



NUUSLETTER

of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula

Theme: Interdependence

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

April 7

“This Dance We Do”

Rev. Axel Gehrmann and Worship Associate Celia Barbarena

It is well established that we are not isolated beings. “No one is an island,” a poet memorably wrote. Scientists and sages agree that we exist within an interdependent web, a network of mutuality. We each play a part in the dance of life. How can we be good partners in the dance, without stepping on one another’s toes?

April 14

“You Say Potato . . .”

Rev. Elaine Gehrmann and Worship Associate Christina Zaro

In this age of great polarization and division, it can be hard to engage in dialogue with those with whom we differ politically, religiously, and philosophically. And yet, perhaps there is some value in finding ways to share our perspectives and values, and maybe there's even a case to be made for us needing one another to survive.

April 21

“At Home in the Natural World”

Rev. Axel Gehrmann and Worship Associate Ann Johnson

“Being at home” conjures up images of settling in on a comfortable sofa, or at the kitchen table within four walls and under a roof. We are at home indoors. However health professionals say it is beneficial for body and soul to spend time outdoors, enjoying the beauty of nature. How might our lives be different if the natural world were our true home?

April 28

“On Optimism for Radical Regeneration”

Suzy Worcester and Worship Associates Lauren Keenan and Shannon Morrison

The natural world requires optimism and action from all of us as climate chaos threatens the world we love so fiercely. We have a choice in how the future unfolds. Will we embrace radical regeneration for our world and ourselves? Will we take collective action for change? We need to act now. What will you do?

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.

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See the calendar at
www.uucmp.org



Ministers' Message

Rev. Axel Gehrman

What are we doing here? Why do we come to UUCMP? What are we hoping to accomplish? These are the kind of questions I ask myself, when I am able to take a step back from my busy weekly routines, and the many events and activities at 490 Aguajito Road.

I don't know about you, but I sometimes get lost in the immediacy of my daily duties, and the next pressing task that demands attention, the next meeting, the next appointment. And I lose sight of the over-arching purpose, the throughline that is present within all congregational activities and efforts, the vision that both grounds and guides me.

What are we doing here? It's a good question. It stops me in my tracks without fail. It always takes a few moments for answers to take shape in my mind. And depending on the day, different responses strike me as more or less meaningful and accurate.

Our mission statement offers one worthwhile answer: "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."

I see the wisdom of these words reflected in our spirited Sunday services, in our beautiful music, in the laughter of our children, in the efforts of our many social justice initiatives, in our book discussions, Chalice Circles, and many social groups and events.

What are we doing here? The answer that comes to mind for me today is: **we are creating a caring community.** We are here to deepen our understanding and engagement, our concern and care for all people, beginning with those

closest to us.

Each of us helps create this caring community in the respect and kindness we extend to others in our every conversation and encounter at UUCMP.

More formally and programmatically, we have a Caring Network, that seeks to connect those of us who need help with those who would like to offer help – perhaps providing meals after an illness, or a ride to a doctor's appointment. (To join our Caring Network email group, or to learn more, please contact Carol Collin.)

We also have a team of Pastoral Associates (Dennis Hamilton, Peggy Hansen, Meredith Harrill, JT Mason, Sharon Sadler, and Darold Skerritt) who provide support to those who are homebound or in the hospital, and any of our members and friends, who might appreciate an understanding ear. If you would appreciate a call or visit from a Pastoral Associate, or if you know of someone in the hospital who would, please let one of your co-ministers know. You can also contact any of our Pastoral Associates directly. Creating a caring community is an effort that involves all of us!

Why do you come to UUCMP? What are you doing here? What are you hoping to accomplish? These are good questions worth asking. I look forward to hearing your answers – or even better – I look forward to seeing your answers in action!

See you in church,

Axel

Men's Breakfast

Saturday, April 13, at 8:30 a.m.

The men's monthly breakfast is continuing, as hybrid. Our next meeting is Saturday, April 13, 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 so that we will have an idea of how much food to bring. If you have any dietary restrictions, please bring your own food.



SCHEDULED EVENTS

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

Board of Trustees meets Wednesday, April 17, at 5:45 p.m.

Buddhist Sangha is every Wednesday at 7 p.m. in person in the Sanctuary. Zoom is available. See page 11.

Environmental Justice will not meet in April.

First Friday Game Night is Friday, April 5, 6:30 p.m. in the Fireplace Room.

I-HELP for Men is Sunday, April 14, 5 p.m. Sign up on the Meal Train (page 8) or contact Steve Smaby if you can help.

I-HELP for Women is Sunday, April 28, Contact Lee Hultquist if you can help.

Membership Committee meets Wednesday, April 24, 5:30 p.m. via Zoom,

Men's Breakfast Group meets Saturday, April 13, 8:30 a.m. in person and 9 a.m. via Zoom. See article at left.

