



NUUSLETTER

of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula

Theme: Presence

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

December 1

“Hello Darkness My Old Friend”

Jon Czarnecki and Worship Associate Christina Zaro

In this season of growing darkness, we sense a hard-wired fear; what if the light never returns? Yet, we are born in darkness to enter the light. Darkness is the place of peace. Our senses peak in darkness. So why do we fear it? Why do we associate goodness with light and evil with darkness? These are questions for which we shall explore answers in our service.

December 8

“The Best Present is Presence”

Rev. Axel Gehrman and Worship Associate Lauren Keenan

One of the customs of the holiday season is the giving and receiving of gifts. Often gifts are objects carefully wrapped in colorful paper, sometimes with a bow on top. They are designed to elicit a moment of joyful surprise among family and friends. Some say, however, our greatest gifts are not items exchanged, but rather precious moments shared with people we love.

December 15

“A World of Winter Lights”

DRE Shannon Morrison and Rev. Axel Gehrman

Join us for our multigenerational holiday pageant featuring the children and youth of our Religious Exploration program. We will celebrate the signs, symbols and stories from a number of religious traditions, which feature illumination and inspiration found in the darkest nights of the year.

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.

December 22

“Lighting Up the Darkness – Music Sunday”

Rev. Elaine Gehrman, 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 music, lighting up the winter darkness, and welcoming a new and glorious morn.

December 24

5:00 p.m.

Revs. Axel and Elaine Gehrman, and Worship Associates Ray Krise, Robin Jensen, and Jon Czarnecki

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

December 29

“The Falsehood of Calendars”

Worship Associates Bjorn Nilson, Ray Krise and Ann Johnson

With a New Year upon us again, it is once again time to think about time. Or perhaps, think less about it and live more into it, into each moment. This month's worship theme has been Presence. How do we achieve presence in the present? The Eternal Now of each moment of cognitive awareness, of conscious sentience, is a meditative gift to be accepted with gratitude. Can the falsehood of calendars deter us from the loving hope of the future?

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Ministers' Message

Rev. Axel Gehrman

As we head into the winter holiday season, as the days grow shorter, and we approach the turning of another year . . . as I watch holiday lights appear around the neighborhood, and start to think about our family holiday plans and observances . . . I detect a familiar mix of thoughts and feelings - a sense of joy and hope mingled with melancholy. I am reminded of childhood excitement and expectation: unpacking fragile ornaments, carefully hanging them on evergreen branches, and lighting candles on cold, dark nights, kindling a sense of wonder and awe. And also memories, now, of loved ones who have passed away.

For me the solstice season is above all a quiet and contemplative time to reflect on years gone by and years to come, on the deeper dimensions and larger movements of our lives. I find these dark weeks poignant, powerful and profound. And because they contain such an amazing depth and breadth of sacred rituals and secular customs, I feel especially grateful to be a part of a religious community such as ours, with our enthusiastic celebration of pluralism and interdependence, generosity and justice, equity and transformation – all of which are grounded in love.

I have to think of all the members and friends who have celebrated the holidays here over the past decades, ever since this building was erected, and all those who will gather here in the decades to come.

As those of you who have been members for many years know, our church is here, thanks to the ongoing care and commitment of many remarkable people. People who, year after year, joined together to build and expand and repair and renovate our meeting space – an amazing labor of love. And this work continues!

This year, we are working to refresh our sanctuary furnishings, which will involve commissioning a new pulpit (built by a respected local craftsman), and enhancing our worship space. With the support of our Board of Trustees and Stewardship Committee, a small team (Lauren Keenan and Elaine Gehrman, in consultation with Bob Sadler) has been reviewing drafts and are finalizing plans.

Our current pulpit was built in the 1980s, and has served us very well for almost forty years. It has a brass plaque that says it was dedicated to the memory of Fred Keip, Sr. (1897-1985), the father of then minister, Rev. Fred Keip. The wear and tear of countless worship services has left its marks.

A lot has changed in the past forty years. Our hope is to create a new pulpit that might serve UUCMP for the next forty years. And rather than dedicate it to the memory of a single person, we would like to dedicate it to the memory of the many loved ones of our community.

