



NUUSLETTER

of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula

Theme: **Mystery**

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

December 3

“Holiday Mysteries”

Rev. Axel Gehrmann and Worship Associate Celia Barberena

Winter holidays are observed in a multitude of different ways in various countries, cultures, and religious traditions. For many of us, familiar stories and symbols have multiple layers of meaning, which have accumulated over the years, often beginning with the earliest holidays we remember: the celebrations and family traditions we experienced in our childhood homes. Surely, all of these contribute to our seasonal sense of mystery and wonder . . .

December 10

“The Snow Tree – A Service for All Ages”

DRE Sharyn Routh and Rev. Axel Gehrmann

Today’s multi-generational service will feature a special holiday pageant: the story of a snow tree and a little bear. Please join this celebration for all ages, and help rekindle the season’s spirit of peace, hope and joy!

December 17

“Winter Lights – Music Sunday”

Rev. Elaine Gehrmann, Jorge Torrez, Lucy Faridany, and the UUCMP Community Choir

For our annual winter holiday Music Sunday, Jorge Torrez, Lucy Faridany and our UUCMP Community Choir will share an inspiring assortment of global music, lighting our way, and calling us to more light, more peace, more hope, and more love.

December 24

“Christmas Eve Candlelight Service”

One service at 5:00 p.m.

(There will be no 10:30 a.m. worship service on December 24.)

Revs. Elaine & Axel Gehrmann, Ray Krise & Robin Jensen

Join us for stories of the season, carols and candlelight. All ages are welcome! And please bring a plate of cookies to share.

December 31

“Do Miracles Exist?”

Bjorn Nilson and Worship Associate Kathleen Sullivan

Albert Einstein said, “There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.” Wherein we will ride the horns of this dilemma together.

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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

This year, more than most, I am looking forward to the holidays. This year I am particularly aware of the growing darkness. And I feel a more pressing need for a spiritual renewal of peace, hope and love. I know the holidays can help.

There are many annual observances I cherish, and that I am grateful to share with family and friends – decorating a tree, lighting candles, exchanging gifts and greetings, hearing familiar songs and carols, sampling an assortment of tasty treats. And on our living room mantle, we carefully place a selection of small manger scenes. Over the years, Elaine and I (but especially Elaine) have accumulated a respectable collection of creches, of different design and origin, most of them small and simple.

The dark days feel particularly poignant this year amidst the troubling events in the world – particularly the violence in the Middle East. In 2017, we had the opportunity to visit Israel and the Palestinian territories. For several days we stayed at a hotel in Bethlehem, as we explored the area with a small tour group of UU ministers. We visited the spot Jesus is believed to have been born, which is now located within a grand basilica, the Church of the Nativity, built in the 4th century. We also visited several sites in Jerusalem, just a few miles to the north, that figure prominently in stories of Jesus's last days, as well as the Temple Mount, a site sacred not only to Christians, but also revered by Jews and Muslims.

Ideally, this place of shared religious significance would be a model of pluralism, peace and harmony. Sadly, however, what remains foremost in my mind from our visit, are not the ancient sacred sites and the timeless stories of divine peace and harmony, but rather our modern-day divisions.

What remains with me are memories of countless check-points, through which we needed to pass several times a day, with heavily armed soldiers and intimidating fortifications. I remember the stark differences on opposite sides of



that barrier. The streets of Israel seemed as prosperous and bustling as many Northern European places I have known. The Palestinian Territories looked like an altogether different and vastly poorer country. The average income of people living in Israel is fifteen times greater than that of Palestinians.

What remains with me is the sight of the concrete wall running through Bethlehem, separating Israeli and Palestinian territories. It's 30 feet tall – more than twice the height of the Berlin Wall – with tall round guard towers, and part of the 440-mile-long barrier surrounding the West Bank. The wall is a manifestation of both

-- continued on page 3



Ministers' Message

Rev. Axel Gehrman

physical and psychological separation, obscuring the humanity of those who live on the other side.