Music Committee meets Tuesday, April 23, 6 p.m. via Zoom.

New Member Luncheon and Orientation is Sunday, April 14, in the Sanctuary after the service.

NUU'sletter deadline for the May issue is Tuesday, April 16.

Program Council meets Tuesday, April 2. 12:30 p.m. via Zoom. Contact Mibs McCarthy programcouncil@uucmp.org

Social Justice meets Sunday, April 7, at noon in the Sanctuary and via Zoom.

Stewardship will meet Wednesday, April 3. 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.

T'ai Chi Chih meets Tuesdays at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary. See page 11.

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

Environmental Justice at UUCMP

The Environmental Justice group will be providing information each Sunday in April about climate actions you can take. Please visit their table in the Welcome Hall after Sunday services.

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.

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

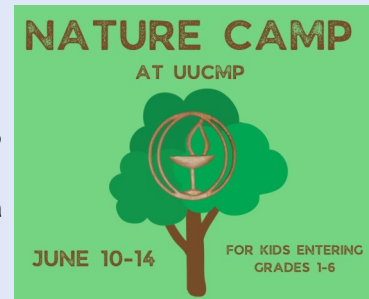


Spring has officially sprung and I'm excited to explore this month's theme of interdependence with our RE kids and youth! During the past few months, we have ventured outside a few times with the kids onto the beautiful church grounds, exploring and observing our environment. One way I like to encourage the kids' outside exploration is to give them three prompts for their observations— 1) I notice... 2) I wonder... and 3) That reminds me of... It's amazing to see how much the kids observe once we take the time to slow down and be in nature. Spider webs, isopods, mushrooms, flower petals, and ants are just a few of the things we've discussed. I'm hoping to get the kids outside more now that the weather is warming up for continued explorations and discussions about how we can honor the interdependent web of all existence.

Related to our UU core value of interdependence and our 7th UU principle ("We believe in caring for our planet Earth, the home we share with all living things"), I'm excited to announce that we will be hosting a summer day camp focused on nature! UUCMP member Shannon Morrison will be directing the summer camp along with support from Rebecca Irwin, and Corey Brunson, and me. The camp will take place from 9 a.m. - 3p.m. (optional aftercare available until 5 p.m.) on June 10-14. It is open to all kids who are entering 1st through 6th grades this fall! Please check out the UUCMP website for more information and to register. We have spaces for 24 campers, so be sure to

share with anyone who may be interested.

There is also an opportunity for UUCMP youth in middle and high school to apply to be a youth counselor. Please get in touch with Acting DRE Sharyn if your child is inter-



ested in applying. Finally, we would love to get more adult volunteer support! There will be many opportunities to help with and lead camp activities. Please get in touch if you're interested in helping out for a few hours or for a day or two (or more!)

Upcoming events:

- First Friday Game Night in the Fireplace Room on April 5 at 6:30pm in the Fireplace Room.
- If you have kids in RE, had kids in RE in the past, or are interested in potentially joining our RE community, we'd love to have you join us for lunch after church on Sunday, April 28th in the Fireplace Room. We'd love to hear your ideas of what's worked in the past and what you'd like to see in RE in the year to come. We'll provide lunch and hopefully a fun discussion! Childcare will be available.
- RE Sunday is coming up on May 19th. If you have a child who plays an instrument and would like to perform during the service, please let me know.
- Be sure to check the weekly UUCMP newsletter for info on other upcoming all-ages and RE events!

Sharyn Routh
Acting Director of Religious Exploration
dre.sharyn@uucmp.org

Venturing Crew 212

Thanks to the support of UUCMP, Venturing Crew 212 is becoming a reality!



City of Monterey's Cutting Day
Saturday, March 16.

Venturing is a program of the BSA (formerly known as the Boy Scouts of America) designed for slightly older youth. Created in the 1980s for both young men and women, the program emphasizes building the leadership capacity of kids in college (until they turn 21) and high school.

Crew 212 meets at UUCMP almost every Sunday evening at 6 PM. Any young person looking for camaraderie, personal growth, and community service is encouraged to check them out.

The best way to connect with the members of Crew 212 is to join their Discord server [here](#), or follow this QR code:



Learning to handle sharp things at a regular meeting at UUCMP.

You can also check out their website at www.crew212.org or send an email to vp@crew212.org to learn more.