Among the holidays' many meanings, they are a season of generosity and giving. We have conducted a variety of special holiday fundraisers in the past. This year, we invite you to consider making a special holiday contribution for the new pulpit and sanctuary enhancements in memory of someone you love. (Please see page 6 for additional information.)

However you choose to observe the holidays, we hope you find ways to rekindle a spirit of hope, of wonder and awe, and discover ever-new ways to bring joy to the world.

See you in church,

Axel

Men's Breakfast

Saturday, December 14, at 8:30 a.m.

The men's monthly breakfast is continuing as hybrid. Our next meeting is Saturday, December 14, from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., in the Fireplace Room. People will bring 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.



PUBLICATION DEADLINES

ANNOUNCEMENTS for SUNDAYS 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

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

Board of Trustees meets Wednesday, December 18, at 5:30 p.m.

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

Celtic Christmas Concert is Saturday, December 21, 2 p.m.

Environmental Justice meets at noon, Sunday, December 8, in the Sanctuary and via Zoom.

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

I-HELP for Men is Sunday, December 8, 5 p.m. Sign up on the Meal Train (page 11) or contact Rose Lovell or Greg Simmons if you can help.

I-HELP for Women is Sunday, December 22. For more information contact Mibs McCarthy.

Membership Committee meets Wednesday, December 11, at 5:30 p.m.

Men's Breakfast Group meets Saturday, December 14, 8:30 a.m. in person and 9 a.m. via Zoom. See article at left.

Music Committee does not meet in December.

NUU'sletter deadline for the January issue is Monday, December 16.

Program Council meets Tuesday, December 3, 12:30 p.m., via Zoom. Contact Mibs McCarthy programcouncil@uucmp.org

Social Justice meets Sunday, December 1, at noon in the Sanctuary and via Zoom.

Stewardship meets Wednesday, December 11, 1:00 p.m. via Zoom.

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

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

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION



Presence



**CHILDREN'S
RELIGIOUS
EXPLORATION**

Dear UUCMP Families,

Our theme for the month of December is *Presence*. Sometimes it feels like staying present mentally, physically, emotionally and/or spiritually may be one of the greatest challenges of our time. It is so easy to get swept up in the hustle and bustle of our overscheduled, overstimulating world. Never in human history have we had access to so many *things*, ideas, technology and information. What a time to be alive! The drawback is, often it is hard to enjoy the moment we are in when we are thinking about the *next thing*, whether literally the next thing on our schedule or looking far ahead into the what-if future.

The ability to be fully present, noticing our environment and connecting with those in front of us is integral to building community. The month of December we hope to create opportunities for our children to practice presence, share stories on this theme and all work together toward this goal.

The **Committee on Family Ministry (CoFM)** has moved to an in-person format on the third Sunday the month - we will meet next on December 15th after our Winter Pageant service. The meeting will be held in the Fireplace Room from 12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m. Childcare will be provided and a light lunch will be served; please bring a side dish or a dessert to share if you are able to do so. We will discuss ideas for

January and opportunities to connect through the winter months. This is also a great opportunity for RE program feedback.

We have several opportunities to connect this month - please come to any that feel nourishing and helpful to your family. We are forming our village, and I am so grateful that you are the ones joining me in this journey.

With warmth and gratitude,

Shannon Morrison (she/her) Acting Director of Religious Exploration

Activities & Events in December

Mark your calendars - you won't want to miss out on the fun!

* December 6 First Friday Game Night!

Andrea is back to host 6:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m., Fireplace Room.

NOTE: Our Monthly Game Night will be moving to the Second Friday of the month starting in January.

* **December 14 - Winter Solstice Celebration**
3:30-6:30 p.m. hosted by the Bagley Family

* **December 15 - Winter Pageant Service & Committee on Family Ministry Meeting**

An all-ages service - we will share a delightful winter Pageant

December 15 - Committee on Family Ministry (CoFM) meeting 12:15- 1:15 p.m. after the service.

PROGRAM REGISTRATION

Please be sure to Register for [RE Programming 2024-25](#). This will help us best prepare for your child, keep you in the loop for upcoming events and activities and build our community.

