



NUUSLETTER

of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula

Theme: Embracing Possibility Sunday Services at 9:30 a.m. in person and via Zoom and 11:15 a.m. in person

April 5, 2026
“Life after Life”

Rev. Elaine Gehrman and Worship Associate
Allysson McDonald

There are many ways to think about resurrection, as springtime reminds us of the recurring cycles of life. This Easter morning we will explore ways to return to life, and to discover new life possibilities.

April 12, 2026
“Believing in Our Possibilities”

Rev. Axel Gehrman and Worship Associate
Lauren Keenan

We each carry our own unspoken assumptions and expectations about what we are capable of, and what is beyond us. We chart our life course within parameters often defined by our parents or peers, by social convention or of our own making. And yet, both individually and collectively, unimagined possibilities may be within reach – but only if we try.



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.

April 19, 2026

“Ingredients of Possibility”

Rev. Elaine Gehrman and Worship Associate
Sundeep Gupta

What creates possibility? Is there a recipe, with a list of ingredients? Are they common ingredients available to all, or are there rarified specialties only available to the privileged few? How can more people have access to a feast of possibilities?

April 26, 2026

“Images of the Future”

Worship Associates Jon Czarnecki and
Charlotte Bear

In his voluminous book on futurology, “Images of the Future,” Fred Polak found truth in an old Biblical dictum, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” Have we as a people, as a community, a state, a country lost our vision? Let us explore answers to these questions and ponder the answers as our paths to the future evolve from the present.

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See the calendar at
www.uucmp.org



Ministers' Message Rev. Axel Gehrman

“The only constant in life is change,” is the well-known quote attributed to the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus. This universal truth applies to human life and – as I have been reminded recently – also to congregational life.

One of the more noticeable aspects of change at UUCMP this year has been our decision to offer two Sunday worship services every week. Some of you may recall, we moved to our two-service format last September in response to increased attendance, and a Sunday morning experience that was beginning to feel too crowded and chaotic.

This is not the first time UUCMP has offered two-service Sundays. For several years prior to the pandemic we had two services, shifting to single-service Sundays during the summer months, when attendance was generally smaller. One thing that has been different this time around, is that we now have audio/visual staff that supports Zoom worship, as well as recordings of past services available on our church website, which provide additional opportunities for attendance.

At our March Board meeting we reviewed feedback and attendance figures of the past six months, and found that Sunday attendance has not increased significantly. We noticed that our 11:15 services often seemed sparsely attended, leaving us concerned that visitors might not realize what a lively populous church we actually are. Also, the people at the second service do not have the benefit of the closed captions nor hearing the choir, and the people at the first service miss out on seeing most of our RE families and children. And our staff and volunteers put in a lot of effort on long Sunday mornings. In light of these observations and consideration, it seems that a return to one service would make the most sense at this time.

Thus we will be returning to our one-service format with **worship at 10:30 a.m., beginning May 3rd**. Following the service on May 3rd, we will also have our annual congregational meeting.

Going forward we will continue to experiment and observe, and try to come up with ways to better accommodate folks at one service. Once again, we will encourage those who are mobile to park their cars in the lower lot. In the sanctuary, we will invite folks who are comfortable doing so, to scoot toward the center of our aisles.

Our hope is that this upcoming change will create a livelier and more welcoming Sunday morning experience, allowing for more conversations and connections among members and friends, as well as lightening the work load of our dedicated Sunday morning volunteers.

As our collective congregational needs and interests continue to change in the weeks and months to come, we will continue to adjust and adapt, helping our vibrant, caring community continue to thrive. This will not change! (And in the course of the next months, the Board will discuss whether to return to two services after the summer.)

Thank you for your help and support in making UUCMP such a warm and welcoming place, dedicated to justice and love!

See you in church,

Axel

Save the Date!

Make sure you have marked your calendar to attend the UUCMP Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, May 3, at 12 p.m. after the 10:30 a.m. service, in person and on Zoom. We will vote on the budget for fiscal year 2026-2027 and on new Board members and other elected positions.

