18) attend our worship service on Sundays and go to their respective Religious Exploration classes following the Story for All Ages.



## Ministers' Message

Rev. Axel  
Gehrman

If Summertime is when the living is easy (according to Gershwin's song), then Autumn time is when life gets busy. At least that has been my experience around UU churches.

Autumn is when children are back in school after summer vacation, and summer travelers return to the routines of home. Around church attendance often picks up, choir and committees become more active, and a new church year - full of both new initiatives and treasured traditions - starts up in earnest. This year is no exception. Though, to me, it feels exceptional.

This year is unlike past years, in that we are starting up back in the church building after a two-year hiatus. It was three years since we last celebrated our Ingathering & Water Communion service together in the sanctuary. What a joy it was to be back! And during our annual Big Sur Campout in August, we realized it had been four years since we last gathered at the beautiful campsite we had visited every year for decades. (Do you remember? Prior to the pandemic, back in 2019, wildfires caused us to cancel the campout.) It was wonderful to sit around the campfire together again!

This year, for me, everything happening at church feels exceptionally exciting. The other day I met with a few folks from our Membership Committee to welcome a friend who had decided to "officially" join the church, and sign the Membership Book. I always enjoy this tradition, because in the course of our conversation, as we talk about the meaning of membership, and why we each value being a part of this religious community, I always invariably learn new things about others' lives, and am left with a deeper appreciation for this congregation, and all it does and stands for.

But this time our conversation felt particularly powerful, because it was the first time in several years that we were able to do this in-person (rather than via Zoom). Being present to one another, sharing our experiences, engaging thoughtfully, listening respectfully,

was a gift.

In the past, I may have taken the quality of conversations like this for granted. But now I don't. Now I realize this church provides us with precious opportunities to engage with others, to discover the deeper meanings of our lives, and to explore ever new ways to put our ideals of love and justice into practice.

This church is a precious place. We are living in unprecedented times. Today we are being presented with unique challenges and exceptional opportunities. We are re-discovering how to connect in-person, while continuing to gather via Zoom or hybrid, depending on our respective needs and sensibilities.

My question for you is this: How will you choose to seize this day? How will you join (or re-join) the life of our community this year?

The Connections Fair on September 18th showcased a multitude of active groups, emerging initiatives, and folks who can answer your questions - whatever your interests. (If you missed it, you can check out the video available on the church website.) And, of course, Elaine and I are always available to chat.

Also, please join our church-wide Congregational Covenant Workshop on Saturday, October 1, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. via Zoom. This will be a very special opportunity to connect with other members and friends, all while helping to strengthen our church community. (See page 4 for more information.)

In the midst of it all, I remain grateful for all of you: the exceptional people who make this church such a precious place.

See you in church,

*Axel*

## People of Color Group

Do you identify as a person of color? Join us for conversation and camaraderie! The UUCMP POC (People of Color) Group provides a framework of support and acknowledgment for members and friends of UUCMP who have lived experience as people of color. At our meetings, we will gather as an intentional, accepting fellowship of POC UU's to explore and reflect on our individual experiences, intersectionality, and UUism.

The UUCMP POC Group meets at 7 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Monday of every month, and at noon on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of every month. Feel free to drop in and join us at any of these times! Meetings will be virtual until in-person meetings at the church resume. Due to recent tech issues, please contact Patty Pai [singerpattypai@gmail.com](mailto:singerpattypai@gmail.com) to be included on an email list and receive meeting reminders and any last-minute updates to the meeting link.



## Men's Breakfast

**Saturday, October 8, at 8:30 a.m.**



The men's monthly breakfast is continuing as hybrid. Our next meeting is Saturday, October 8, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., in the Fireplace Room. People will bring in food of their choice to the in-person meeting. If you prefer, you can join us via Zoom from home at 9:00 a.m.