-- continued on page 5

-- RE continued

MITTEN TREE

Please bring a pair of warm winter gloves or mittens for a man or woman. Warm socks are a lovely addition as well. We hope to collect 60 pairs of mittens donated by our RE families and the UUCMP community. We will have our Mitten Tree in the foyer to hang gifts of warm mittens and socks for our I-HELP Men and Women.



a chance to connect with our wonderful community. We appreciate your help whether working directly with our kids or to make our UUCMP campus a safe and fun place to be!

THANK YOU OUR VOLUNTEERS! We have been so lucky to have helping hands in RE - thank you to our volunteers Monique Romero, Roberta Granados, Matthew Lynam, Lindsay Fondren, Amy Blondell, and Karen Brown for all your contributions this month!

Whether bringing food to share, helping to set or clean up, keeping our library tip-top, or filling in for our teachers - your help is greatly appreciated!



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Church members *without* little ones are encouraged to lend a hand so caregivers can have

Musical Offerings



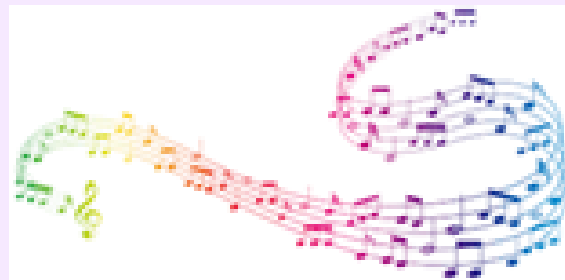
The Adult Community Choir continues to grow and meet **every Thursday from 7 p.m. -**

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.

The UUCMP Community Choir will be singing December 8 and December 22.

December 22nd will be our special Music Sunday where the choir will be providing extra music for the service. We will also be featuring Karen Brown's chosen song for the choir that she purchased at a previous Service Auction!

December 24, our Christmas Eve service, will feature our special guest, Peter Mellinger, on violin.



Do you **play an instrument**, sing, and would like to find a group where you can practice your skills in a safe environment? We would like to start Jam Sessions up again!! If you have any interest, please reach out to music@uucmp.org



Strong Together for Love and Justice

“Strong Together, for Love and Justice!”

Your Stewardship Committee is looking forward to the February 16, 2025, kick-off of our annual budget drive, your opportunity to make a financial commitment to UUCMP for the next fiscal year, 2025-2026.

Our theme this year is “Strong Together, for Love and Justice,” because we know how important it is, especially now, for each of us to have a church home that will support our values, amplify our voices, and strengthen our commitment to speak out against injustice.

The values of our church are reflected in the annual budget created by our Finance Committee and Board, based on the financial commitments received from each of us. Last year we made significant progress in filling the budget “hole” we were facing, with the prospect of dipping into our reserves. You will hear more specifics about our current fiscal health soon. In the meantime, please begin thinking about YOUR financial commitment to UUCMP for 2025-2026.

As we did last year, your financial commitment will be submitted online, but help from our wonderful stewards is yours for the asking. It’s easy! Thank you in advance for your continued generous support of UUCMP.

Your Stewardship Committee,
Carol Collin, Gretchen Hausmann, Steve Johnson, Björn Nilson, Jo Ann Novoson, Katie Hamilton, and with spiritual encouragement and support from the Rev. Axel Gehrmann

Holiday Fundraiser



Please consider contributing to our new pulpit and sanctuary enhancement effort! We are hoping to raise \$8,000.

We invite you to make a contribution in memory of a loved one. We plan to publicize the names of all memorialized, when the new pulpit is dedicated in the new year.

Please include the name of your loved one with your contribution. (If you are writing a check, please write “pulpit” in the memo line.) Contributions of any amount – whether large or small - are greatly appreciated!

Your Name: _____
Name of person memorialized: _____
Amount of your contribution: _____

(Contributions of \$1,000 or more will be noted on a brass plaque inside the pulpit.)

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 also supports the right to safety, dignity and justice for Central Americans in Central America, along the migration route and 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's theme is *Expanding the Welcome Table*. For more details of each of these important efforts, check out <https://www.uusc.org/resources/congregations/gayt/>

There are more details about the efforts of these brave leaders in the UUSC Stories of Hope 2024-2025 online and at the UUSC table in the Welcome Hall after worship each Sunday. Those nickels, dimes and quarters can go towards the family's donation.

