



# NUUSLETTER

of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula

Theme: Cultivating Compassion

Sunday Service at 9:30 a.m. in person and via Zoom and 11:15 a.m. in person

**October 5**

**"Radical Love in Tumultuous Times"**

**Rev. Axel Gehrmann and Worship Associate  
Jon Czarnecki**

Our country today seems marked by deep divisions. Conflicting visions and values are becoming more volatile. Many of us are worried. How can we make sense of this moment, and how shall we respond? In the midst of these difficult times, how can we promote justice and practice love?

**October 12**

**"Doubt and Compassion"**

**Rev. Beth Miller and Worship Associates Rev.  
Elaine Gehrmann and Ray Krise**

In the movie, Conclave, about the election of a new Pope for the Catholic Church, the lead Cardinal talks about the role of doubt in unity, tolerance and faith development. I would add compassion to the list. As Unitarian Universalists, we're very familiar with doubt, and as we see it, doubt calls us to an openheartedness toward others.

**October 19**

**"Walking a Mile In Your Shoes"**

**Rev. Axel Gehrmann and Worship Associate  
Annan Patterson**

We are each shaped by our own unique experiences. We are all equipped with a particular assortment of abilities and disabilities, which are likely to change in the course of our life journey. Cultivating compassion involves looking beyond our own experience, and imagining the roads others have traveled.

For this service, we would like to include some of your experiences of disability – whether visible or invisible, physical or otherwise. What have you found particularly challenging and what have you found helpful? (Please email 100-200 words to Rev. Axel by October 12.)

**October 26**

**"Mirror of the Other"**

**Worship Associates Christina Zaro and Bjorn Nilson**

The "Mirror of the Other" is a concept which suggests that by understanding and reflecting on the suffering or pain of others, you can cultivate a deeper, more innate sense of compassion for all humans. Two healers by profession will explore their stories and lessons learned about compassion through their time with patients.

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See the calendar at  
[www.uucmp.org](http://www.uucmp.org)

## Religious Exploration

Children (pre K - 11) and teens (12-18) attend our worship service on Sundays at 11:15 a.m. and go to their respective Religious Exploration classes following the Story for All Ages.



## Ministers' Message Rev. Axel Gehrman

One of the recurring elements of our weekly worship services, is the time we take to honor our respective and collective Joys & Concerns. We usually invite folks to take a breath, pause for a moment, and reflect on what's been happening in their lives this week . . . and what's been happening in the world. Lately, I find myself adding: "There's a lot going on." And indeed there is!

Sunday worship is our largest weekly gathering, and an important aspect of congregational life. However, in my experience, the spirit of our community is most tangible and palpable in our smaller gatherings – whether in affinity groups, committees, discussions, or any number of small groups.

"Small Group Ministry" is the term long used in UU circles to describe the purpose and format of these meetings, of which there are many variations. Small groups often consist of 8-10 people, who meet monthly and seek to relate on a more intentional level, often around an issue or activity of shared interest. Our Chalice Circles have been practicing small group ministry for years. Our Grief and Growth Group, Men's Breakfast Group, and Park Lane Dinner Group follow a similar format. In the broadest sense, whenever a few of us gather for meaningful conversation and deeper connection, we are creating a small group. If you aren't already a part of a small group, I heartily encourage you to join one. (Or if you would like to start a new group, let us know – we are happy to help!)

I find small groups deeply rewarding. When I lead them, I often begin by taking a breath, and inviting folks to join me, to settle in, and slow down. I remind folks that in our conversation some will share important thoughts and sensitive life experiences. However, this is only likely to happen if everyone is able to listen attentively and respectfully. I believe firmly that everyone present has important insights and wisdom to share, and that all will benefit from hearing what each has to say. So, I encourage the group to let each person speak once, before anyone speaks twice. When everyone has spoken once or twice, it's often time to wrap up. In closing, everyone in turn is invited to share a brief closing thought – which might relate to the topic of the day, or be something completely unrelated; it might be appreciation for something shared during the meeting, or it might be nothing at all – anyone can choose to "pass."

There is a lot going on. And UUCMP is a terrific place to be in the midst of it all – a place to connect with like-minded, caring people - for support and inspiration, striving to make sense of what's going on, and – joining together in service – doing our part to help build a better world.