Zoom Meeting ID is: 975 5961 1965. Passcode: 408070

On a phone (call 669-900- 9128)

Or with a computer - simply click on this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/97559611965>

The breakfast is open to all who identify as male or gender fluid. Our conversation is confidential. If you are joining us in person please RSVP to Mike Lovell [lovellmike50@hotmail.com](mailto:lovellmike50@hotmail.com) so that we will have an idea of how much food to bring. If you have any dietary restrictions please bring your own food. Hope to see you there.

## PUBLICATION DEADLINES

ANNOUNCEMENTS for SUNDAYS in the Order of Service or Welcome and Announcements from the pulpit are due by 9 a.m. on Wednesdays. ARTICLES for THE WEEKLY NEWS email are due by noon, Tuesdays. Newsletter articles are due the 16th of each month.

## SCHEDULED EVENTS

**Adult Community Choir** meets Thursdays at 7 p.m. in person and via Zoom.

**Anti-Racism Book & Film Discussion Group** Tuesday, October 4, 7 p.m. in the Fireplace Room and via Zoom. See page 7,

**Board of Trustees** meets Wednesday, October 19, at 5:45 p.m. via Zoom.

**Buddhist Sangha** is every Wednesday at 7 p.m. in person in the sanctuary and via Zoom. See page 7.

**Environmental Justice** meets Tuesday, October 11, 3:30 p.m. via Zoom.

**I-HELP for Men** is Sundays, October 9 and 30, 5 p.m. Sign up on the bulletin board if you can help. See page 12.

**I-HELP for Women** is Sunday, October 23. Contact Lee Hulquist if you can help; see page 10.

**Membership Committee** meets Wednesday, October 26. 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.

**Men's Breakfast Group** meets Saturday, October 8, 8:30 a.m. in person and 9 a.m. via Zoom. See article at left.

**Music Committee** meets Wednesday, October 5, at 5 p.m. via Zoom.

**NUUsletter deadline** for the November issue is Sunday, October 16.

**People of Color (POC) group** will meet Saturdays, October 1 and 15 at noon, and Mondays, October 3 and 17 at 7 p.m. See article to the left for meeting details.

**Program Council** meets Tuesday, October 4, 12:30 p.m. via Zoom. For questions contact Mibs McCarthy [programcouncil@uucmp.org](mailto:programcouncil@uucmp.org)

**Social Justice** will meet on Sunday, October 2. at noon in the Sanctuary and via Zoom.

**Stewardship** will meet Wednesday, October 5, 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.

**T'ai Chi Chih** meets Tuesdays at 4 p.m. in the sanctuary. See page 7.

**UUCMP Services Auction** runs from Saturday, October 15 for Silent Auction to Saturday, October 22 for virtual Live Auction at 7 p.m. See page 10.

## President's Corner — Carol Greenstreet



### Connections

I am writing this before the Connections Fair begins, but I am looking forward to seeing what the different groups are currently doing and planning. I am engaged in a Chalice Circle, which continues to be a really rewarding experience. I hope you had a chance to talk to representatives of a few groups to see if you found them compelling. At this point I do not have time for more activities, but I hope that you find some groups and topics in which you would be interested. If you did not have the opportunity to attend on September 18th and would like some more information, you can always follow up with the office or the group leader.



I was pleased to hear that Camille will be pursuing an advanced degree; what a great opportunity for Camille and Altaira to live in gorgeous New Zealand while Camille studies for

a graduate degree at the University of Auckland. I have really enjoyed Camille's creativity in her musical and choral selections, and I know we will all miss her. The church has had a number of outstanding music directors, and I hope we will continue our streak of excellence. We will wish Camille and Altaira bon voyage in January.



I was able to visit my two brothers and their wives in September; it had been nearly three years due to the pandemic. It was really wonderful to catch up with them, whether around the dinner table or out for a walk. Or in my car-crazy family, while out for a drive. I already have a trip to New Jersey planned for May 2023; I can't let that much time pass before my next visit. I hope you have been able to connect with your friends and family and enjoy your time together.