Konea Ishimura helps his community heal from the destructive legacy of nuclear testing by the United States while envisioning a sustainable future for the Marshallese people.

Anna-Maria Tesfaye offers resources and companionship to the LGBTQ community in Ukraine who have been impacted by Russia's invasion.

Suleyman Wellings-Longmore researches the ways racism is impacting the experiences of migrants of color in the United States.

Pink Haven Coalition creates networks of safety and welcome for trans and gender expansive people forced to flee unsafe states in the United States.

You can write a check to UUSC for GAYT 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. Your donations make a real difference in social justice work around the world. Thank you for your generosity.

Final day to turn in and checks is December 31, 2024.

Home Sharing

On November 9th, we celebrated the remarkable life of Virginia Lyon, who lived to be 99 years old and served as an inspiration to many. Her resilience, positivity, and determination to age in the home she loved deeply moved me. Virginia was fortunate to have a supportive family, friends, and the resources that allowed her to maintain her lifestyle. Sadly, not everyone has that option. Many individuals yearn to stay in the homes and communities they cherish but may lack local support or the financial means to do so.



In today's world, we have the technology to combat social isolation, enabling us to attend meetings, participate in church services, and connect with loved ones online. However, many older adults don't have access to smartphones or computers, which unfortunately contributes to their loneliness and isolation. Ensuring that everyone, regardless of their circumstances, has the means to connect is crucial.

Social isolation, particularly among older adults, increases the likelihood of psychological and medical risks. Key risk factors include physical limitations that can hinder mobility and the ability to perform daily tasks independently. A recent study shows that this issue costs Medicare approximately \$6.7 billion each year in related health problems.

Home sharing provides older adults with an opportunity to age in place while saving money, reducing feelings of isolation, and enhancing their overall quality of life. Some older adults choose to share homes due to financial needs, personal preferences, or a desire to contribute to the community. For seniors, sharing a living space also offers essential assistance in maintaining their homes as they age.

Other benefits of home-sharing include:

- ◇ Having someone around to call for help if there's an accident or injury, like a slip or fall
- ◇ Sharing the responsibility of household chores, home maintenance, and running errands
- ◇ Sharing living expenses and other financial expenditures
- ◇ Able to own less stuff
- ◇ Using less of the earth's resources
- ◇ Daily companionship
- ◇ Less food waste
- ◇ Help with pets if you have to go out of town

Let us join hands to nurture a future where our aging community feels supported, connected, and at home. Together, we can build a vibrant network of care and compassion that empowers every individual to thrive in their golden years. Together, we can make a difference.

-- Doris Beckman



December Shared Plate Recipient *Malala Fund*

The Malala Fund empowers girls through education, transforming lives and communities globally. Over 130 million girls are out of school today due to barriers like poverty, conflict, and gender discrimination. Education is key to breaking cycles of poverty, improving health outcomes, and driving economic growth. By donating to the Malala Fund, you support grassroots education activists and policy initiatives that remove these obstacles. Educated girls marry later, earn higher wages, and reinvest in their families and communities, creating a ripple effect that benefits everyone. Your contribution helps build a world where every girl has the opportunity to learn, lead, and live freely—ultimately fostering a fairer, more peaceful world.

Unitarian Universalists value social justice, equality, and the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Supporting the Malala Fund aligns with these principles, as it helps remove educational barriers for girls worldwide, promoting equity and empowerment. Education fosters individual potential and drives positive social change, both of which resonate strongly with Unitarian Universalist values. By supporting the Malala Fund, the church not only helps transform lives but also embodies its commitment to justice and compassion on a global scale.



Your donations will be matched 1:1 up to \$5,000.

Please give generously to this worthy organization.

-- Björn Nilson

Photo directory coming -- Please update your Breeze info

Last year we began using Breeze to manage our church member data -- if you have not yet logged into Breeze, please do so soon, and please upload a photo, so that we can create an updated photo directory soon! All the information you need to access Breeze you should be able to find on our website here <https://uucmp.org/breeze-database/>

Or you can e-mail a photo to be included to office@uucmp.org

Questions, contact office@uucmp.org



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 meet both face-to-face and via Zoom in December.