See you in church,

*Axel*

**The Reverend Beth Miller** served UUCMP from 1997 until 2006, when she moved to Boston to serve as Director of Ministry at the UUA and to be near her first grandchild. That child is now a college sophomore, and Beth is retired and living in Sarasota, Florida, where she's a caring clown for the local hospice organization and ushers at a professional theater, among other pursuits. She is visiting her son, Ben, who some of you will remember as a youth in RE, and is now living in Santa Cruz. Beth is very excited to be at UUCMP on Sunday, October 12.



Rev. Beth Miller

## Men's Breakfast

**Saturday, October 11, at 8:30 a.m.**

The men's monthly breakfast is continuing as hybrid. Our next meeting is Saturday, October 11, 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](mailto:lovellmike50@hotmail.com) so that we will have an idea of how much food to bring. If you have any dietary restrictions, please bring your own food.



## PUBLICATION DEADLINES

ANNOUNCEMENTS for SUNDAYS from the pulpit are due by 9 a.m. on Wednesdays.

ARTICLES for THE WEDNESDAY WEEKLY NEWS-LETTER email are due by noon, on Tuesdays.

MONTHLY NUUSLETTER articles are due by the 16th of each month.

## SCHEDULED EVENTS

**Adult Community Choir** meets every Thursday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

**Board of Trustees** meets on Wednesday, October 15, 5:30 p.m.

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

**Committee on Family Ministry** meets October 21. 7:15 p.m.

**Communications Committee** meets on Sunday, October 26, at 12:30 p.m., in the Conference Room.

**Environmental Justice** meets at 12:45 p.m. on Sunday, October 12 in the sanctuary and via Zoom

**Friday Game Night** is Friday, October 10, 6:30 p.m., in the Fireplace Room.

**I-HELP for Men** is Sunday, October 12, 5 p.m. Sign up on the Meal Train (page 12) or contact Kathleen Craig or Greg Simmons if you can help.

**I-HELP for Women** is Sunday, October 26. For more information contact Mibs McCarthy.

**Membership Committee** meets Wednesday, October 22, at 5:30 p.m.

**Men's Breakfast Group** meets Saturday, October 11, 8:30 a.m. in person and 9 a.m. via Zoom. See article at left.

**Music Committee** meets on Tuesday, October 28, at 6 p.m. via Zoom.

**NUUSletter deadline** for the November issue is Thursday, October 16.

**Program Council** meets on Tuesday, October 7, at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom. Contact Mibs McCarthy [programcouncil@uucmp.org](mailto:programcouncil@uucmp.org)

**Social Justice** meets Sunday, October 5, 12:45 p.m. in the Sanctuary and via Zoom.

**Stewardship** meets Wednesday, October 1, 1 p.m. via Zoom.

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

**Youth Music** will be on the 1st and 3rd Sundays between the services in the Conference Room. If you are interested, please send Jorge an email: [music@uucmp.org](mailto:music@uucmp.org)

## RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION



**OCTOBER!**



Dear UUCMP Families,

Last month we made the transition to two Sunday services! For Religious Exploration, this means our nursery will be staffed during the earlier 9:30 a.m. service, while all of our children's and youth programming will take place during the 11:15 a.m. service. Each week, children will continue to explore our Unitarian Universalist principles through creative, hands-on building challenges.

As we move into October, we welcome not only the start of our **Fall Curriculum** but also the turn of the seasons. The days grow shorter and darker, and with that shift can come challenges for both children and adults. As a community, we remember that we can share our light with one another—through presence, kindness, and connection. Religious Exploration is one way our children and youth learn to carry and spread that light.

On Sunday, **October 5th**, we launch new classes for each age group:

- **Teens (8th–10th grade)** will begin the **Coming of Age** program, offered on the 1st and 3rd Sundays.
- **Lower Elementary** will enjoy our new **Bluey Curriculum**, filled with playful, values-based stories and activities.

- **Upper Elementary** will connect with the monthly congregational themes through **Soul Matters lessons**, linking worship and learning together.

We're also looking forward to a fun **Pumpkin Carving & Pizza Party on Tuesday, October 28th at 5:30 p.m.** – a great time to gather in community and celebrate the season.



Wishing you all a joyful October as together we share our light in this season of change.

Warmly,  
Shannon Morrison  
Director of Religious Exploration

### Thank you to September Volunteers and Helpers:

Thank you again to our wonderful September volunteers – Zeana Bey Davis, Carol Collin, Susanne Schmidt, Ali Shappard, Maren Martin, Andrea Rivas, Karen Brown, and Rebecca Irwin – for your time, energy, generosity and love. We couldn't do this without you!