Be there and attend the meeting to learn what's happening, participate in the discussions, and to cast your vote on these important issues.

The logo for the Annual Meeting, with the words "ANNUAL" and "MEETING" stacked vertically. The letters are in a bold, sans-serif font and are multi-colored, with each letter having a different hue.

Social Justice

The Social Justice Committee members report on the local actions and groups working on justice: environmental justice, criminal justice reform, and human rights, among other issues.

We meet the first Sunday of each month in person, and via Zoom. Our meeting agendas include updates on the church meals and shelter provided for the I-HELP programs, the UUCMP members' work with COPA (Communities Organized for Relational Power in Action), Whites for Racial Equity, Indivisible, Swing Left, organizations working on justice for Palestine, health care for all, immigration, peace, among many other groups doing good work.

Committee members also share their concerns, joys, frustrations and we often find solace in our camaraderie at our monthly meetings.

Church members and friends are welcome to attend or join the committee. Or add your email to the list to receive the monthly agendas and minutes. There is no obligation to join or attend meetings.

Outside of UUCMP there are various opportunities to share the way(s) you are caring for yourself as you witness injustice and the imbalance and need in the world. Please contact me if you are interested in sharing your methods and inspiration.

Peace.

Lee Hulquist, she
lmhulquist@gmail.com

Men's Breakfast

Saturday, April 11, at 8:30 a.m.

The men's monthly breakfast is continuing as hybrid. Our next meeting is Saturday, April 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 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 Wednesday, April 15, 5:30 p.m.

Buddhist Sangha is every Wednesday at 7 p.m. in person in the Sanctuary. Zoom is available. See page 9.

Committee on Family Ministry meets Sunday, April 19, 12:45 - 1:45 p.m. in the Fireplace Room.

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

Environmental Justice meets Sunday, April 12, 10:40 a.m. in the Fireplace Room.

Friday Game Night is Friday, April 3. Potluck dinner at 5:30 p.m., games at 6:00 p.m. Sign Up Genius:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0544AAAAA28A2F9C34-61799518-potluck>

I-HELP for Men is Sunday, April 12, 5 p.m. Sign up on the Meal Train (page 11) or contact Greg Simmons.

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

Membership Committee meets Wednesday, April 22, at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.

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

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

New Member and Visitor Orientation and Lunch is Sunday, April 19, 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. See page 7.

NUUsletter deadline for May is Thursday, April 16.

Program Council meets on Tuesday, April 7, at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom. Contact Mibs McCarthy programcouncil@uucmp.org

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

Stewardship meets Wednesday, April 1, 1 p.m. via Zoom.

T'ai Chi Chih meets Tuesdays at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary. See page 9.

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

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION



Embracing Possibility



Spring is here, and with a fresh month and new theme, we continue moving forward with intention—consciously inviting curiosity and hope into our lives. April's theme is **Embracing Possibility**, and throughout the month we will explore what it means to open ourselves to new ways of being, thinking, and connecting.

In our sessions, we'll reflect on four ways we can embrace possibility:

- ◆ Session One: Embracing the Possibilities that lie Beyond Grief and Loss (Easter)
- ◆ Session Two: Embracing the Possibility of Building a Better World
- ◆ Session Three: Embracing the Possibility of Healing the Earth (Earth Day)
- ◆ Session Four: Embracing the Possibilities in Each of Us

One of the things I love most about this theme is how naturally it invites us to lift up UU values, inspiring UU ancestors, and meaningful events this month. I also want to share with families this [letter to UU children at Easter](#). I will be out of town on **Easter Sunday**, but our caring team and wonderful parent volunteers are planning a fun and engaging morning—likely involving chocolate, eggs, and maybe even a rabbit!

We will continue **Our Whole Lives (OWL) for Grades K-1** this month. This eight-session, age-appropriate program supports children and families in learning about bodies, relationships, identity, and safety, with a required parent orientation and opportunities for continued conversations at home. Registration is required, with a suggested \$25 donation.