Cheers,  
Carol

### Congregational Covenant Workshop - October 1 Don't Miss It!

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend our Congregational Covenant Workshop scheduled for Saturday, October 1st, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and which will be held on Zoom only. Our UU regional Congregational Life staff person Annie Scott will lead the workshop in which you may participate in the creation of our congregational covenant. This will be an engaging process and a great opportunity to connect with other members and friends, all while helping to strengthen our church community. We hope to see you there!





## RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION



Hello Friends,

September has been a great month for RE since our Fall season is starting to pick up. We welcomed a new family with two young ones who attended class. We had Christina Zaro, Corey Brunson, Warren Finch, and Martin Levi help refresh the nursery with a new coat of paint. We even had our Building and Grounds committee chair Lauren Keenan and her husband Bill Keenan come paint and support our RE program. We had Sundeep Gupta work on sanding furniture, and he did a wonderful job. What a great team! I love seeing how much people care about our church community and how much they are willing to help make it a lovely and welcoming space for us all. I am very blessed to be surrounded by amazing people.

We've had several congregants donate snacks for the kids. Carol Collin, Nellie Jane Ryder, and Wanda Sue Parrott have each brought some yummy snacks for the kids and teens.



Our Connections Fair was a great success. We had new people sign up to volunteer to help in RE. So sorry if you couldn't make it, but it was a lot of fun! Our very own Abby Pai-Grimmer won one of the Scavenger Hunt

prizes. Woohoo! There was music, a bubble machine, and yummy snacks at our RE table.

We have apple-picking coming up in October. **All are welcome**, so stay tuned for more details and announcements!

Our RE UUCMP Parent Group and luncheon is October 9th. Next First Friday Family game night will be October 7th. Come join Andrea Rivas, our October game night host for a night of games and fun. All are welcome.

We learned what it means to feel belonging in September. Our new theme for the month of October is Courage.

The kids are exploring the many paths of courage and how courage can look like different



things. For example, being yourself takes courage. Doing hard things and facing your fears also take different forms of courage. In the teens class, one of their discussion topics is Strengthen Your Courage to Apologize and Forgive. The teens topic is important as we all learn how to have healthy relationships. I'm grateful that our youth have a place to discuss such topics.

I want to welcome all children and families to dress up this Halloween at the service on October 30th. We will have a little Halloween parade for kids, and I would love to see adults dress up too!

Thank you all for catching up with RE! I hope you have a wonderful month.

Elizabeth Granado  
Director of Religious Exploration

# Musical Offerings

Lately I have been considering the question: what does courage really look like, and how might I recognize it? When talking with Altaira about the matter, she wove in the thread of positive social contagion. This may include a laugh, a smile, or courage to do something difficult.

Getting up in front of a crowd to sing is always scary, even for me, and it's my job. But in choir, we are buffered, hidden even, by our fellow singers. No one stands alone. Until they do - those brave soloists who swallow their fears and move to the front of the crowd. Does seeing someone else confront their fears make it easier for us to do the same?



In the quiet Alsace region of Strasbourg, France, in 1518, there was a plague. A dancing plague. It began with a lone woman dancing nonstop in a central square in July, and by some recorded accounts by the time it ended in September, more than 400 people had been taken with an undeniable, unstoppable, urge to dance. Some even danced to death. Explanations run the gamut from witchcraft to a hallucinogenic mold in that year's rye crop, but all accounts confirm that the plague moved from person to person as if by physical contagion.

By modern understanding, we might label this a "mass hysteria" event. But what is mass hysteria

if not a sort of social permission to stretch the norms of behavior? Can we also witness someone confronting a fear, like rock climbing, or spelunking, or public performance, and be so moved by their courage that we find our own?



If you would like to harness yourself to the courageous spirit of music exploration, we have many ways for you to take part. These include the long-standing Adult Community Choir, the Children's Choir (for anyone 1st-12th grade aged students), and instrumental accompaniment during the services.