## GUIDELINES FOR THE COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

(on west wall of hall outside the kitchen)

The board is for members of UUCMP to put up announcements about upcoming events, brochures of local related nonprofits, or advertise items for sale or other information that may be of interest to members of our congregation. A member of the Communications Committee will monitor the board and date any new postings.

1. You do not need special permission to post on the board. The Communications Committee monitor reserves the right to remove anything that is deemed inappropriate or offensive.
2. The Monitor will date any new postings and remove them after a month or after the date of an event. We ask that you remove your own item once it is sold or the resource you are seeking is provided to you.
3. Please keep the board neatly organized. If you need to get more pins, ask the office for them. Please do not tape anything on the board.

## Calling All Members Into Conversation

During the next few months, folks from our Membership Committee will be calling you to become better acquainted, and to support your church involvement. In doing so, we hope to further develop our community's sense of belonging and to encourage greater and more meaningful connections. We hope to briefly visit with you via phone or in person. Please contact Barbara Woodruff or either of the co-ministers if you have questions.

## Musical Offerings



The **UUCMP 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 ([music@uucmp.org](mailto:music@uucmp.org))! We are always looking to expand our choir size!

The **UUCMP Community Choir** is currently preparing to sing 2 services a month (every 2nd and 4th Sunday - unless otherwise stated) This month, the choir will

be singing on October 12th and 26th at the 9:30 a.m. service.

The **Music Committee** meets every 4th Tuesday of the month, please let our Music Director know if you would like to be part of the zoom meetings to be added to our email list! [music@uucmp.org](mailto:music@uucmp.org)



**Youth Music** will be returning every 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month meeting between services in the Conference Room. We are going to prepare for our Winter Pageant happening in December!

-- Jorge Torrez

The  
**Friendsgiving Potluck**  
is back at UUCMP

Join your church family on the  
afternoon of Thanksgiving for a  
potluck celebration of community.



More details will be posted  
in the weeks ahead.

## New Book Discussion: *See No Stranger*

First and Third Tuesdays, beginning October 7, at 7:00 p.m., in the Fireplace Room.

Rev. Axel will be leading a five-session discussion of *See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love*, by the Sikh author and activist Valarie Kaur.

In these challenging times marked by deep social and political divisions, UUs strive to promote justice and a moral message with love at the center. In her book, Kaur makes the case "that revolutionary love is the call of our time." Drawing on the wisdom of sages, scientists, and activists - and her own riveting journey as a brown girl growing up on California farmland . . . Kaur discovers practices of revolutionary love to bring us longevity, resilience, and joy.

Please consider joining us! We will be meeting on the first and third Tuesdays, at 7:00 p.m. either in the Fireplace Room or via Zoom. **(Please let us know whether you prefer to meet in person or via Zoom - or if you can do either.)** Please contact Rev. Axel ([minister@uucmp.org](mailto:minister@uucmp.org)) to register, or if you have questions. Please purchase a copy of the book, and read the first two chapters prior to our first session.



## Want to Try Something Different?

### Introducing the Unitarian Universalist Association's *Meet the Moment* Program

Imagining the future of Unitarian Universalism together, Meet the Moment is a framework for collective conversation, discernment, and strategizing about how our faith can be its most impactful in the context of new realities for Unitarian Universalism, religious life in North America, and the geopolitical landscape. Meet the Moment is rooted in cycles of learning, reflection, and action — and designed to be used across Unitarian Universalism to grow our shared analysis, identify urgent needs and important opportunities, and ground us in our values, in order to prioritize work and develop shared strategies for navigating the current times.

### How to Get Involved

A new wave of shared conversations (called “Wave Cohorts”) via Zoom has become available, and you can join one of these conversations. The topics range from administration to worship to fund raising to religious education. Other topics include: “What Keeps You Up at Night,” “Now What: An Organizing Response to ‘What Shall We Do?’” “Queer and Trans Communities in Crisis,” “The Practice of Covenantal Living,” “The UU Racial Justice Ecosystem,” and more.

To learn more about the *Meet the Moment* Program and to find additional information about how sign up to participate in one of the UUA conducted conversations click here:

<https://www.uua.org/congregations/meet-the-moment/wave-cohorts/fall-2025>

## Love snacks at coffee hour after worship?

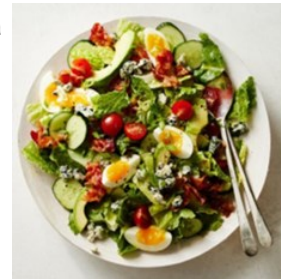


Coffee Hour needs you! We're looking for volunteers to bring treats and help set up the snack table on Sundays after worship services. Share your hospitality and keep the joy flowing—sign up today to support this beloved tradition!