Finally, please note that our **Committee on Family Ministry will meet on the third Sunday of the month**—watch the weekly newsletter for details.

With warmth and gratitude,
Shannon
Shannon Morrison (she/her)
Director of Religious Exploration

Activities & Events in April

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

- ◆ April 3 - First Friday Game Night 6 p.m.-8 p.m.
- ◆ K1 OWL Classes will continue this month April 12, 19 and 26
- ◆ CoFM to meet April 19 - checking in about RE Sunday and Summer Activities
- ◆ Sunday May 17 - RE Sunday

Watch the weekly Newsletter for More Events!



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Church members *without* little ones are encouraged to lend a hand so caregivers can have a chance to connect with our wonderful community. We appreciate your help, whether working offering your time directly with our kids or working to make our UUCMP campus a safe and fun place to be!

Thank you to our March Volunteers!

Karen Brown again worked hard to feature stories of Purim, Women, Ostara, Spring and books that fit the monthly theme of Paying Attention. Thank you Karen for your dedication to our RE Library. A big thanks to **Andrea Rivas** and **Warren Finch** for your time and dedication leading our K1 OWL class! Thank you also to **Suzanne Schmidt**, **Ali Shappard** and **Rebecca Irwin** for your time volunteering with our youth and RE team. Thank you **An McDowell** for the beautiful blanket made to welcome Baby Miles! **Zeana**, **Lindsay** and **Aydan** for your help with the potluck and connection. **Korah**, **Roxanne**, **Murtaza** and **Catherine** for your time in the nursery! Always thank you to **Carol Collin** for collecting birthday wishes and sending them in the form of cards to our youth. The kids love getting their special UUCMP birthday cards.



April Shared Plate Recipient *Planned Parenthood Mar Monte*

Mission

Planned Parenthood Mar Monte invests in communities by providing health care and education, and by expanding rights and access for all.

History

Planned Parenthood Mar Monte (PPMM) is the largest Planned Parenthood affiliate in the U.S., providing medical and education services to over 300,000 people annually at 30 health center locations in mid-California and Nevada.

PPMM was formed by a series of mergers of Planned Parenthood affiliates and independent health centers during the 1990s. The affiliate's name was chosen to reflect a service area that stretches from the sea (mar) through the mountains (monte).



Health services include abortion (medication abortion and procedural abortion), birth control, emergency contraception (morning-after pill), gender-affirming care, HIV services, pregnancy testing & planning, STI testing & treatment, sexual and reproductive concerns, wellness & preventive care.



Every day, we are guided by the heart of our mission: providing excellent health care and sexual health education to tens of thousands of individuals and families — regardless of income, identity, or zip code — with compassion and without judgment.

At Planned Parenthood Mar Monte, we're passionate about delivering high quality, non-judgmental health care and education to our communities.

UUCMP Grief and Growth Circle

The Spring holidays have come with their messages of rebirth and renewal. This can be difficult for those of us who are dealing with the absence of a loved one. If this resonates with you, please join us as we keep alive the stories of our dear ones and share strategies and resources that have proven helpful. This month we meet from 10-11:30 am on Wed., April 15, in the Fireplace Room at the UU Church. Group members are establishing a tradition of going out to lunch on another date so that we can deepen our friendships and support network. Contact Sharon Miller at 831-601-0403 for more information.



New Member and Visitor Orientation and Light Lunch April 19, 2026, 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, April 19th, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.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 and please let us know by April 12th if you need childcare.

Questions? Ask Rev. Axel or Rev. Elaine.



Musical Offerings



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



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 (music@uucmp.org)! We are currently preparing for two services per month and we are always looking to expand our choir size!

The UUCMP Community Choir is preparing to sing 2 services a month. This month, the choir will be singing for the 9:30 a.m. service on April 12th and April 26th.