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

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.

Men's I-HELP for December 8, 2024

On December 8, UUCMP will host and provide meals for Men's I-HELP (Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program.) We are planning to have about 20 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 this link:



[Men's I-HELP MEAL TRAIN](#)

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 p.m., but no later than 4:00 p.m. on that Sunday. Please use this Meal Train link to sign up by the Saturday before 5pm 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 Greg (gregs2001@gmail.com) and he will sign you up.

[Men's I-HELP MEAL TRAIN](#)

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 contact Greg Simmons gregs2001@gmail.com

Thank you for supporting this important mission of our church!
Greg Simmons 602-361-1015

UUCMP Grief Support Circle

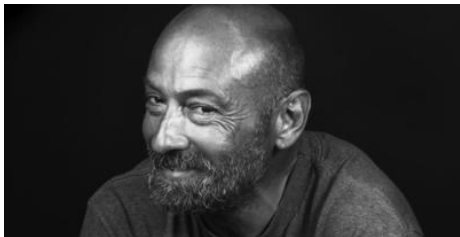
The UU Grief Support Circle continues to meet in the Fireplace Room every 1st and 3rd Wednesday from 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Those seeking support and fellowship following loss can join us this month on **December 4** and **December 18**. We gather together to share stories and resources, including a small collection of books. Some of us stay after the Support Circle to continue our friendship with brown bag lunches and chit chat. For more information, contact Rev. Axel or Sharon Miller (831-601-0403)



Art News

We are displaying our very own Bob Sadler's portraits of unhoused men in a display entitled *Inherent Worth and Dignity*. The intent is to find the 'inherent worth and dignity' of each man and portray and communicate those fine qualities for all to see.

These portraits are the effort to look at homeless men "through another peephole," weakening the negative stereotype of homelessness and build empathy that might be converted to better public policy and more effective support. One night in 2013, while standing in the I-HELP super line, Bob was asked by a homeless man named Ferdinand to get one of Bob's "good luck" pictures. Many of the men he'd photographed before had gotten jobs and housing. Ferdinand told Bob that when a man woke in the morning and reached for the photo instead of a mirror, he would say, "That's a good-looking guy who deserves a job and a house!" They felt good about themselves and did better in interviews. Bob realized that his was a social justice project,

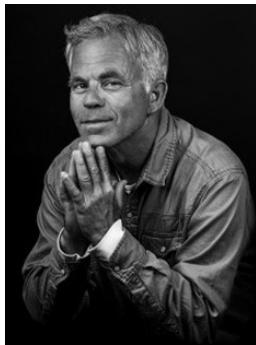


one that could change hearts and minds. Ferdinand did indeed get a job and a place to live, like many others of the men in the photographic collection.



Bob Sadler has been creating art through photography for over 50 years. His fine art exhibit of homeless men is on display at UUCMP and has been shown at the

Weston Gallery in Carmel, CA, Art Intersection's Gallery 4 in Gilbert, AZ and 20 other locations in Monterey Bay.



Another exhibit, "Transcendent Landscapes," is hanging in the sanctuary. In January 2014, Bob delivered a lecture at the Monterey Museum of Art in Monterey, CA. His portfolios can be seen hanging in the lobby and hallways of the Goetz office building in Pacific Grove as well as the Cherry Tree Mortgage Finance Company



that's about to open in the lobby of the Holman Building.

He began shooting photographs in 1965 while serving in the US Army in Vietnam and hasn't put the camera down since.

Bob has a 50-year career as a management consultant working for KPMG, Ernst & Young, and Deloitte, before running his own corporation, Sadler Consulting.

Bob relocated to Pacific Grove, CA in 1995 and moved from Pacific Grove to Carmel last month.