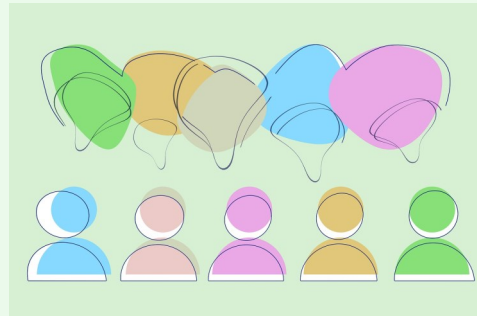
Welcome New Member Charlotte Bear

Charlotte has been "on the move" most of her life, and yet most of that time has embraced UU community. Charlotte is married to Andrew Bear. They both work as healthcare chaplains and reside in southern Salinas with their rescue Collies. Their son, Ben Bear, is currently serving in the US Marine Corps. Charlotte grew up in an itinerating family that was serving in the military and foreign service. She grew up UU, and attended different UU churches while living in various places stateside. She spent much of her youth and young adult life living overseas. Religious pluralism has always been a part of her family's DNA. Prior to professional ministry, Charlotte was a professional broadcast journalist and actor. She is a US Army veteran, having served as a combat TV reporter. Charlotte is a lifelong lover of animals and nature. She has been very engaged in social and environmental justice since her teen years. She also loves movies, singing, dancing, exploring different cultures and spending as much time as possible at the ocean. Oh, and moon gazing.



Would You Like to Join a Chalice Circle?

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. Chalice Circles consist of 6-10 people who meet at least once a month for about two hours to explore meaningful topics together. Some Chalice Circles meet via Zoom, others meet in person, and others meet in person with the option to also attend via Zoom.



If you would like to learn more about Chalice Circles, contact the ministers at minister@uucmp.org.

Currently, there are openings in these ongoing groups:

Second Monday Afternoon

This group meets at church in the Fireplace Room on second Mondays from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. If you are interested in joining, please contact Kathleen Craig at kathleen@craigdesignassociates.com

Second Monday Evening

This group meets at church in the Fireplace Room and via Zoom on second Mondays from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining, please contact Kat Morgan at katmorgan13@gmail.com

Fourth Monday Evening - OMNIA Group

This group meets via Zoom on fourth Mondays from 6:45 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. If you are interested in joining, please contact Sharon Miller at bmcclane@redshift.com or Kerry Sissem at kerrysissem@earthlink.net

Third Thursday Afternoon

This group meets via Zoom on third Thursdays from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. If you are interested in joining, please contact Rose and Mike Lovell at lovellfamily5@gmail.com

New Member and Visitor Orientation Light Lunch April 14th, 12 - 2 p.m.

Are you interested in learning more about Unitarian Universalism in general and in hearing more about UUCMP? Then please join us for an orientation on Sunday, April 14th, from 12:00 to 2 p.m. after the worship service. A light lunch will be provided, followed by an interactive session led by Rev. Axel. RSVP to Rose Lovell at membership@uucmp.org by April 9th.



Questions? Ask Rev. Axel or Rev. Elaine.



April Shared Plate Recipient Rancho Cielo

For over 20 years Rancho Cielo has worked to change the lives of underserved, at-risk youth in Monterey County. Students receive on-site counseling, enrichment, social services, and connect to a community striving for social vibrancy. Students can complete their high school degrees while receiving training in culinary/hospitality, construction, and agriculture. Over 632 young people who were at serious risk of dropping out of school earned diplomas; 380 earned vocational certificates and 98% of graduates were enrolled in post-secondary education and/or left with a job.

Rancho Cielo students face serious challenges: 7% are homeless, 15% have been involved in the criminal judicial process, 30% are learning the English language and 95% are socioeconomically challenged. Graduates of Rancho Cielo have greatly enhanced chances of not being part of the judicial process again. Students have an opportunity to be proud of themselves and find a path to happier lives. Please consider supporting the Culinary Program by dining at Rancho Cielo and through UUCMP by donating to the shared plate in April.

Thank you. Karen Judkins

Musical Offerings



The Adult Community Choir continues to grow and meet **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 Sundays this month will be April 14 and April 28.

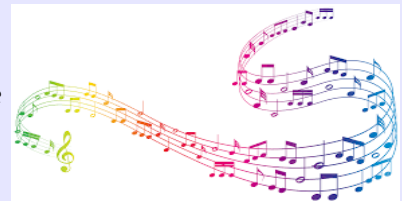
CHOIR POTLUCKS: We are having monthly choir potlucks on the **FIRST** Thursday of each

month from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. followed by rehearsal. Bring something to share and join us for a bite followed by harmonious songs!

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. If you would like to be added to the choir email blast (you will receive

information on all rehearsals and upcoming singing events), please email our Music Director, Jorge Torrez: music@uucmp.org



-- Jorge Torrez

Men's I-HELP for April 14th

On April 14th UUCMP will host and provide meals for Men's I-HELP (Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program.) We are planning for about 17 guests.

We need your help to provide the donations of food for the meals. We can also use your help with setting up, preparing food and greeting the men. Please sign up on the link below.



[Men's I-Help 4/14/24](#)

You can sign into Meal Train with your Google account or Facebook, you do not have to create a new account unless you want to do so.

Food donations may be left in the church kitchen after the morning worship service on Sunday. **PLEASE LABEL all food with Men's I-HELP.** Food may also be brought to the church after 3:00 pm, but no later than 4:00 p.m. on that Sunday. Please use this Meal Train link to sign up by Saturday April 7 before at 5 p.m. so we know where we stand for donations, since our goal is to have all items donated.