The **Music Committee** meets every 4th

Would you like to meet with other musicians for a jam session? No experience needed just the will and the want to create music with others! Looking for all musicians to play an egg shaker, tambourine, guitar, drums, ukulele, bass guitar, bongos, claves, and more! Email Jorge Torrez at music@uucmp.org for more information!

-- Jorge Torrez

There will be a Celebration of Life Service

In honor of

Marsh Pitman

Saturday, May 9, 2 p.m.





By the time this newsletter reaches you, our 2026-2027 Pledge Drive will have formally ended, and we are now tabulating not only the total dollars pledged, but also your comments and feedback for the coming fiscal year. Thank you!

The Board will be reviewing these numbers and comments, and will present a budget for fiscal year 26-27 at our annual meeting on May 3. Mark your calendars! We still need your participation for that important discussion and vote. Your commitment to this beloved community, both in dollars and in service, opens our welcoming doors even wider.

Did you perhaps miss connecting with us during the formal pledge season? No problem. It is never too late, and we very much want to hear from you. The form is here:

<https://uucmp.breezechms.com/form/3d1e809431>

Thanks again for your participation, whether it was early or late, large or small. Please join together with your fellow congregants on May 3, the annual meeting, to vote and to celebrate.

And yes, there will be cake!

Stewardship Committee

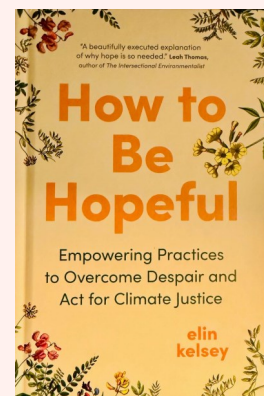
Steve Johnson, Carol Collin, Katie Hamilton, Gretchen Hausmann, Jo Ann Novoson, Rev. Axel Gehrman

Environmental Book Discussion Group

We will be reading and discussing Elin Kelsey's book How to be Hopeful: Empowering Practices to Overcome Despair and Act for Climate Justice—on 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, -8:30 p.m. on Zoom. This is the schedule:

- April 14—Stance 1 – I Choose Hope, pp. xi - 43
- April 28—Stance 2 – I Reject Fatalism, pp. 45- 81
- May 12—Stance 3 – I Am Emotional, pp. 83 - 116
- May 26 – Stance 4 -- I am on a Reparative Quest of Transformation, pp. 117 - 171
- June 9—Stance 5 – I Am Nature, pp. 173 - 241

For questions or more information contact Rev. Elaine.



Join Our Church!

In these challenging 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 in April both face-to-face and via Zoom.

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 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.

Art News



Becky Olvera Schultz

Indigenous Expressions

April 3 - May 31, 2026

Artist Reception on Saturday, April 18th from 1-3 p.m.

Artist Statement:

"I have directed my consuming interest in the native peoples of the Americas into my own personal art expression. I derive immense satisfaction from putting life into the materials I work with. My art is an extension of my spirit, a piece of my personal vision and a constant source of comfort and healing for me."

When I was young I always wanted to be an artist. After high school, I wanted to take art classes in college. My mother was a nurse and she felt I should go pre-medical as I'd have a better chance of earning a living. Taking pre-med classes didn't work for me and feeling not supported by family at the time, I dropped out of college. Several years went by, and I ended up in the publication industry where I interviewed businesses, took their photos and wrote editorials, and sold print advertising. I was good at it. and I eventually forgot about being an artist.

This changed when I lost my brother. While I was grieving, a friend suggested I take a Native American drum making class as a distraction. It was fun. I remembered again how good it felt to work with my hands! It was such a centering and calm experience. I realized that if I had not lost my brother I may have never gone back to art so I feel his death was a gift to me to rediscover myself.

Soon after that I took a clay class and discovered I was good at sculpting faces. My focus was indigenous faces. My work was inspired by images in books but most of my pieces were faces that just emerged from the clay from my own vision. I started painting the faces and adding horse hair and other adornments.