Finally, if you have other ways you would like to share in music making at UUCMP, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Warmly,  
Camille



## Join Our Church!

Even in these pandemic times - *especially* in these times - our church seeks to be a caring community and a welcoming place. We strive to deepen our religious lives and support the spiritual growth of all who join together here, working to build a better world beginning with ourselves.

If you find you resonate with our principles and you are at least 16 years of age, then we invite you to sign our membership book.



Joining the church entitles you to vote at congregational meetings, at which we adopt budgets, elect officers, and direct the course of church programming. Above and beyond that, membership is a personal and public expression of your support of this religious community, the ideals it stands for, and the work it does.

If you are interested in becoming an “official” member of UUCMP, contact the ministers. ([minister@uucmp.org](mailto:minister@uucmp.org))

Please join us!

## Life Enrichment Programs Affinity Groups

**Some groups will not meet face-to-face in October. Some will meet via Zoom.**

**Anti-Racism Book and Film Discussion** First Tuesdays, 7-9 p.m. in the Fireplace Room and via Zoom.

**Men’s Breakfast Group** meets second Saturdays 8:30 a.m. in person at church and at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom. Contact: Mike Lovell. See page 3.

**Buddhist Sangha** will continue in the sanctuary and via Zoom on Wednesday evenings, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Contact: Rev. Dennis Hamilton

**Friday Night at the Movies** will not meet in October. Contact: John Freeman for any questions.

**Dances of Universal Peace** will not meet in October. Contact: Barbara Bullock-Wilson if you have any questions.

**POC (People of Color) Group** meets via Zoom at 7 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Monday of every month, and at noon on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of every month. See article on page 3 for meeting link.

**T'ai Chi Chih** meets every Tuesday at 4 p.m. in the sanctuary.

### THE MISSION STATEMENT OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF THE MONTEREY PENINSULA

Welcoming all, we worship together with loving  
hearts and open minds,  
promoting peace, equality, and respect for the Earth.  
Questioning, reflecting,  
learning, leading . . . we change  
ourselves  
as we change the world.

### We Know You Have Stories to Tell!

The Worship Associates at UUCMP bring a variety of experiences and perspectives to our weekly services!

If you think it might be fun to help plan and participate in worship services, please talk to one of our ministers about joining our team. Enthusiasm is required, experience is not.







## Art News



### LORI HUGHES

Artist • Illustrator • Designer

### MY LIFE, MY VISION

October 1st to November 12th

Welcoming Guests 12 - 2pm each Sunday

Artist Reception October 16th 12 - 3pm

Lori has been aware of her innate, God-given gift of seeing the world and being able to portray its beauty, from a very young age. When filling in a black outlined circle in a coloring book, she colored it as a sphere , , , not a flat surface. Her mom recognized this and encouraged her to explore her artistic talent. Even today, she is still surprised by some of the images that emerge.



Mandolin Solo

She has enjoyed a long, successful and award-winning career as a graphic designer and had her own design studio in Pacific Grove for ten years.

She is still working, loves the challenge of each project and feels she learns something new every day!

Several of the illustrations in the show were created as feature images in graphic design projects.

Using a variety of mediums she tries to challenge herself to new ways of seeing typical images of people or objects in situ . . . reading a newspaper, sitting on the front stoop, a close-up of a flower or seashells.

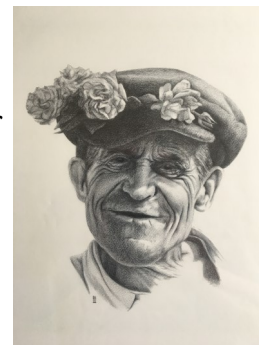


The Sandwich

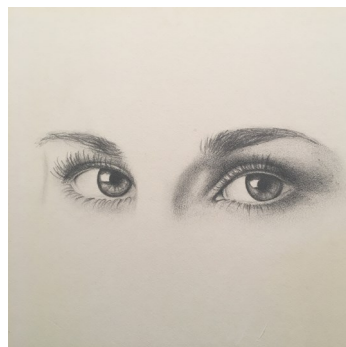
She is incredibly honored to exhibit her lifetime of illustrations in this retrospective show.