You can sign-up using the signup genius app <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C054EA9A92BABFBCE9-58345145-snack> or on sign-up sheets on the bulletin board and at the snack set-ups in the welcome hall.

## New Member and Visitor Orientation and Light Lunch October 26, 2025, 12:30-2:30 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, October 26th** from 12:30-2:30p.m, after the second worship service. A light lunch will be available, followed by an interactive session led by Rev. Axel. Please RSVP to Rose Lovell at [lovellfamily5@gmail.com](mailto:lovellfamily5@gmail.com) and please let us know if you need child-care by October 19th.



Hope you can make it!

Questions? Ask Rev. Axel or Rev. Elaine

## KAZU Underwriting

We are continuing to advertise UUCMP on KAZU Public Radio, FM 90.3. A number of us who already regularly contribute to this local public radio station, instead pool our money, by giving it to the church, which then gives it to KAZU. Then UUCMP gets under-writing spots, one for each \$30 contributed. KAZU gets our money, and UUCMP gets our message out to the community.



Please consider contributing to this effort. Make sure your check is clearly labeled “KAZUGift” in the memo line. These donations will not earn any of the thank you gifts that KAZU sometimes gives. However, they will give UUCMP greater visibility in the community and help us implement our mission of “Changing ourselves as we change the world.”





The UUCMP SERVICE  
AUCTION 2025 is here!  
This year we are  
**BEING GREEN!**

Join us for our **green-themed**, costume-optional *Live* Auction at 7 p.m. on **Saturday, October 25**. We'll gather in the UUCMP sanctuary. This lively event will be the exciting culmination of the week's *Silent* Auction bidding.

Come to enjoy the delicious variety of **green snacks** while listening to some special live music, enter to win a Heads or Tails Basket, and help your table team win at our unique **green** cross-word puzzles!



Our annual Auction fundraiser lets us all bid on items donated by fellow congregants – delicious homemade food, exotic treasures, helpful services, and diverse experiences that enrich our lives. For more information, check on the UUCMP website at <https://uucmp.org/service-auction-2025-being-green/>

Be the first to check out the complete selection of Auction items starting on Saturday, October 11, found in the online Auction Catalog – see the website at <https://auctria.events/UUCMP2025>

This year's catalog will be unveiled on Saturday, October 11. *Silent* Auction bidding, using the online catalog, will run from **Sunday, October 19** through 8 p.m. on **Sunday, October 26**. Use the online home page for the 2025 Auction at: <https://auctria.events/UUCMP2025>

Watch for **reminders** and **helpful hints** in UUCMP's weekly e-news broadcasts. Questions? You can email the team at [ServiceAuction@uucmp.org](mailto:ServiceAuction@uucmp.org) or ask Steve Johnson, Ann Johnson, Fred Hamilton, Carol Collin, Lauren Keenan, Lois Davidson, Mike Lovell or Rev. Elaine the next time you see one of them.



## October Shared Plate Recipient

### Guitars United / Guitarras Unidas of Monterey County



Guitars United / Guitarras Unidas of Monterey County is a non-profit corporation recently formed by a group of volunteer guitar instructors that were a part of the Monterey County Chapter of Guitars Not Guns. The Monterey County Chapter of GNG was forced to cease and desist by the National Chapter in August of 2025 because they (along with 3 other chapters) were not willing to pay a retroactive 20% assessment fee on all monies raised in 2025 without any discussion nor the ability to meet and confer. The local chapter's funds were subsequently drained.

The former Monterey County Chapter of Guitars Not Guns started in 2009 and during the last 16 years Monterey County volunteer instructors served over 2,800 children (free guitar classes and guitars) and donated over 650 additional acoustic and electric guitars to our advanced students and underserved schools in Monterey County.

The Monterey County GNG year after year was the most active chapter in the national organization and received numerous awards. In 2017 the Monterey chapter was named the California 17<sup>th</sup> District Non-Profit of the year. In 2015 the national organization presented Stephen Vagnini, the Chapter Director, with their first ever Vision Award. The Monterey County Chapter was also the only chapter to continue holding online classes during the COVID pandemic.