At a gift shop in Bethlehem, Elaine picked up a small wooden creche, that portrays the familiar

manger scene. This creche, however, is unlike others, because it includes a wall separating the Holy Family in the stable from the Magi bearing gifts. Placing it on our mantel this year, I am reminded of my favorite part of the creche: the fact that the wall is removable.

Whatever our individual holiday observances this year may entail - my hope is that they might help us re-envision a world of peace and justice, grant us the wisdom to overcome all that would divide us, and help us embody a love that embraces all people.

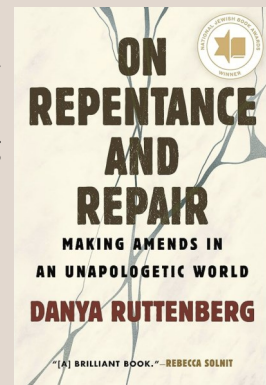


See you in church,

Axel

Book Discussion

Rev. Axel will continue leading an 8-session discussion of the book *On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World*, by Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg. In this timely book, drawing on the teaching of the 12th century Jewish physician and scholar, Maimonides, Ruttenberg invites readers “to explore practices for accountability that can bring us into wholeness and really make a difference in our personal, community, and national relationships.” The book is also this year’s UUA “Common Read,” recommended for UU congregations across the country. Please consider joining this worthwhile conversation and exploration.



We will continue to meet on first and third Tuesdays at 7:00 in the Fireplace Room. We will also have a hybrid option. Please contact Rev. Axel (minister@uucmp.org) to register, or if you have questions.

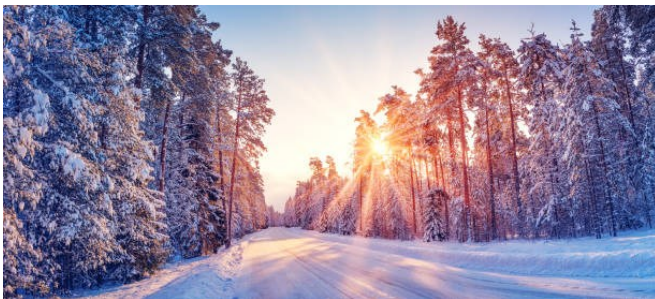
Men's Breakfast

Saturday, December 9, at 8:30 a.m.

The men's monthly breakfast is continuing as hybrid. Our next meeting is Saturday, December 9, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., in the Conference Room (a change of room for this month only). 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 so that we will have an idea of how much food to bring. If you have any dietary restrictions, please



PUBLICATION DEADLINES

ANNOUNCEMENTS for SUNDAYS in the Welcome and Announcements from the pulpit are due by 9 a.m. on Wednesdays. ARTICLES for THE WEDNESDAY WEEKLY NEWSLETTER email are due by noon, on Tuesdays. MONTHLY NUUWSLETTER articles are due by the 16th of each month.

SCHEDULED EVENTS

A Course in Miracles meets Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Conference Room.

Adult Community Choir meets Thursdays, 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary and via Zoom.

Board of Trustees meets Wednesday, December 20, at 5:45 p.m. in the Fireplace Room and via Zoom.

Book Discussion meets first and third Tuesdays, December 5 and 19, 7 p.m. in the Fireplace Room and via Zoom.

Buddhist Sangha is every Wednesday at 7 p.m. in person in the Sanctuary. Zoom is available. See page 10.

Environmental Justice meets Sunday, December 10, at noon in the sanctuary and via Zoom.

First Friday Game Night is Friday, December 1, 6:30 p.m. in the Fireplace Room.

I-HELP for Men is Sunday, December 10, 5 p.m. Sign up on the bulletin board if you can help.

Membership Committee meets Wednesday, December 27, 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.

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

Music Committee meets Tuesday, December 26. 6 p.m. via Zoom.

NUUsletter deadline for the January issue is Saturday, December 16.