If you just want to tell us what you are bringing, contact Rose and she will sign you up.

[Men's I-Help 4/14/24](#)

If you would rather contribute monetarily to support this important mission of our church, please mark your check donation in the memo line for **Men's I-Help Meals.**

[Donate financially](#)

If you have difficulty using the Meal Train program, please let Rose Lovell know:

lovellfamily5@gmail.com

Please let Steve Smaby know if you have suggestions or questions: pilot.smaby@gmail.com

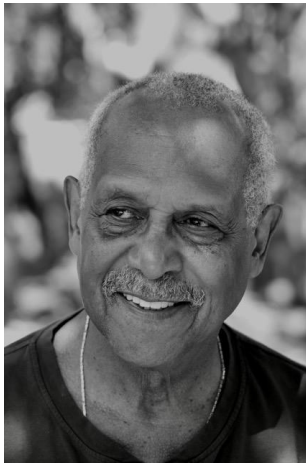
Thank you for supporting this important mission of our church!

Rose Lovell 214-228-6665

Church Administrator Transition

Amy Razzak will be our new Church Administrator. Originally from the Midwest, Amy and her family made the trek west ten years ago and have called Monterey home for the last two years. She has two growing kids that keep her busy, and they enjoy getting outside and exploring the area together. She's excited to join the team at UUCMP.

Art News

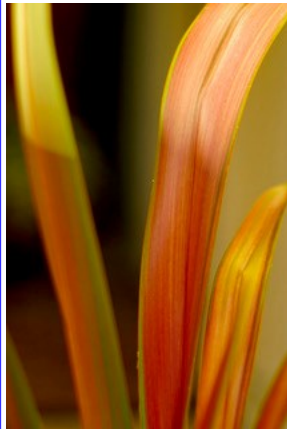


Macroflora -- An Inward Look Richard Cannon

March 30, 2024 – May 31, 2024

Reception: April 13, 2024, 2:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.

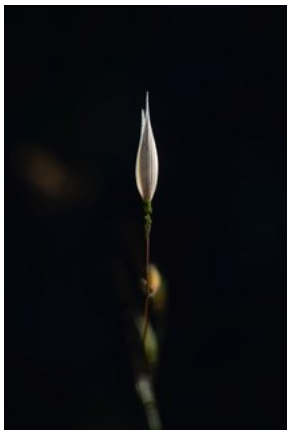
I was born in San Jose, CA in 1946. While growing up during the 1950s, the Santa Clara Valley was still very agricultural, and even though my family lived in the city, there were plenty of opportunities to engage with nature. As kids, my friends and I spent many wonderful days exploring nature, wandering along Coyote Creek and going fishing at the nearby lakes and streams. This appreciation of nature has stayed with me all of my adult life and influences my photography immensely.



Phormium

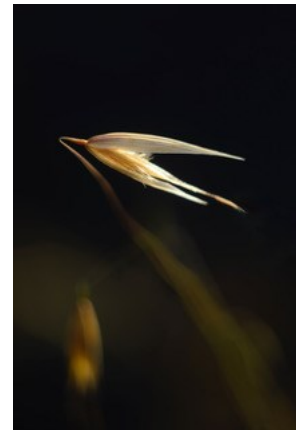
Along the way, I attended San Jose City College, and eventually received a BA and MA in behavioral science from San Jose State University.

I served in the US Army from 1966-68 and spent most of my career at Lockheed Martin in human resources management. Upon retirement in 2004, my wife, Bette, and I moved to the Monterey Peninsula where I became involved in the arts community. I am a member of the Image-Makers of Monterey and have served on the boards of the Center for Photographic Art and the Carl Cherry Center for the Arts.



Seed Husk

My photographs have been exhibited in a number of galleries, including the Avery Gallery, the Monterey Convention Center, the Triton Museum, the Carmel Foundation, the Center for Photographic Art, the Pacific Grove Art Center, the Carl Cherry Center for the Arts, and the Harvey Milk Center for the Arts. Several of my images are also on permanent display at the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula.



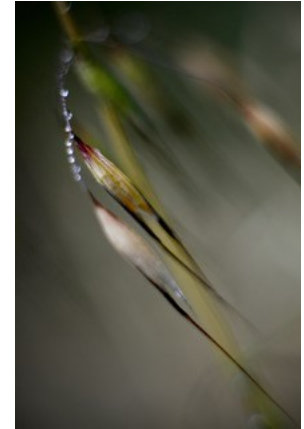
Seed Husk

All of the photos in this exhibition were taken in 2021, near the height of the Covid pandemic. Not much good can be said about the pandemic, save for the fact that the isolation many of us experienced created time for a great deal of introspection.