Bison Gourd Mask



Powwow Dancer

When my masks were displayed publicly some people were intimidated or scared by how realistic they were. That's when I started making clay and gourd masks in a Southwestern style which were more whimsical and colorful. Eventually I started making rawhide shields as a compliment to both styles of masks.

Always one to crave variety, I began creating two-dimensional mixed media works which included photography, serigraphy, painting, photo transfer, collage, dolls and other works. I often use bold contrast in my images, and my Native masks are usually painted in the traditional Native American colors of the four directions, red, black, white and yellow. My Southwestern pieces, however, are in many different colors.

I believe my own indigenous bloodline, natural talent, research and travel experiences have all contributed to my specific style of art. Over the years my art has been featured in nine museum exhibitions, galleries in several states as well as included in countless national and local exhibitions and Santa Cruz Open Studios twelve times. My art has been featured in the national magazines Cowboys & Indians, Wild West and Native Peoples.

native-expressions.com native-art-gift-shop.com powwow-power.com
831-295-7562 becky@native-expressions.com

Keep on Cooking into the Spring! Men's I-HELP Program at UUCMP Next Meal April 12, 2026

Each second Sunday, UUCMP hosts Men's I-HELP (Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program) welcoming up to twenty-five men with dinner & a safe night's rest. I-HELP is the only emergency shelter open every night in the Monterey area for men & women: a hot meal, a safe place, & a caring community. There are many ways you can help: You can help by donating cooked food, joining us in the kitchen & sharing the meal, or even taking on sponsoring a meal as a group.



Volunteering Options

Join the kitchen team to cook nourishing meals for the men.

Cook something at home or purchase prepared food & drop off on the Sunday of the meal.

Help set up tables & stay with the men to share the meal.

Join the organizing team & lead a meal night or organize a group to sponsor a meal.

Great opportunity for a volunteering or service-learning project through school programs.

Your generosity makes a real difference. If you'd like to get involved, please contact Greg Simmons.

602-361-1015, Gregs2001@gmail.com, text, email or phone call, all methods are welcome.

Our next meal is April 12, 2026, and we need your help to provide donations of food for meals. Even more than food donations, we are requesting help from the congregation for the kitchen and setup volunteers. We also really need more help to keep this program going so we are also seeking volunteers to become more involved with UUCMP I-HELP Team to help plan and organize the meals.

Food contributions can include a main course, rotisserie chickens, vegetables, potatoes and other sides, bread, drinks and desserts. We are using the meal train website to help organize or you can communicate with me directly to let me know what you are thinking about contributing or have questions. Please, to ensure we can use all the food that is provided, and that we can serve the men a healthy meal, we request no unsolicited food items be provided.

Please contact Greg Simmons if you wish to volunteer to work with I-HELP, want to know what is needed for the next meal, and learn how to make food contributions.

For questions, ideas, or comments: gregs2001@gmail.com, 602-361-1015. Text, email or phone calls are all fine.

Thank you for supporting this important mission of our church!

The details:

April 12 Meal train Link: <https://mealtrain.com/5we80z>

Drop off food Sunday morning or by 3:30 p.m.

Please label all food with Men's I-HELP

Setup and kitchen volunteers can arrive after 3:00 p.m.

If you prefer to donate money, funds are used to purchase staples and some meal items.

To donate: put Men's I-HELP in the memo line of your check or use this link:

<https://uucmp.org/connection-overview/donate/> & specify Men's I-HELP Meals.

Please sign up for Meal Train by Saturday before 5 p.m.

President's Corner



Dear Members and Friends of UUCMP,

April arrives with that long-awaited glimmer of the world waking up again. Light stretches a little farther into the evening, calla lilies proliferate, and something in us stirs in response. Hope, as the old saying goes, springs eternal, not because life is easy, but because life keeps renewing itself, inviting us to do the same.

It's hard to believe we are entering the final quarter of our church year. Time has a way of slipping past us, especially when we are busy building, tending, and dreaming together. Still, this post vernal equinox season asks us to pause, breathe, and pay attention. Spring really isn't subtle. It taps us on the shoulder and says: wake up, look closely, life is happening right here.