Program Council meets Tuesday, December 5, 12:30 p.m. via Zoom. Contact Mibs McCarthy programcouncil@uucmp.org

Social Justice will meet on Sunday, December 3, at noon in the Sanctuary and via Zoom.

Stewardship will meet Wednesday, December 6, 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.

T'ai Chi Chih meets Tuesdays at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary. See page 10.

Youth Music will be starting again. If you are interested, please send Jorge an email: music@uucmp.org

President's Corner



I don't know

There are many things I don't know. As a matter of fact there is someone I live with that thinks there are times (I hope they are rare) that I might not even have a clue. She might be right.

How are the citizens of our world going to solve the problems of war, climate change, poverty, etc.? I don't know. In this country, will budget disagreements shutdown the government, what will be the election results next year, and what team will win the Super Bowl? I don't know.

At UUCMP, in what direction will our Strategic Planning efforts point us, what will the results of our coming stewardship campaign be, what expenses might we need to trim to balance the budget, and what will our church look like after possible changes? I don't know. Yet.

What I do know is that many of our UUCMP ancestors planned, worked, and struggled to provide us with a wonderful campus, a history of principled commitment, financial stability, and an organizational structure as a solid foundation.

I also know that we came through the Covid pandemic very strongly due to the efforts of many committed members and friends. (Covid Angels) We are now transitioning and testing what a new normal might look like and what it means for our congregation. Our Strategic Planning process is gathering input from congregants to help guide us.

I know that committees, ministers, worship associates, staff, friends, and others are hard at work to provide programs, funding, leadership, and in general the work of the church. This work helps provide a place for us to gather, connect, get spiritual nourishment, and work together to make the world a better place. UUCMP can also be a "beacon" for those searching for a spiritual connection based on principles and not doctrine.

The Board of Trustees and the Finance Committee are planning a mid-year financial review in January covering our first half of the year of revenue and expenses. The results will be available to the congregation. Our Stewardship campaign will be starting soon after that. We will then have information we can use moving into our budgeting for our next fiscal year. I know that our congregation will respond in a thoughtful and generous way.

-- Mike Lovell

The Board of Trustees has regretfully accepted Susan Holland's resignation from the Board for personal reasons, and is happy to announce that Katie Hamilton has agreed to serve out Susan's term this year.

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION



Holiday

Six years ago, my daughter's preschool gifted a copy of the book *Llama Llama Holiday Drama* to each family. The book follows a young llama's journey through the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, highlighting the excitement and joy of the holidays, along with the inevitable stress and chaos. As I approach the busyness of December, I am reminded of this story and its encouragement to focus on the joy of being together with family and friends, rather than getting caught up in the pressure to create a "perfect" holiday experience. I hope that the family-friendly activities that we have organized this December will help foster some magical moments to cherish and help us all find some joy in the midst of the holiday chaos.

Wishing you all a joyful and peaceful December!

Acting DRE Sharyn Routh
dre.sharyn@uucmp.org

UUCMP Winter Pageant: Sunday, 12/10

We are looking for both kid and adult volunteers to participate in this year's winter pageant, "Snow Tree," on December 10th. If you'd like to participate, please get in touch with Acting DRE Sharyn for more information. We are also looking for various animal costumes and props— please



see the list on the RE bulletin board and sign up if you have any items we can borrow for the pageant. We appreciate your help!

Holiday Family Fun Night: Friday, 12/8 at 6 p.m. in the sanctuary

The Committee on Family Ministry invites everyone to a special video night with karaoke. We'll have pizza, enjoy the magic of the season with the heartwarming holiday video, "The Snowy Day" (perfect for all ages), and then host a kid-friendly karaoke. Everyone is invited to showcase their singing talents with festive and fun karaoke. Sing along to your favorite holiday tunes and more! We look forward to celebrating the season at this festive family-friendly event.



Gingerbread House Decorating: Saturday, 12/16 at 3:30 p.m. in the UUCMP Kitchen.

