SUNDAY SERVICES
9:00 A.M. MEDIATION
9:15 & 11:15 a.m. Two Service’s
Worship and Children’s Programs

Sunday, February 4
Gifts of God. Each year we are grateful to host the Balazs Scholar. This year Rev. Emese Bodor will grace our pulpit. What is the heritage which was given to us by our family, our faith, and our communities? Are we aware of all these? Let’s find the gifts that connect us to each other.

Sunday, February 11
Patience is the River. In Winnie The Pooh, Milne writes: “Rivers know this: there is no hurry. We shall get there someday.” How do we cultivate this important practice? This is part of the DIY Virtue series. Join Rev. Leslie Takahashi for an exploration.

Sunday, February 18
What’s Love Got to Do with It? On this Sunday after Valentine’s Day, we will explore the concept of Agape, a universal and unconditional love that transcendent and persistent regardless of circumstances. How are we called as a religious community to practice and experience the love known as agape? Join Rev. Neal Anderson at 9:15 a.m. and 11:15 a.m., which will be a multi-generational worship.

Sunday, February 25
Medusa’s Footprints. A break-through of our age has been an understanding of trauma and all that it entails for the individual. How does this also inform our common life together? How would public policies be changed if this were more commonly understood? The work of Peter Levine will be highlighted by Rev. Leslie Takahashi doing this service on how we cultivate resilience.

Sanctuary Community Where YOU Matter!

Thank you MDUUC for your votes authorizing us to act on requests for sanctuary and for MDUUC to bear public witness that black lives matter. Both affirmations are critical to our continued work both to learn, grow, better connect and more wholly care for each other and to become that beacon of inclusiveness, understanding and safety. We are proud to serve this community and our mission. Our heartfelt thanks goes out to the many who have brought us to this shining moment in MDUUC history: this board of trustees, our Social Justice Council (SJC), the Sanctuary Task Force and Racial Justice committee, Rev. Neal Anderson. And let’s remember it was Reverend Leslie Takahashi who brought us the seeds of a vision for a more truly inclusive and welcoming community, and guides us so ably to better understand how much change is needed within each of us to get there. Be proud MDUUC. It is truly an honor to work with you now, to make it so.

Celebration of Commitment March 11
Mark your calendar for March when we will have many fun and inspiring events which celebrate the past and the future of our beloved congregation. On the first Saturday, we will hold our annual Fellowship Dinner which celebrates the history of our congregation. On Sunday, March 11, we will hold our second Celebration Sunday when we will recommit to this precious place which holds our values and our vision. A single service will be held that weekend followed by an amazing party!

Thanks from your Stewardship Committee
Leslie's Logos  
February 2018

Dear Members and Friends,

How odd it is to live in this world where it seems that when connecting with others is easier than ever from a technical sense, and yet just as hard—and maybe even a little harder—in others.

Smartphones social media and email all make it easier to help others know WHAT we are doing. And yet it still remains up to us to let people know how we ARE and what we NEED. All the bright and shiny baubles do not take away a basic choice—do we acknowledge and empower our interdependence with one another or do we put our energy into preserving a radical autonomy?

The messages we get every day reinforce that it is better to be a giver than a receiver, that people who are in need are somehow suspect and that we do NOT want to be one of those people. And yet to offer help from a place of authentic generosity requires that when we are in need, we can learn the lessons of receiving. Being able to receive help makes us a better helper.

Living our values means acting out of our sense of interconnection—recognizing that we are woven into the strands of that mutual web of connection. We have a million small ways in which we can offer help to someone—being a listening ear to someone who has no one to listen; giving a ride to someone who otherwise would not have been able to attend something that will provide inspiration or connection; fixing a computer for someone less savvy; or even doing some small practical task for someone like picking up groceries or needed medicine.

Our community has many ways to help. We offer support for those who have suffered a recent loss, caregivers, and people in life passages such as retirement or divorce or other life changes. We also have a Pastoral Visitors program for people who could use a trained and empathetic listening ear. Our Caring Committee offers help with Memorial Services, a knitting ministry, baby clothes for new arrivals and short-time times of difficulty and manages our Neighborhood Networks which are designed to provide transportation help. The Ministers’ Discretionary Fund offers financial assistance with housing, food, utilities, medical care and other urgent needs for members and friends of the congregation. If you want to be part of any of these activities, please let me know. If any of these ministries of the congregation would be helpful to you, please let me know.

None of these resources are helpful if you don’t let someone know you need them. If you have an urgent need, please CALL. Don’t ever worry about whether it is the right time or whether everyone is too busy to deal with your need. If you have a less time-sensitive need and aren’t sure where to start, email ministers@mduuc.org. This address will go to me, to Rev. Neal Anderson and to our intern minister.

Let’s live our values and care for one another. Let’s offer care and ask for it when we need it.

In faith,
Leslie

Due to perennial issues with her email, Rev. Leslie Takahashi has a new address which is leslie@mduuc.net. Messages sent to the other address will be forwarded through March 1.