“I really enjoy creating images that are simple, but tell a story.”

“I see objects in space . . . defined by light. I don’t use “line” but create images that are influenced by the light and shadow that surround them.”

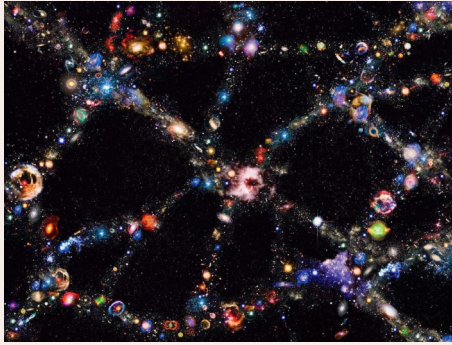


Old Fisherman



Those Eyes

## Stargazing at the UUCMP Service Auction!



We are all Stargazing, and it's almost time for our annual Services Auction! Each year UUCMP members offer a wide variety of goods and services from jewelry to dinners, delivered or in a home, homemade crafts or works of art, delicious treats, or outdoor activities. By joining in the fun, you are also contributing to a major church fund-raising event. We have received many exciting donations, and it is almost time for the festivities to begin.



Go online to [https://auctria.events/UUCMP\\_2022\\_Auction](https://auctria.events/UUCMP_2022_Auction) to participate.

Our on-line SILENT AUCTION will begin on Saturday, October 15, and will run for the entire week, culminating in a virtual LIVE AUCTION on Saturday, October 22. During the Live Auction we will also see videos of congregants' Talent Show performances. Although all bidding in the Live Auction will be via Zoom, there will be a watch party at church starting at 7 p.m. There will be no food or child care provided, but you can bring your own food and beverages and join the fun from there.

Our goal this year is to raise \$15,000 for the church, which we surpassed last year. We hope to see you there on October 22 to join in this **fun** fundraising event!

## Seeking Volunteers for the I-HELP Women Program Once a Month

Please join UUCMP members and friends to welcome women in the Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program (I-HELP). We provide a warm meal donated by the volunteers, and a safe place to spend the night once a month on the fourth Sunday.

Volunteers arrive at the church at 4:45 p.m., set up for the evening meal, and greet the women when they arrive at 5:30. The meal is served buffet-style and we join the women for dining and conversation. We are usually done by 6:30 p.m.

Currently, we are planning the meal for 6 - 8 people. Examples of meal items include main dish, salad, dessert, fruit, breakfast, or beverages.

Volunteers who are not able to join the women in the evening may bring an item for the meal and leave it in the church kitchen after the Sunday service.

Please contact Lee Hulquist (she, her) if you would like to volunteer to greet the women, provide food/dishes for the meal, and/or join us for dinner on the fourth Sunday of the month.

831-917-3179, [lmhulquist@gmail.com](mailto:lmhulquist@gmail.com), [hulquist@redshift.com](mailto:hulquist@redshift.com)

## Environmental Justice News

### Creating a Fire-Resilient Landscape

By Paola Berthoin, RisingLeaf Restoration Consulting

Caring about the land isn't just about the heart. Numbers tell us a lot.

In 2005, we learned we have destroyed 60% of earth's ability to support us. Ninety-five percent of wildlife habitat across the United States has been lost due to human uses of one form or another. Sixty percent of water is used for lawns in the west. In 2019, it was reported there is a 41% insect species decline, with a two and half percent insect biomass loss every year. Close to three billion adult breeding birds, representing one in four birds, have been lost since 1970.

These numbers are staggering, but we can do something to right the ship. When we tend our gardens and our land for making our homes more fire safe, there are a variety of best fuel management principles to take into account.