We are excited to announce our upcoming "Gingerbread House Making Extravaganza." Let's come together as a community to celebrate the holiday season in a sweet and festive way! We'll provide all the materials, from gingerbread pieces and icing to a colorful array of candies and edible decorations (feel free to bring your own favorite decorations to share!). To ensure we have enough gingerbread house kits for everyone, please RSVP to Acting DRE Sharyn (dre.sharyn@uucmp.org) by Sunday, December 10.



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RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

RE Highlights:

Our Religious Exploration (RE) program continues to thrive with engaging lessons and meaningful discussions. For the month of December, we will be focusing on the theme of mystery, exploring its relevance to our Unitarian Universalist principles and values.

Volunteer Spotlight:

A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated volunteers who make our RE programs possible. This month, I'd like to shine a spotlight on our OWL volunteer teachers, whose passion and commitment have enriched the lives of UUCMP youth and youth in our larger Monterey Bay community. Corey Brunson, Warren Finch, Rebecca Irwin, JT Mason, Edmund



Pendleton, and Andrea Rivas -- we appreciate your contributions!

Save the Dates:

First Friday Game Night: Friday, 12/1 at 6:30 p.m. in the Fireplace Room

Holiday Family Fun Night: Friday, 12/8 at 6 p.m. in the sanctuary

UUCMP Winter Pageant: Sunday, 12/10

Gingerbread House Decorating: Saturday, 12/16 at 3:30 p.m. in the UUCMP Kitchen (*RSVPs needed*)

Sharyn



December Shared Plate Recipient *Hijos Del Sol*

Hijos Del Sol Arts Productions is a longstanding, community-based organization providing professional art instruction for children and youth of underserved neighborhoods, including many that are homeless or in foster care, and families seeking a fresh start in the U.S.

Hijos Del Sol Arts Productions creates opportunities, inspires children and youth, and builds community in the Salinas Valley through visual and multicultural arts education, experiences, and mentorship. There, young people are respected, they develop artistic and life skills, and explore and embrace their cultural identities. It helps nurture pride and connection to their community---an important aspect for children to grow up strong and whole in an increasingly isolating world.

Throughout each year, instructors and students

design collective exhibits to showcase their work. In

addition to visual arts instruction, Hijos Del Sol provides ample opportunity for exploration with interdisciplinary forms; exposure to historical, contemporary and cultural traditions; and practice with core life competencies, all while fostering the value of post-secondary education. An important strategy is to create jobs with allowance for youth apprentices that act as mentors to the next generation of up-and-coming young illustrators.

José G. Ortiz is the Founding Director and Lead Art Instructor for Hijos Del Sol Arts Productions.

Please give generously to this organization.



Guest At Your Table (GAYT) (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee – UUSC)

December is *Guest at Your Table Month* for Unitarian Universalists around the world. It is an opportunity to support advancing the human rights-based work of UUSC in more than 20 countries worldwide. UUSC is a nonprofit, nonsectarian organization advancing human rights with international community grassroots partners and advocates. UUSC works with communities affected by natural disasters and humanitarian crises and partners with First Nations and Indigenous Communities losing their lands and livelihoods to climate change. It supports the right to safety, dignity and justice for Central Americans in Central America, along the migration route in the United States, and many other grass roots organizations internationally. Their work is grounded in the belief that all people have inherent worth and dignity. Guest At Your Table is one of the longest running fundraising efforts of UUSC. This holiday, symbolically invite a guest to your table and help to understand how they are trying to function and survive.

This year’s program theme is *Pursuing Liberation*. For more details of each of these important efforts, check out <https://www.uusc.org/resources/congregations/gayt/>

Leaders chosen as “guests” for 2023/2024 are:

- Ana Lorena Delgadilla, Fundacion Para La Justicia’s Executive Director. (Foundation for Justice) FJEDD was established in 2011 to uphold the rule of law in Mexico by ensuring access to justice and due process for particularly vulnerable people. It has a successful track record of connecting and dispersing

resources to those harmed by human rights violations.