Environmental Justice

Monterey County Community Workshop to Develop the Community Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, December 4th at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Members of the UUCMP Environmental Justice Committee are part of a coalition to track and influence the formation of our county's Community Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CCAAP). The plan will provide a comprehensive framework for mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

The county is asking for your input and invites you to be part of this important process by attending the virtual Climate Action Workshop on Wednesday, December 4th at 6:00 p.m. The workshop offers an opportunity to learn about the CCAAP and potential actions Monterey County can take. Open to all residents, the virtual session will help prioritize strategies for Monterey's climate future through engaging presentations and collaborative discussions.

Your input is needed to develop a plan that meets the unique needs of our coastal, agricultural, and urban communities. Join us in building a resilient and sustainable future for Monterey County!

Register now: <https://qrco.de/monterey-caap>

President's Corner



For many people, November was a rough month. Many folks are grieving the outcome of the election at the federal level. Many people are in despair, many people are frightened. Some of us may react to events by withdrawing, by focusing on our personal security, our individual safety. But that would be a mistake. It is in difficult times that we need each other most and, like a bulwark, it is in difficult times that our community is needed most.

We are fortunate that our UUCMP community is strong and healthy because adversity brings out the best in strong, healthy communities. That's one of the great things about them. We are also fortunate because our community is built on a set of values that are more important now than they have ever been. More than ever, we need to put Love at the center of our lives, because that is how we will oppose hate. More than ever our devotion to Justice and Equity will help us to fight injustice and corruption. More than ever our commitments to Pluralism and Interdependence will help us to oppose tribalism and the further destruction of the natural world.

As we head toward the end of the year, the hours of daylight grow fewer and the hours of darkness increase. But we know this will not last. It is also a time of year when people fill the darkness with festive lights. How audacious to turn what might have been dark, gloomy evenings into opportunities to create beauty and light. May UUCMP be a beacon of Love and Hope, shining brighter than ever in this troubled world.

Vegetarian Recipe

Red Lentil Soup

Melissa Clarke, NYT recipe

INGREDIENTS

Yield: 4 servings

3 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling
1 large onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 teaspoon ground cumin
Salt and black pepper
Pinch of chili powder or ground cayenne, plus more to taste
1 quart chicken or vegetable broth
1 cup red lentils
1 large carrot, peeled and diced
Juice of ½ lemon, more to taste
3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro



PREPARATION

Step 1

In a large pot, heat 3 Tablespoons oil over high until hot and shimmering. Add onion and garlic, and sauté until golden, about 4 minutes.

Step 2

Stir in tomato paste, cumin, ¼ teaspoons each salt and black pepper and the chili powder, and sauté for 2 minutes longer.

Step 3

Add broth, 2 cups water, lentils and carrot. Bring to a simmer, then partly cover pot and turn heat to medium-low. Simmer until lentils are soft, about 30 minutes. Taste and add salt if necessary.

Step 4

Using an immersion or regular blender or a food processor, purée half the soup, then add it back to pot. The soup should be somewhat chunky.

Step 5

Reheat soup, if necessary, then stir in lemon juice and cilantro. Serve soup drizzled with good olive oil and dusted lightly with chili powder, if desired.

-- Lauren Keenan

CELTIC CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Saturday, December 21st, 2:00 pm
to benefit the

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula
490 Aguajito Road, Carmel – 831.624.7404

Tickets are available online through PayPal at uucmp.org,
at Bookmark Music, or at the door

\$20, \$15 for seniors, military, and students, kids under 12 are free with a paying adult



Come and celebrate the holidays with this rousing and spirited performance of seasonal songs, music, and tales featuring:

Amy Krupski, virtuoso Celtic harpist

Camellia Latta, ethereal and enchanting flautist

Shannon Wardo, red-headed, Irish-blooded, natural-born Celtic songbird

Taelen Thomas, renowned bard and storyteller of Carmel Bay

Taelen will perform selections from Dylan Thomas' masterpiece, *A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS IN WALES*, along with stirring tellings of the stories behind other Holiday classics and Amy, Camellia, and Shannon will delight audiences with beautiful Celtic music and songs of the season!

Contact: shannon.e.warto@gmail.com

Unitarian Universalist Church
of the Monterey Peninsula
490 Aguajito Road
Carmel, CA 93923

Office Hours

The office is open for limited hours:
10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Wednesdays and
Fridays.
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December 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