Restored to Sanity  
Pastoral Visitors Workshop

Addiction is a disease and it is one that is ravaging our nation. Alcoholism is at record levels and the new opiate crisis is claiming lives, especially of our youth and young people. Other addictions such as to food, media or pornography are growing in frequency. Often we as Unitarian Universalists are loathe to access help, beset by a limiting sense of shame. Life with addiction, whether your own or a loved one can be nightmarish and demanding.

In this workshop, sponsored by our Pastoral Visitors program and coordinated by Rev. Leslie Takahashi and Intern Minister Natalie Malter, we will hear a variety of approaches to addiction—including the medical model for treating this disease, spiritual resources and a uniquely Unitarian Universalist approach to the 12-step program.

Join us from 9:30-noon on February 17 to learn more about how to approach your own addictions and those of your family members. A light breakfast, coffee, and tea will be available as well as a chance to get to know others who understand the struggle that living with addiction is. Register online at https://mduuc.org/learn/adult-programs
Greetings,

I love the New Year and the sense that again we have the opportunity to start anew, or simply to start something new. In 2018 I am leaning towards the latter as I realize I’ve forgotten something important in the raising of my teen children, the skills, and tools of earning, saving, spending and giving of money. My eldest and I are literally paying for this oversight as he navigates into young adulthood.

Perhaps you are in the same boat with teens, or looking ahead with elementary aged children? I invite you to join me for a two-part workshop on “Money Sense: Raising Kids Who Are Thoughtful and Smart About Money.” Recognizing that money is something our children and youth have already begun a lifelong relationship with, this workshop will ground teaching our children basic financial skills with the perspective that every conversation about money is also one about values.

We will cover:

- Why we need to talk about money
- Ways to teach saving, spending wisely, and giving
- How financial literacy can support our faith values of patience, generosity, responsibility, perseverance, perspective, compassion, economic justice, and stewardship
- The allowance debate

These workshops are appropriate for parents of elementary through high school aged children and will be held February 7 & February 14 from 7:15-8:45 p.m. I hope to see you there as we start something new together in 2018!

Warmly, Indigo

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Winter Nights Homeless Shelter Begins March 26

“Winter Nights gives us the opportunity to practice our first and sixth UU principles, the inherent worth and dignity of every person and the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

Helping the most vulnerable in our community Working with young families who need our help An opportunity to help young people achieve academic success in school during a time of transition for their families.” Jim Hughell.

Over 100 members of MDUUC helped last year, and we need a similar effort this year. We have a new enlarged leadership team of eighteen members.

Over 100 members of MDUUC helped last year, and we need a similar effort this year. We have a new enlarged leadership team of eighteen members. You can see the team and the remaining openings at https://goo.gl/F3wRLD. If you want to be on the team, send an email to WNVolCoordinator@mduuc.org

Opportunities for you to volunteer will be posted in mid-February. In the meantime, you can help Kelly Webster and her team prepare dinners that will be frozen for use in Winter Nights. Cooking parties are first Sunday of each month after the second service. Three meals will be made each Sunday. Email Kelly at KellyWebster@mduuc.org.

Winter Nights is a project of the Social Justice Alliance of the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County https://cccwinternights.org/.

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MDUUC and the Black Empowerment Movement History

By Natalie Malter, Intern Minister

In recent years, Unitarian Universalists have been engaging in important and challenging conversations about racial justice in our world, in our denomination, and in our congregations. These conversations are not entirely new, but have been on-going throughout UU history. The Civil Rights Movement and the Black Empowerment Movement of the 1960s are excellent historical examples of the ways that Unitarian Universalists have wrestled with difficult questions about what it means to embody our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of all people. In the 1960s Mt. Diablo, like UU congregations around the country, was involved in these complex and transformative conversations.

While members and friends of MDUUC may have heard of the Rev. Aron Gilmartin, the MDUUC Minister from 1961-74 and an outspoken advocate of the Civil Rights Movement, fewer people may have heard of the Rev. George Johnson and the Rev. Harold Wilson, Black ministers who served MDUUC alongside Gilmartin in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Like Gilmartin, Johnson and Wilson were important leaders on both the congregational and national levels, especially in regards to the Civil Rights Movement and Black Empowerment. The stories of their respective ministries illustrate the promise and the heartbeat, the hope and the disillusionment that defined race relations in Unitarian Universalism in that time period.

On a recent professional trip to Boston in December of 2017, I had the opportunity to visit the UUA Archives, located in the Andover-Harvard Theological Library, to study the ministerial files of both Revs. Johnson and Wilson and to learn more about their work at MDUUC. This February, in celebration of Black History Month, the History Committee will be unveiling a special display about Revs. Johnson and Wilson in the History Niche, located just outside the Sanctuary. I will also be offering an Adult RE course entitled “Celebrating Black UU History” from 1:00 to 2:30 pm every Thursday in February. For more information about the course and to register, visit the website at https://www.mduuc.org/learn/adult-programs. Finally, you can read more about the work and legacies of Revs. Johnson and Wilson in my extended article in the online version of this February Beacon.
Update from the MDUUC Accompaniment Team:  
By Mary-Helen Binger, on behalf of team members.