- Lida Palama, Coordinator for National Temporary Protected Status Alliance (NTPSA) which was formed in 2017 when TPS recipients from Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Nepal, and El Salvador gathered in Washington, DC, to form a national association working toward concrete solutions to issues with seeking the designation.
- Dr. Margaret Amaka Ohia-Nowak, co-founder of Black Justice In Poland (ABJP) formed in March 2022 to support Black people arriving in Poland for refuge.
- Sepasitiano Pateleisio got involved with Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change (PISFCC) to broaden the impact of students in offering solutions for climate change. As chair of PISFCC, his goal is to bring more youth innovation to generate creative solutions in the climate justice movement.

There are more details about the efforts of these brave leaders in the UUSC Stories of Hope 2023-2024 online and at the UUSC table in the Welcome Hall after worship each Sunday.

RE youth will be making boxes to drop spare change in to support the GAYT. Those coins can go toward the family’s donation. Sharyn Routh will also have templates available for others to fold their own boxes if they want to give that way.

You can write a check to UUSC with GAYT in the memo line during December. Every individual gift of \$150 or more (or if you sign up for monthly giving that adds up to \$150 over the year) will be matched by the very generous Shelter Rock congregation in New York. Also, a generous donor here at UUCMP has put up a \$1500 challenge offering to match up to 10 new \$150 pledges to UUSC from members of our congregation. Your donations make a real difference in social justice work around the world. Thank you for your generosity.

Final day to turn in boxes and checks is December 31, 2023.

Art News



The Reason for a Flower: Paintings by Erin E. Hunter

December 2, 2023–February 1, 2024

Artist reception

Saturday, December 2 • 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Private showings available: please contact Erin at erin@eehunter.com

Monterey-based painter and science illustrator Erin E. Hunter will share several original pollinator-themed paintings in this exhibit, inspired by Ruth Heller's beloved picture book *The Reason for a Flower*. Hunter's detailed portraits of wildflowers and floral visitors bring attention to the importance of native bees, hummingbirds, butterflies, and other pollinators in our ecosystems.



Upper Bidwell Wildflowers



Wheeler's Thistle

Hunter deeply researches her subjects as she sketches and composes a painting, then layers thin washes of acrylic on watercolor paper or gesso board. With an increasing focus on California native flora, viewers will recognize many of the flowers in her artwork—and hopefully walk away with a new awareness of the floral visitors that pollinate these plants.

Hunter is a trained science illustrator with a background in graphic design. She splits her work between fine art paintings depicting the natural world, and technical illustrations for an academic science journal (*Annual Reviews*). Her personal work focuses on the interactions between plants and animals, with a special interest in plant-pollinator relationships. View more of Erin's work at www.eehunter.com.



California Wildflowers in Yellow

Join Our Church!

Even in these post 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)

Please join us!

Life Enrichment Programs Affinity Groups

Some groups will not meet face-to-face in November. Some will meet 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 4.

Buddhist Sangha will continue in person 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 December. Contact: John Freeman for any questions.

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.



UUCMP General Fund Drive 2024

Stewardship Report

The canvass for our 2024-25 fiscal year will kick off in mid-February. The theme is **“Be the Light.”** Our vision for this operating fund drive is that we all will become bright lights within our community by providing whatever time and treasure is needed to support the success of this wonderful church.

The work we do here makes the world a better place. We want to be able to brighten our lights in the world to share our values and encourage others to join us in our quest for a world of love and equity for all. We can all do so, each in our own way.

We can each be the light by becoming an active member of a committee, becoming an usher or greeter or worship associate on occasional Sundays, donating generously to the church through a pledge, dropping funds in the offering baskets, and participating fully in fundraisers.