1. Work from your home out. Harden your home as best you can. Bushes close to the home invite scorching, or worse, of your home.
2. Plant natives. Preserving biodiversity is in everyone's interest.
3. Thin and prune vegetation; don't clear.
4. Remove invasive plants.
5. Do vegetation management work at the right time of the year.
6. Creating a fire resilient landscape is a collaborative, community effort.

An excellent source for determining best plants for your native plant garden can be found on the CalScape/California Native Plant Society website. Some firewise California native plants to consider in your garden based on your location and soil are: western columbine, sticky monkey flower, hummingbird sage, California sunflower, yerba buena and wild strawberry for ground covers, California lilac, coffeeberry, yarrow, Douglas iris, California fuchsia and scarlet bugler penstemon. You can use low-growing native grass for lawn areas. What is most important is hydration of plants and pruning, as needed, to keep the growth fresh. Native plants take less water than non-natives, generally.

When tending your landscape outside your garden

proper, thinning and pruning native plants is the best fuel management practice as well. If you remove all plants in the 30-70-foot zone, you are opening up the soil for flashy, fire-prone invasives to come in, even in the first year. Wide open expanses allow embers to rush towards your home rather than landing in a tended plant along the way. Bare soil can cause erosion problems, especially on steep hillsides. This makes for expensive and time-sapping remediation. Generally, thinning and pruning should be done October through January when birds are not nesting. After January, you risk disturbing them.

When it comes to trimming oak trees, the best time is late summer or early fall for the health of the oaks and to not disturb nesting birds. When trimming oaks to meet the fuel management standards, trim only branches three inches in diameter or less to achieve the required six-to-eight-foot uplift of branches. Large low hanging branches can be left as is, except for trimming the smaller branches that may be laying low to the ground. Overall pruning of oaks is highly discouraged as it opens the canopy allowing heat to beat down on the ground and encourages non-native plants to take root. Leaving oak leaves as mulch (2-3") is important for the health of the soil and the oak trees. Preserving the oak tree canopy provides a bounty of food for birds.

When we take into account how we tend our land and help others to do the same, we can help restore the balance of the natural world that supports us, free of charge!

Some useful resources are as follows:  
Conservation Fuel Management Handbook - available online in English and Spanish at [carmelvalleyassocation.org](https://carmelvalleyassocation.org), or by contacting Paola directly at 831-624-9467.

California Native Landscaping by Greg Rubin and Lucy Warren

California Native Gardening: A Month-by-Month Guide by Helen Popper

Nature's Best Hope by Douglas Tallamy

CalScape/California Native Plant Society

Blue Moon Native Plant Nursery, Carmel Valley

Rana Creek Nursery, Carmel Valley

Las Pilitas Nursery, Santa Margarita. Informative on learning about natives.



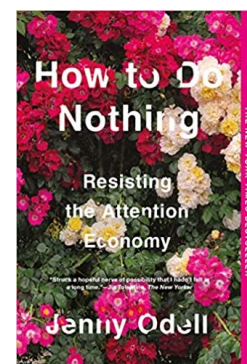
## New Book Discussion for Our Times: “How to Do Nothing”

Second and Fourth Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Join Rev. Axel for a **six-session** discussion of *How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy* by Jenny Odell, an artist and writer who teaches at Stanford and lives in Oakland, CA. This 2019 New York Times Bestseller (now available in paperback and as an eBook) grew from a lecture Odell gave on “how to do nothing,” which examined the impact of modern life’s ceaseless demands on our time and attention. She explores how we might learn to assume a different perspective, one that allows us to see familiar things in a new way, and in the process find momentary relief.

Informed by the sensibilities of both a contemporary artist and a political activist, Odell offers a compelling and timely case for mindfulness and engagement. Her ideas are particularly relevant during our current period of re-orientation and re-connection and provide worthwhile food for thought and conversation.