-- Continued on page 10

--- Art News continued

During those intense days, the age-old maxim, “it’s the little things in life that matter,” suddenly took on more meaning and importance for me. This externally imposed solitude created the time and the motivation to look more closely at “the little things” around me and I began to notice attributes that had previously gone unappreciated. This inward way of seeking easily migrated into my approach to photography and sent me on a fun and fascinating photographic journey into the world of wild grasses, grass seeds, flowers and other flora. I felt a true love for what I discovered and remain in awe of the elegant, delightful, intriguing and sometimes mysterious ways in which the Life Force continually expresses itself.



Grass seed

-- Richard Cannon

President’s Corner



April Showers Bring May Flowers

The term “April showers bring May flowers” originated in the UK. April is a very soggy month in the UK, and when someone complains about the rainy weather, we can be reminded that the showers can be beneficial. The seasons are different here, and we are thankful for our rainy season to bring a beautiful assortment of flowers for our enjoyment.

But the saying “April showers bring May flowers” can have a deeper meaning. It can mean after a long period of adversity, good times will follow. That is what I am seeing now. We have had several years of Covid sickness, anxiety, adjustments, changing plans, and uncertainty. Now, people are reaching out, testing the outside world again, still being careful, dealing with Covid outbreaks, but realizing the benefits of being back together in community. Worship attendance is expanding, visitors are coming and showing interest, some visitors are joining, committees are active, and our “Be the Light” operating fund drive is successful. Yes, this is a very good time.



UUCMP and our programs and activities are in **Full Bloom!**

-- Mike Lovell

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)

Life Enrichment Programs Affinity Groups

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

Men’s Breakfast Group meets second Saturdays 8:30 a.m. in person at church but not via Zoom this month. 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

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

This Year's Canvassing Campaign. YOUR PLEDGE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

As of the writing of this article (March 23), many of us have responded to the call to BE THE LIGHT and have pledged for UUCMP's 2024/2025 fiscal year. Thank you to everyone who has already stepped forward. Despite the generosity of many, we are still quite a bit short of the \$480,000 goal. As of March 23, the 77 pledges we've received amount to \$382,941.75 or 79.8% of the goal of \$480,000.

Of those who have pledged, 40 increased their pledge enough (at least 25%) to qualify for the match and as of March 23, the match stands at \$44,611,7!. Thanks to all challenge participants. Even some of our newer members have become 5%ers (we have 20 of those right now). That means they are pledging 5% of their income to the church. Impressive! Thanks to all the 5%ers.

Canvassing every year is a team sport. Each of you can be a member of the team. Special

thanks to the stewards who have reached out to folks to remind them to pledge, especially Carol Collin and Mike Lovell who helped with clean up. A HUGE thank you to Steve Johnson for tracking everything through Breeze. And to everyone who pledged online.

If you haven't already done so, please don't miss your opportunity to really help UUCMP in a time of need by making a pledge - at whatever amount you can afford - like others in the church already have! BTW - It is never too late to pledge, even though the official canvass ends March 31. Please, please - pledge as you are able. Your pledge matters!

With the shortfall, the Board is going to have to make some cuts and some difficult decisions. We truly appreciate those who have dug deep to try to make this work, If you are unable to pledge, please let us know. We want to do as much as possible to keep this wonderful and caring community going.

KONNY MURRAY -- STEWARDSHIP CHAIR
FOR UUCMP's STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

PS. Here's my cell. 831-595-7853. Call with questions or comments. Your suggestions are welcome.



BIG SUR
INTERNATIONAL MARATHON

It's time to sign up for the UUCMP Big Sur International Marathon (BSM) Volunteer Team. We've helped with the marathon and half-marathon for the past several years. We've had fun, increased our community's awareness of UUCMP, and earned some money. BSM has made grants from \$1,000 to \$1,500 for our help in distributing t-shirts to runners. It's a fun and easy job and you don't have to get up early! We distribute t-shirts on Friday April 26 and Saturday April 27 at the Monterey Conference Center. Please sign up at the BSM Registration Link: <https://bigsurinternationalmarathon.volunteerlocal.com/volunteer/?id=75717>. The password is UUCMP.

We need to have our 20 positions filled by April 12. Please contact Karen Judkins, 270-401-2605 or Carol Collin if you have questions.

Environmental Justice

Environmental Justice at UUCMP

Rev. Elaine and Dr. Suzy Worcester have led the Environmental Justice group and friends in a discussion of the book *The Future We Choose: The Stubborn Optimist's Guide to the Climate Crisis*, by Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac. Here, I'll give some of the highlights of the book and of our discussion.

The book presented two possible futures that depend on the climate related choices we make during the current crucial decade, one terrifyingly bleak and one to be proud of. After this, the authors presented three key mindsets needed to achieve the desired future: stubborn optimism, endless abundance, and radical regeneration. Our group discussed them at some length.