You may remember that at our Annual Meeting last year, incoming treasurer Robert Brunson shared the budget with everyone. (We approved that budget.) One of the things he explained is that for the last few years, we have been dipping into our financial reserves to balance our budget. That is, we have been using the reserves to pay bills. The Financial Solutions Committee, created by the Board last year, recommended that we stop taking money from savings/reserves to balance the budget, beginning with the fiscal year 2024/2025. The committee suggested that to wean the church

from using savings to pay our bills. 2023/2024, the current fiscal year, will be the last year that savings would be used for that purpose. So, in the future, we will be relying more heavily on pledges from our members and friends to balance our budget. For the 2023/2024 fiscal year, we, as a congregation, approved using \$132,000 from reserves as needed to support the budget.

Last year, the Board, as recommended by the Financial Solutions Committee, also created a Fundraising Committee as a subcommittee of Stewardship. Carol Greenstreet expertly chairs that committee. The recently completed COVID angel recognition campaign organized by the Fundraising Committee raised \$8,500 to add to our coffers this fiscal year. That was income that was unbudgeted and means that we could end up using less of our savings to pay bills.

After the upcoming canvass, the Fundraising Committee may offer other ways to help fill the “hole” in the current budget. Some ideas include naming opportunities for sale such as for the new outdoor benches or concrete tiles on the newly built walls. Other ideas are most welcome.

It is up to all of us to immerse ourselves in the business and spirit of UUCMP. We look forward to seeing the results of those efforts as we each become a bright light for the community.

As previously announced, please remember that our next canvass will be an electronic/online one. More information to follow.

Thanks for your continuing generous support of UUCMP!

Your Stewardship Committee: Konny Murray, Chair; Carol Collin, Gretchen Hausmann, Steve Johnson, Judy Lind, Bjorn Nilson, Jo Ann Novoson, and Wanda Sue Parrott, with spiritual encouragement from Rev. Axel Gehrman.

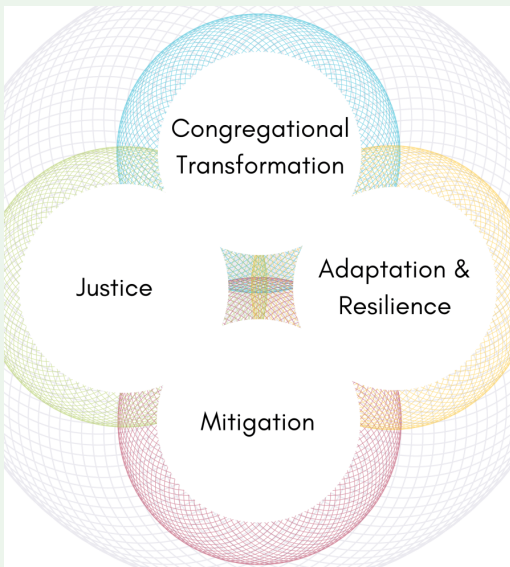
Environmental Justice

UUCMP Environmental Justice Group, Climate Change, and Climate Justice

by Mibs McCarthy

The Environmental Justice Group met on Sunday, November 12th, after church. We watched a video from the UU Green Sanctuary 2030 Program called, "Surprise Lessons in Congregational Transformation." This was about the UU Church of Ann Arbor, Michigan, and how they got their congregation to focus on climate change. It was inspiring. Following the video, we discussed what we want to do to focus our church on climate change.

We agreed to reach out to local groups with similar climate change goals to see where we can collaborate. We also agreed to attend the orientation the UUA Green Sanctuary program has on December 6th at 4:00 p.m. Anyone who is interested can register for this on the UUA Green Sanctuary 2030 website <https://sidewithlove.org/climatejustice>



Green Sanctuary 2030 gets its name from the 2018 United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report that to prevent in-

creasingly catastrophic and irreversible trends, global net emissions of carbon dioxide need to fall to 45% from 2010 levels by 2030. The full name is now UUA Green Sanctuary 2030: Mobilizing for Climate Justice – A Roadmap for Congregations to Rise to the Crisis.