Using music as a catalyst *Guitars Not Guns* encouraged children and teens to use their creativity to foster personal development and to help divert them from self-destructive influences such as drugs, alcohol and gang-related activities. By providing free guitars and lessons GNG hoped to engage their creative potential and help them

achieve their dreams.

Programs are for children and teens ages 8 - 18 using low teacher-to-student ratios. Most classes consist of 4-12 students with two to three adult instructors. In addition to learning how to master changing from one chord to another, children learn perseverance, discipline and self-esteem. More importantly, the kids learn to enjoy the interaction and have fun in a group setting. Those who complete the full 8-week program are allowed to keep the guitar and are encouraged to return for Level 2.

Classes have been held at the Rancho Cielo Youth Campus (Silver Star and the Culinary Institute), the Boys and Girls Club in Seaside; the Marina Teen Center, Monterey County Youth Center, Monterey County Juvenile Hall; Ohana Center for Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health; Marina High School, Salvation Army in Salinas, Alisal Center for Fine Arts in Salinas, CHISPA Housing programs, Ord Terrace Elementary School through the Community Partnership for Youth in Seaside, Fairview Middle School in Gonzales, CSUMB Upward Bound Program, Steinbeck Library in Salinas, the Mary Chapa Academy in Greenfield. Castroville Middle School, and Harden Middle School in Salinas.

The new non-profit, which filed its Articles of Incorporation on September 9, 2025, will seek to continue the work that it did through Guitars Not Guns and will expand their scope to include all ages. The Mission of Guitars United / Guitarras Unidas of Monterey County is to empower Monterey County residents of all ages through introductory and advanced (guitar) classes offered by compassionate and competent volunteer instructors.

Please donate generously to this worthy organization.

## 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](mailto:minister@uucmp.org))

Please join us!

### 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.

## Life Enrichment Programs Affinity Groups

Some groups meet both face-to-face and via Zoom in October.

**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.



## 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 OCTOBER 12, 2025

### Request for Food Contributions and Volunteers

On October 12, UUCMP will host and provide meals for Men's I-HELP (Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program.) We are supporting food and space for up to 25 men to stay with us for the night. Helping with I-HELP is very rewarding. At recent meals the men have expressed their appreciation for how welcome they feel at our church, how much they enjoy the quality and variety of food we prepare, and how much the program is helping them.



We need your help to provide donations of food for meals.

Besides food donations, we are requesting help from the congregation in the kitchen and setup.

Please sign up at this link: <https://mealtrain.com/n95dr6>

We are also seeking core volunteers to become part of the UUCMP I-Help Team to help plan and organize the meals.

#### The details:

1. Drop off food Sunday morning or between 3:00-4:00 p.m.
2. **Please label all food with Men's I-HELP.**
3. Setup and kitchen volunteers can arrive after 3:00 p.m.
4. If you prefer to donate money, funds are used to purchase staples and some meal items.
5. To Donate: put Men's I-HELP in the memo line of your check or use this link: <https://uucmp.org/connection-overview/donate/> and specify Men's I-HELP Meals.
6. Please sign up on Meal Train by Saturday before 5 p.m.

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. If you have difficulty using the Meal Train program or want us to enter your items, please contact Greg Simmons at [gregs2001@gmail.com](mailto:gregs2001@gmail.com)

**If you wish to become an I-HELP volunteer or have questions about the October 12 meal contact**

Greg Simmons 602-361-1015, [gregs2001@gmail.com](mailto:gregs2001@gmail.com)

or Kathleen Craig, 650-279-8639, [kathleen@craigdesignassociates.com](mailto:kathleen@craigdesignassociates.com)

Thank you for supporting this important mission of our church!

## UUCMP Grief and Growth Circle

The UU Grief and Growth Support Circle is open to anyone experiencing loss, no matter where they are on their journey. If you are looking for understanding and companionship, we are here to share stories, strategies, and resources. Our regular monthly meeting will be in the **UUCMP Fireplace Room on Wednesday, Oct. 22, from 10 - 11:30 am.** We also schedule a field trip on another date during the month in order to deepen our support for one another and our friendships. Contact Sharon Miller by phone or text at **831-601-0403** for more information.





## Art News



**Dixie Dixon**

*Photo Kaleidoscope*

September 5 through November 7

**Dixie Dixon** has been a photographer for over 50 years and has participated in several exhibits, both her own and jointly with others. She has been the official photographer for several non-profit organizations, including the Carmel Music Society and the Monterey Cowboy Poetry & Music Festival.

She is currently a member of the ImageMakers of Monterey fine-art photography group and previous member of the women's photography group FotoSaga.