For more information on meeting and reading details, please contact Rev. Axel ([minister@uucmp.org](mailto:minister@uucmp.org))



## Men’s I-HELP Dinner Program Update

I became involved in the Men’s I-HELP (Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program) dinner program sponsored by the UUCMP Social Justice Committee in 2014. The I-HELP program promotes support for homeless men and women to find jobs and housing while becoming valuable independent members of our community. While they are in the program, they cannot be using drugs or drinking alcohol. The program has been successful. One of my ex-I-HELP friends has started a successful business. With that introduction, I hope you realize the dinner program is important to the men’s transition to a fruitful, productive, and independent life.

During the pandemic our dinner program provided dinners from restaurants. This was expensive for the church to support. Thanks to the generous contributions from members of the congregation to the program, we were able to continue to support this interim program. With the more relaxed COVID restrictions, I am returning to some of the original program procedures.

I am now soliciting food contributions from the congregation instead of ordering food from restaurants. The dinners are scheduled on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday, and on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday when there is one. You can sign up to contribute specific items, i.e., rotisserie chicken, vegetable, salad, desserts, drinks, etc. There will be two I-HELP dinners in October, on the 9th and the 30th. Look for the food contribution sign-up-sheet on the News and Activities board a week before each Men’s I-HELP dinner to make donations of food.

— Steve Smaby

For further information, contact Steve Smaby at [pilot.smaby@gmail.com](mailto:pilot.smaby@gmail.com) or 831.233.1014.

# SOCIAL JUSTICE



## Upcoming opportunities for Communities Organized for Relational Power in Action (COPA)

Founded in 2003, COPA has had success on issues such as affordable housing, healthcare access, safety, immigration, education and economic development. Representatives of the 27 organizations which comprise COPA met in September to plan three key events.

The first, is holding a **Convention** in late spring or early summer 2023 to celebrate COPA's 20-year anniversary. The goal of the convention isn't just to celebrate what COPA has done throughout its history, but to create a visual display of representational power.

"Representational power" comes from assembling enough people to persuade decision makers that the views of COPA matter. During the Founding Assembly in 2003, COPA demonstrated its representational power by gathering voters, and those who couldn't vote but whose labor mattered to the local and state economy, to work on important issues. One of the things for which the Founding Assembly advocated was changing the law to enable individuals who are not legal residents of the US to be able to lawfully obtain driver's licenses. The COPA Assembly persuaded elected officials this was an important issue which they should support. Now California is one of 18 states in which undocumented immigrants can legally drive. A huge win, which allowed more job and educational opportunities for undocumented immigrants. There will be similar im-

portant issues in which representational power

matters in the 20-year Anniversary Celebration Convention.

Each COPA organization agreed it would support an **Accountability Action** in the fall. On October 24, 2022, COPA will host a Zoom conference in which it will ask individuals running for the Monterey County Board of Supervisors, District 2 and the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors District 3, to commit to meet with and listen to COPA representatives. Some organizations made commitments for how many members would attend the Accountability Action. While UUCMP hasn't said how many members would attend, we hope that we turn out a good number. "Butts in seats" matter - you don't need to prepare or speak if you don't want to. Just show up.

Each COPA organization agreed to support the "hard" money effort. "Hard" money is money the organization raises and can use for whatever it thinks is most appropriate, as opposed to "soft" money from grants. Grant money frequently can only be used for purposes the grantor specifies. COPA's goal is to raise \$1 million over 5 years. As a critical step, COPA will now be listed in the Annual **Monterey County Gives** and Santa Cruz's similar activity. There will be training on November 1 at 6 p.m. via Zoom to learn how to leverage Monterey County Gives. This could be a great opportunity for COPA to gain support from a broader group of people.

There is a lot going on, with opportunities to do greater good in the community. We hope that you will attend the Accountability Action and the Anniversary Convention and help the **COPA Monterey County Gives** campaign to be successful.

by Karen Judkins

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