Our Unitarian and Transcendentalist ancestors knew something about this practice of attention. Emerson reminded us that "the invariable mark of wisdom is to see the miraculous in the common." Thoreau, who built a whole spiritual practice around noticing, wrote, "Only that day dawns to which we are awake." And Whitman, with his expansive psyche, declared, "To me, every hour of the day and night is an unspeakably perfect miracle."

These voices echo across the years, nudging us toward a truth we sometimes forget: the sacred is not something remote. It is everywhere. Not only in the big moments of celebration or crisis, but in the small, ordinary gestures that make up a life in our Church: lighting the chalice on Sunday morning, greeting a friend at coffee hour, tending the gardens around the Church building, or simply sitting in silence as sunlight spills through the little windows above our Sanctuary.

April invites us to awaken to an everyday holiness. To notice the way our community embraces our oneness. To see the beauty in the work we do together. To remember that each act of kindness, each pledge of support, each hour volunteered, each conversation shared is part of the sacred fabric we are weaving.

As we move toward the close of the church year, we also move toward the future we are shaping, one grounded in love, resilience, and shared purpose. Your presence, your attention, and your generosity make that future possible. Thank you for all the ways you show up for this congregation, for one another, and for the wider world.

May this season of renewal remind us that awakening is not a one-time event but a daily practice. May we continue to look closely, listen deeply, and find the sacred in the everyday moments that sustain us. And may the lengthening light guide us gently into the months ahead.

With gratitude for each of you and for the journey we share,

Ray Krise
President, Board of Trustees
The Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula

Vegetarian Recipe

One-Pan Orzo With Spinach and Feta

Melissa Clark -- New York Times

Ingredients

Yield: 4 servings

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 4 large scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- 8 ounces baby spinach leaves (8 cups), coarsely chopped
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1¾ cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable stock
- 1 cup orzo
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest (from 1 lemon)
- ¾ cup crumbled feta (3 ounces), plus more for garnish
- ½ cup frozen peas, thawed (optional)
- 1 cup chopped fresh dill, or use parsley or cilantro



Step 1 Heat a 10-inch skillet over medium, then melt butter, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Stir in about three-quarters of the scallions (saving some of the green parts for garnish) and garlic, and cook until softened, stirring frequently, about 3 minutes.

Step 2 Stir in spinach, adding in batches if it doesn't all fit in the pan at once, and ½ teaspoon salt. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until spinach is wilted, about 5 minutes.

Step 3 Stir in stock and bring to a simmer. Stir in orzo, lemon zest and remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Cover and simmer over medium-low heat until orzo is nearly cooked through and most of the liquid is absorbed, 10 to 14 minutes, stirring once or twice.

Step 4 Stir in cheese, peas (if you like) and dill, cover the pan, and cook for another 1 minute, to finish cooking and warm the peas. To serve, sprinkle with more cheese and the reserved scallions.

Welcome to New Member John Aaron

John Aaron
Salinas
jaaron123@aol.com

John is new to UU, and joined in February of 2026. He mainly has attended New Thought Churches such as Unity and Religious Science. He was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, and as a youngster lived in Bakersfield, California; Anchorage, Alaska; and Petaluma, California. John has lived in Salinas since 1991. He married his wife Rose in 1993. John retired in 2026 as an elementary school teacher of 35 years, teaching various K-8 grades. He enjoys gardening, tennis, traveling, and learning more about himself! John also enjoys participating in the UUCMP Men's Group, being a member of the Membership Committee, and helping with the monthly I-HELP meals for men.



**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.
Email to office@uucmp.org

Co-Ministers

the Revs. Elaine and Axel Gehrman
minister@uucmp.org

Director of Religious Exploration

Shannon Morrison
dre@uucmp.org

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April 2026

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Please send NUUsletter submissions as an email attachment by the 16th to newsletter@uucmp.org, and indicate UUCMP NUUSLETTER in the subject line.

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