To be stubborn optimists, we need to recognize all the bad news about climate change, but refuse to give up hope, to recognize that a better future is possible, to focus on good news regarding climate change, and to continue doing what we can to promote the necessary changes. Our group discussed the fact that while the required changes appear dauntingly huge, we've seen huge changes within our lives. For example, not so long ago the idea of video phone calls was the stuff of science fiction, and now Zoom calls like our hybrid book group are part of everyday life.

Endless abundance refers to the fact that if we cooperate with one another rather than competing, we have everything we need for life. We need to get rid of the competitive zero sum game mentality that permeates our society — the idea that for us to win, others have to lose. Often the things that we think are scarce are actually abundant, and when there is real scarcity, only through cooperation will we survive.

Radical regeneration starts with changing our mindsets from trying to extract things from the earth to living as part of our ecosystem. We need to work to actively regenerate the earth, through activities such as planting trees and regenerative agriculture. We also need to regenerate ourselves and others, taking time to appreciate and understand nature. And we need to fight hard against our tendencies towards consumerism so that we stop promoting extraction of the earth's resources for things that we don't need.

The rest of the book focuses on actions needed to reach our desired future. They start with personal actions such as facing our grief for what we're losing but holding on to our vision, and move on to actions such as moving beyond fossil fuels, reforesting the earth, and engaging in politics.

Our discussion focused on the actions that were important to us, including electrification of our homes, working to make our church a green sanctuary, working to improve transit, promoting climate friendly legislation, and joining groups working toward large-scale change. We emphasized the importance of creating a climate friendly world that functions well for people of all different abilities, not just for those who are physically and mentally healthy.

Based on our reading and discussions, we plan to start having an information table after church. Various people, with interest or expertise in climate-related areas, will provide information on these subjects. We'll focus on many climate-related topics in different months,

-- Rebecca Irwin

Environmental Justice

Adas Polo ba Khorma (Persian Lentil Rice With Dates)

Recipe from [Nasim Alikhani](#) Adapted by [Melissa Clark](#) Updated March 11, 2024

The lentils and rice are cooked together in the same pot, then layered with a mixture of caramelized onions and plump, sweet dates, as well as chopped fresh herbs for brightness. A dollop of yogurt on top adds a tart and creamy touch. Feel free to riff on this basic recipe, adding nuts for crunch, stirring in other spices like cardamom, ginger and saffron, and substituting the likes of raisins, dried apricots or dried cranberries for the dates.

Ingredients Yield: 6 to 8 servings

For the Rice

- 1 cup green lentils, rinsed
- 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal), more as needed
- 2½ cups basmati rice, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup chopped fresh herbs, such as cilantro, dill, mint or a combination
- 1 cup plain whole-milk yogurt, for serving (optional)



For the Onion-Date Mixture

- 6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil or clarified butter, plus more for serving (see Tip)
- 2 yellow onions, finely diced
- 12 fresh Medjool dates, pitted and diced

Preparation

Bring 4 cups water to boil in a medium saucepan over high heat. Add the lentils, cinnamon, turmeric and 2 tablespoons salt. Stir well to combine, breaking up any clumps. Cover and reduce heat to medium. Simmer until the lentils are cooked but still have a bite, 7 to 10 minutes. Drain lentils and set aside.

Using the same medium saucepan, bring 2 cups water to a boil. Add the rice, cooked lentils, 1 teaspoon salt and enough hot water to cover the rice by 1 inch. Cook, uncovered, until all the water is absorbed, 10 to 14 minutes.

Reduce heat to low, wrap the pot lid in a clean kitchen towel, cover the pan and let the rice steam for 10 minutes. Fluff rice with a fork; taste and add salt if needed.

While the rice is cooking, prepare the onion-date mixture: In a skillet, heat 4 tablespoons oil or clarified butter until hot but not smoking. Add onions and a pinch of salt, and cook until the onions are dark golden and a little crispy, 9 to 14 minutes. Transfer onions to a bowl and return the skillet to the heat.

Add remaining 2 tablespoons oil to the skillet and, once hot, add the dates and warm them through, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir dates into the bowl with the onions.

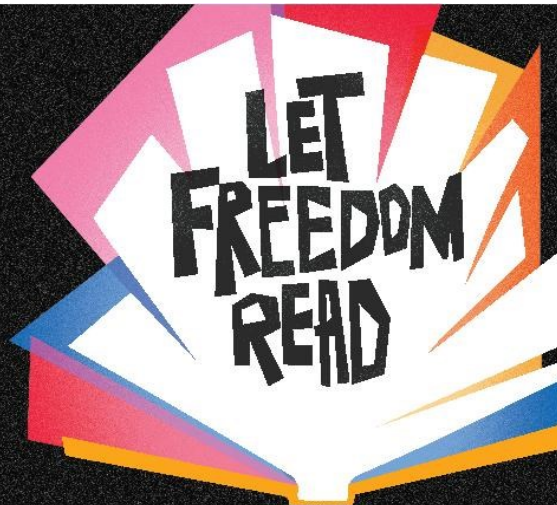
To serve, spoon a layer of rice and lentils into a warmed serving bowl, then add a layer of onion-date mixture and sprinkle with chopped herbs. Keep alternating layers, ending with the onion-date mixture and a final sprinkling of herbs. Drizzle with more oil and top with a dollop of yogurt if you like.