Dixie has also been the curator for several successful photographic art shows.

Dixie says, "Although I have, for most of my life, been a traditional photographer, I wanted to try something different, new and interesting for me, and a couple of years ago I began to hand color my photos and became fascinated. I remember my mother doing this in the 50's when I was a young child. She was truly an artist, hand-making dolls, oil painting, building dollhouses, etc.

I fell in love with hand-coloring and can spend hours doing this sitting in my chair in the afternoon sun. I like the soft subtleness of the finished project and the unique quality of each print. People seem to feel I have found my niche."

Prints are \$250, and may be purchased by emailing me at [dixonline@comcast.net](mailto:dixonline@comcast.net), or calling me at 831-236-3111.



Coming Round the Bend

## President's Corner



### October Reflections: Transformation, Memory, and the Warmth of Autumn

Dear Beloved Community,

October arrives not with a blaze of crimson leaves here on the Monterey Peninsula, but with golden buttery light and surprising warmth. While much of the Northern Hemisphere revels in the crispness of fall, we find ourselves in our warmest month, wrapped in coastal fog that lifts to reveal skies as blue as summer's promise. The trees may not flame in color, but October still burns with meaning.

This is the season of transformation. The agrarian calendar once marked October as the time of harvest—when communities gathered the fruits of their labor and prepared for the stillness of winter. Though our lives may not revolve around crops, we too reap what we've sown. It's a time to reflect on the goals we set in summer: What did we nurture? What grew? What must we now release?

October's name, curiously, means "eighth month" from the Latin *Octo*, a relic of the Roman calendar that began in March and omitted January and February entirely. This calendrical quirk reminds us that even time itself is subject to revision—a fitting metaphor for the spiritual work of this season: accepting change, honoring cycles, and embracing the mystery of transformation.

Across cultures, October is rich with rituals that honor the thin veil between life and death. Halloween, rooted in the Celtic festival of Samhain, marked the end of the harvest and the beginning of the darker half of the year. Later Christian traditions layered on All Saints Day (Nov. 1) to honor the holy departed, and All

Souls Day (Nov. 2) to remember all who have passed. In Mexico and beyond, Día de los Muertos brings marigolds, altars, and sweet bread to celebrate ancestors with joy rather than fear.

Even our secular customs echo these ancient rhythms. Carving Jack o' Lanterns—originally turnips in Ireland—was meant to ward off wandering spirits. Dressing in costume was a way to confuse or appease those spirits. Trick-or-treating evolved from medieval "souling," where children begged for cakes in exchange for prayers for the dead. Today, we may not believe in ghosts, but we still delight in the playful dance between light and shadow.

Pumpkins, those cheerful emblems of autumn in America, appear everywhere—from porches to lattes. Pumpkin spice, that now-iconic blend of cinnamon, nutmeg, and clove, evokes warmth and nostalgia. It's a sensory ritual, the eau de cologne of October, reminding us that comfort can be conjured from scent and memory.

October is also a month of awareness and celebration. We honor Indigenous Peoples' Day, acknowledging the resilience and wisdom of Native communities. We wear pink for Breast Cancer Awareness Month and hold space for stories of survival and loss. We celebrate National Book Month—what better time to curl up with a story that stirs the soul? We uplift LGBTQ+ History Month, remembering the courage of those who have fought for love and dignity. We toast with steins during Oktoberfest, and light lamps for Diwali, the Hindu festival of light that triumphs over darkness.

And through it all, we prepare. We turn inward. We begin the slow descent into winter's quiet. The colors of October—amber, rust, plum, and gold—remind us that beauty often comes in letting go; that death is not an end, but part of a sacred cycle.

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Honoring our ancestors, our past selves, and our shared stories is a way of staying rooted even as the winds of change blow. May this October be a time of reflection, celebration, and gentle transformation. May we

find warmth in community, courage in change, and grace in the turning of the year.

In faith and fellowship,  
Ray Krise President, Board of Trustees  
Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey

## Samhain Celebration



**Saturday, November 1st at 7:00 p.m. (please arrive by 6:45 p.m.)**

**UU Church of the Monterey Peninsula Sanctuary**

Come connect with our ancestors and with the Otherworld betwixt and between Fall harvest and the darkness, mystery and magic of Winter. Costumes are encouraged!

Hosted by the Sacred Earth Circle of UUCMP

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

**Office Hours**

The office is open for limited hours:  
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Fridays.  
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