The 1991 First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit galvanized people of color who have led work addressing environmental and economic justice and health issues as basic civil and human rights as delineated by the Principles of Environmental Justice <https://ejnet.org/ej/principles.html> The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals comprise a general framework, making clear that **climate action is intersectional, addressing justice issues including poverty, hunger, and inequality.**

UUA Green Sanctuary begins with spiritually grounded depth and moves the whole congregation through a continuous spiral of awareness and commitment, resulting in transformed congregational life and courageous, ongoing climate action.

The mission of Green Sanctuary is to provide structure, leadership, and support, in broad collaboration, for the UU faith community to engage in an ambitious environmental and climate justice movement that seeks to live fully our seventh and eighth principles and achieve our vision of a sustainable and just world for all.

If you want to make this happen at UUCMP, please join us for our next meeting, Sunday, December 10th, at noon, after church.

Please enjoy this vegan recipe from Kathleen Craig.

Environmental Justice

Vegetarian Tofu Cashew Coconut Curry



Recipe from ambitiouskitchen.com

PREP TIME 15 minutes

COOK TIME 30 minutes

TOTAL TIME 45 minutes

SERVES 4

Creamy, flavorful vegetarian tofu curry with tender sweet potatoes, carrots, cauliflower, and bell pepper. Beautiful veggies and tofu are simmered in a fragrant coconut curry sauce filled with garlic, turmeric, and ginger for a delicious vegan curry dish you'll love!

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon virgin coconut oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon freshly grated ginger
- 1 jalapeño, diced
- 1 medium sweet potato, diced into 1 inch cubes
- ½ head of cauliflower, cut into small florets (about 2-3 cups)
- 1 yellow or orange bell pepper, diced
- 2 carrots, thinly diced or chopped

- 2 tablespoons curry powder
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1(15 oz) can lite coconut milk
- ½ cup tomato sauce
- ½ cup vegetarian broth
- ¼ cup roasted cashews, ground
- 1 package firm or extra firm tofu, cubed
- To garnish: Cilantro and extra cashews

Instructions

1. Add coconut oil to a large pot and place over medium high heat. Add in garlic, ginger, jalapeno, sweet potato, cauliflower, bell pepper, and carrots. Saute for 10 minutes, stirring frequently, until carrots start to soften.
2. Next stir in curry powder, turmeric, cumin, cinnamon and salt.
3. Add in coconut milk, tomato sauce, vegetarian broth and ground cashews. Stir until smooth.
4. Gently add in tofu and stir. Simmer on low heat for 20 minutes or until sweet potatoes and carrots are fork tender. Serve immediately with cilantro.

Nutrition: 1 serving Calories: 342 cal Carbohydrates: 26.2 g Protein: 14.1 g Fat: 20.4 g Saturated Fat: 10.3 g Fiber: 6.8 g Sugar: 8.6 g

-- Kathleen Craig



COPA News: Affordable Housing Report to the Social Justice Committee, Nov 5th

Our new COPA organizer from Houston, TX, Eli Holliday, spoke along with Jan Lindenthal Cox, also a COPA member from Unity Church in Monterey, and a non-profit housing developer who worked with St. Stephens Lutheran in Santa Cruz, also a COPA member, on the development of 40 units of affordable housing for the elderly. Also present was UUCMP member and architect Ken Turgen who was able to speak to the changes brought about by the newly enacted California legislation, known as YIGBY, that allows churches, that meet the land requirements to build affordable housing as a matter of right. Below are the questions asked and the answers given.

What would be the financing and timing of affordable housing? Jan explained that the financing of affordable housing is very complicated. She offered to come back and do a more detailed workshop on this topic for anyone at the church who would like to learn more.

Would the church manage the housing, or would we sell off part of our property? Jan explained that she had worked with many churches in California considering affordable housing development. Most of them have looked for a developer to put together the project funding that can include many sources which taken together make the project financially viable over the course of its expected existence. They also manage the property given a long-term lease by the church which retains ultimate ownership.