-- Lauren Keenan

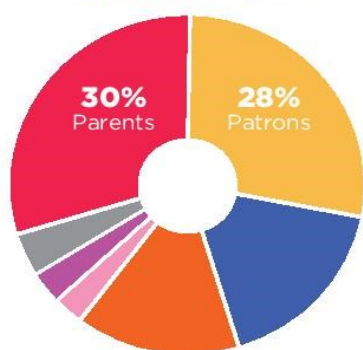
CENSORSHIP

BY THE NUMBERS

In 2022, the American Library Association tracked the highest number of attempted book bans since ALA began compiling data about censorship in libraries more than 20 years ago; 2,571 unique titles were challenged last year, up from 1,858 in 2021. [Learn more at ala.org/bbooks](https://www.ala.org/bbooks)



WHO INITIATES CHALLENGES?



- 17%** Political/religious groups
- 15%** Board/administration
- 3%** Librarians/teachers
- 3%** Elected officials
- 4%** Other
(Includes non-custodial relatives, nonresidents, community members without library cards, etc.)

Statistics based on 1,207 cases with known initiators.

WHERE DO CHALLENGES TAKE PLACE?



48%
Public libraries



41%
School libraries



10%
Schools

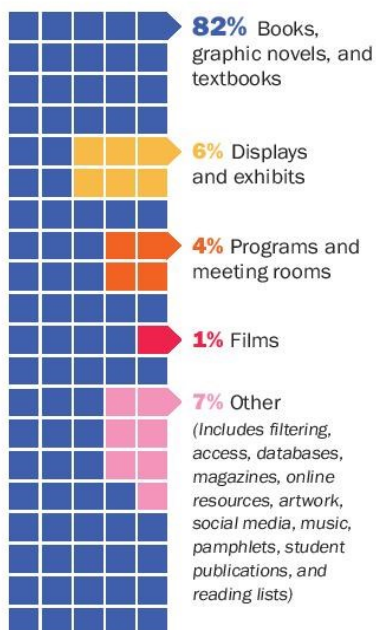


1%
Higher education libraries and other institutions

Statistics based on 1,264 cases with known locations.

BOOKS AND BEYOND

ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked **1,269 challenges** in 2022. Here's the breakdown:



CENSORSHIP ON THE RISE

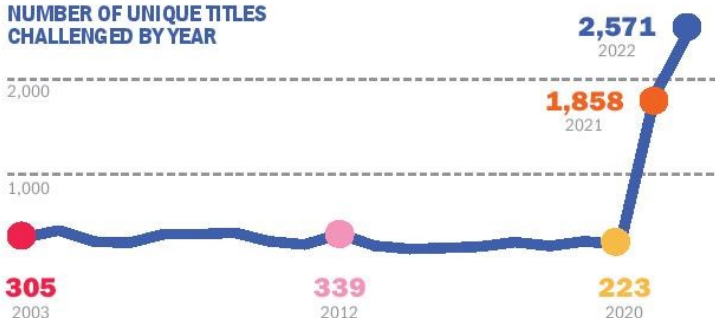
The unparalleled number of reported book challenges in 2022 nearly doubled the number reported in 2021. The number of unique titles targeted marked a 38% increase over 2021.

CENSORSHIP
STATISTICS
COMPILED BY:



OFFICE FOR
Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association

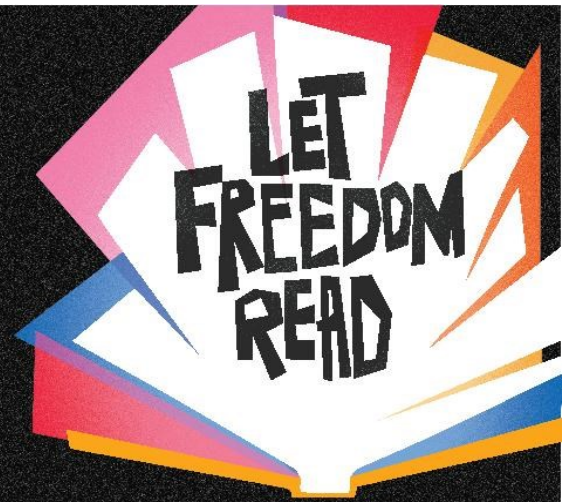
NUMBER OF UNIQUE TITLES CHALLENGED BY YEAR



TDP 13

MOST CHALLENGED BOOKS OF 2022

The American Library Association tracked **1,269 challenges** to library, school, and university materials and services in 2022. Of the **2,571 unique titles** that were challenged or banned in 2022, here are the top 13 most challenged.



1



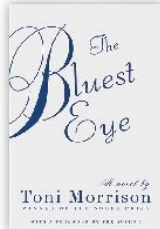
GENDER QUEER
by Maia Kobabe
REASONS: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit

2



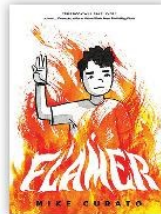
ALL BOYS AREN'T BLUE
by George M. Johnson
REASONS: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit

3



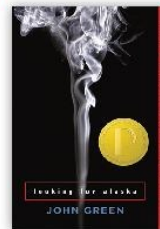
THE BLUEST EYE
by Toni Morrison
REASONS: rape, incest, claimed to be sexually explicit, EDI content

4

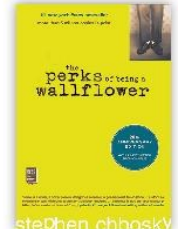


FLAMER
by Mike Curato
REASONS: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit

5

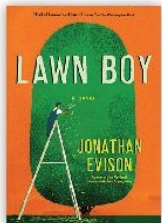


LOOKING FOR ALASKA
by John Green
REASONS: claimed to be sexually explicit, LGBTQIA+ content



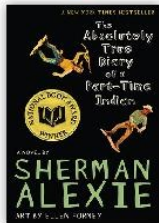
THE PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER
by Stephen Chbosky
REASONS: claimed to be sexually explicit, LGBTQIA+ content, rape, drugs, profanity

7



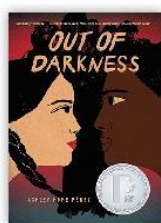
LAWN BOY
by Jonathan Evison
REASONS: LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit

8



THE ABSOLUTELY TRUE DIARY OF A PART-TIME INDIAN
by Sherman Alexie
REASONS: claimed to be sexually explicit, profanity

9

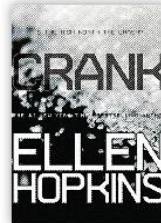


OUT OF DARKNESS
by Ashley Hope Perez
REASON: claimed to be sexually explicit

10



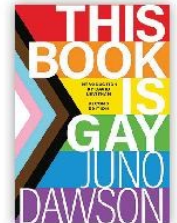
A COURT OF MIST AND FURY
by Sarah J. Maas
REASON: claimed to be sexually explicit



CRANK
by Ellen Hopkins
REASONS: claimed to be sexually explicit, drugs



ME AND EARL AND THE DYING GIRL
by Jesse Andrews
REASONS: claimed to be sexually explicit, profanity



THIS BOOK IS GAY
by Juno Dawson
REASONS: LGBTQIA+ content, sex education, claimed to be sexually explicit



OFFICE FOR
Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association

SOCIAL



JUSTICE

COPA Newsletter: March 12, 2024

Recent Actions



All COPA Leaders Meeting

On February 28th, COPA Leaders came together for the all-COPA Leaders Meeting. COPA leaders had previously met to discuss the possibility for a Workforce Development Action with state officials around recognition, if we wanted to do that and when. The broad consensus seems to be that we need more time to meet with each other to build power.

COPA Training—The Organized Meeting

On February 29th, Liz Hall, COPA Organizing Supervisor, did a training on how to lead an effective meeting, also called “The Organized Meeting.” 33 leaders attended. A new group of leaders are now trained in how to lead an organized meeting where they don’t leave feeling drained or bored.

Elections

Elections happened last Tuesday, March 5th! In Santa Cruz County, all the winners for Santa Cruz City Council and County Supervisors came to the Santa Cruz Accountability Assembly.

Click here to see results for Santa Cruz:

<https://www2.santacruzcountycalifornia.gov/ElectionSites/ElectionResults/Results>

Click here to see results for Monterey:

<https://www.ksbw.com/article/commitment-2024-central-coast-march-5-election-results/60032434>

University of California Santa Cruz Interns

COPA has interns from the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) who want to digitize our history. They want to tell the history of COPA, so if you have stories to share, please reach out to Eli Holiday (eliholiday42@gmail.com) Mayra (mbernabe93@gmail.com) or Rosa Vitela (copa.iaf1@gmail.com) to share your stories. We want to have a better view of our organization’s history.

Organizing in Monterey:

Monterey County Cluster Meetings: Next Meeting to be Announced.

The Monterey Cluster will be meeting to talk about recent updates, upcoming opportunities, and options for leadership development with a special focus on what a regional accountability assembly and house meetings in spring would be like. Please contact Bernabé for more information mbernabe93@gmail.com.

-- Laura Nagel

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Return Service Requested



April 2024

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Please send submissions for WEEKLY NEWS, the weekly announcements, to office@uucmp.org by Tuesday noon.

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