Who would benefit from this project? Would the church benefit, besides the residents of the housing? California, like many states, is experiencing a housing crisis that some have described as an existential problem as there are not sufficient homes for our workers. The church would also benefit financially from the project as recompense for the land we would offer, probably as a long-term lease, thus obviating the need for the developer to have to purchase land. The fact that churches can build as a matter of right means the developer does not have to undertake the costly, time-consuming, and potentially contentious process of public hearings. Eli Holliday reported that St. Stephens Lutheran in Santa Cruz was paid approximately \$2 million for a 99-year lease. They used these funds to make other improvements to their church property.

What about utilities, power, sewer, water, parking? How can those issues be resolved? All of these are important details that would have to be effectively resolved during the design phase of the project. However, Ken Turgen, an architect in a Monterey firm and a church member who has been very involved in past construction projects at the church, believes these issues are solvable. He has also done affordable housing in Monterey and in his preliminary analysis to date has not found any one of these to be an insurmountable problem. All of these facets of development will have cost implications for any project.

Are we talking about building houses or apartments? This is still open to discussion and design and ultimately for the congregation to decide. However, Jan explained that the more units that we can accommodate, the easier it will be to make the project financially feasible.

-- continued on page 15



What about the trees on our property, will they be protected?

We talked about the beauty of our land as one of the things that would make it desirable as a place for people to live, as well as its accessibility to nearby services at CHOMP and Del Monte Shopping Center. The tension may come in building enough units to make the project financially feasible while doing so in a way that best preserves our trees and land.

What future meetings are planned?

- Land Watch, How to Build Affordable Housing on Religious Property, Webinar, Dec 6th at Noon. **Speakers:** Michael DeLapa, Executive Director, Land Watch Monterey County; Rev. Dr. G. Penny Nixon, Faith Communities Housing Liaison, San Mateo County; Rev. Jake Medcalf, Co-Founder and Senior Project Manager, Firm Foundation Community Housing; John Farrow, Legal Counsel to Land Watch, M. R. Wolfe & Associates | Attorneys. [Register Here](#) for the Zoom Link
- Stay tuned for a meeting or tour of Santa Cruz affordable housing developments built or under construction by COPA member churches.
- Possible future workshop to review timing and finance of affordable housing at UUCMP led by Jan Lindenthal-Cox.

-- Laura Nagel

Musical Offerings



The Adult Community Choir continues to grow and meets **every Thursday from 7 p.m. -9 p.m. in the Sanctuary**. This choir is open to everyone, members and nonmembers alike, to explore singing

together. No prior experience is needed. Send me an email or just stop by! We are currently preparing for two services per month.

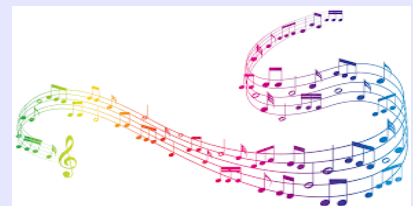
CHOIR POTLUCKS: We are having monthly choir potlucks on the **FIRST** Thursday of each month from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. followed by the rehearsal. Bring something to share and join us for a bite followed by harmonious songs!

Sunday December 17 will be our music Sunday when the choir will be singing several music anthems. Be sure to join us for this musical service!

I would like to continue our Youth Music Program! Students are encouraged to come out and explore music by learning how to read music through the use of hand chimes!. Please ask me if you have any questions about this fun opportunity for our youth! **If you are interested, please send me an email: music@uucmp.org** Youth Music will begin again once there is more interest.

If you have any other ways you wish to contribute to the music department, please feel free to contact me via

email! We would love your involvement in this fun program.



-- Jorge Torrez

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Check the WEEKLY NEWS and website for news throughout the month.

If you have any questions, call the office, 624-7404, or e-mail us at office@uucmp.org