The chronology of how we ended up paired with Justine:
Based on information provided by Suzanne Llewellyn

Members of MDUUC and MICA (Multifaith Immigration Coalition for Action – a group of central county congregations) were invited to a workshop put on by Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity (IM4HI) regarding accompaniment. Seven people signed up to be part of a team.

Several CIVIC volunteers (Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement), a national organization that visits immigrants who have been put in ICE jail, visited Justine at the Richmond jail. They wanted to help him get released so referred him to Rebecca Merton, Civic’s visitation director, who contacted Rev Deb Lee of IM4HI. Deb contacted Suzanne Llewellyn who and asked us to write letters to him and try to find housing. Joe and Mieke held a room for several months waiting for his release. When Justine was granted a bond hearing, several of the MDUUC Accompaniment Team, as well as others volunteering with CIVIC and IM4HI, packed the courtroom. Justine was granted an unusually low bond ($3500), which Joe Shellenberg and Mieke Van Hout paid the next day so he could get released immediately. Now the accompaniment team (made up of MDUUC and non-MDUUC people) are crowd-funding among family and friends to pay J & M back the bond. Stay tuned for opportunities to meet Justine and members of the Accompaniment Team.

STOP! Don’t read this hard copy - read the Beacon online!

Just send an email to publications@mduuc.org and ask to be taken off the mailed Beacon list. If you choose to continue to receive a hard copy, please send $15 to cover the cost of mailing. You can put it in the plate with a note, or drop or mail a check to the office.

Online you will receive the Beacon in color. To access it go to MDUUC.org/news/newsletter.

Try it - you’ll like it. If you must have a hard copy, why not print it out on your computer?

In this time of much anxiety and stress, we wish to offer restorative practices for the healing and wellness of your mind, body, and spirit.

Wednesday, Feb. 7. Vespers, 5:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Wednesday, Feb. 14, 5:30 p.m. in the Owl Room “Give Yourself a Valentine” led by Joan Redding. Explore the importance of caring about and for yourself and how that is expressed.

Wednesday, Feb. 14. Evening Song led by Jo Gelinas. 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Wednesday, Feb. 21. Vespers, 5:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Wednesday, Feb. 28. Centering Prayers in the Universalist Unitarian Tradition. 5:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Led by Rev. Leslie Takahashi

If you are planning to attend a Wednesday evening event please consider joining the community Dinner in Bortin Hall at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 10 10:00 a.m. in Bortin Hall---David Richo

Saturday, Feb. 17, 2018 10:00 a.m. Lafayette Reservoir - This is a locally popular gem attracting many enthusiastic users. We’ll hike the paved 3-mile loop trail. Paving makes this a great hike for strollers (sorry, no bikes). There are some ups and downs. We’ll hike the loop counter clockwise ending in a grassy area with a great play structure for younger children and picnicking for all. Bring a sack lunch, water and appropriate attire, depending on the weather. For directions, and to sign up, please contact Peter Morse at petermorse@mduuc.org.

Awakening Joy continuing classes for participants

Tuesday, Feb. 13 at 1:00 p.m. in Children’s Chapel “Gratitude “

Tuesday, Feb. 27 at 1:00 p.m. in Children’s Chapel “Finding Joy in Difficult times”

Saturday, Mar. 17 "A Second Light Conversation About Death” in the Fireside Room from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Led by Linda Russell

Cultivating Radical Hospitality

Sunday, February 4 at 1:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary – All MDUUCers are welcome to attend this training for greeters, ushers, coffee volunteers, and anyone else charged with extending a warm welcome and practicing radical hospitality especially to our to our visitors. The training will be led by Revs. Leslie and Neal and explore best practices for being a religious community thatwarmly welcomes visitors and has practices in place that will ensure that they will return and become members in the future.
Meet Our Balazs Scholar - Rev. Emese Bodor

I grew up in Kolozsvár and studied at the Protestant Theological Institute where I became a Unitarian minister. I am the Religious Education teacher at the János Zsigmond High School, a 450-year-old Unitarian school. For the last eight years, most of my work was related to children, youth and a variety of educational issues. I believe in the importance of education and I love my work with the students.

I have an active life including bicycling and hiking on long trips. I like to call myself an optimistic person. And I feel that I like to deal with people, work with and help them. I believe that each decision and all the options in my life came by the hand of providence and I am grateful for my life.

Betty Soskin Talk and Book Signing

Meet Betty Reid Soskin and hear her talk and read from her newly released book, “Sign My Name to Freedom: A Memoir of a Pioneering Life” Sunday, February 25 at 1:00 p.m.

Betty Reid Soskin has been a home-front war-years worker, a singer-songwriter and performer, a writer, a legislative aide, the oldest national parks ranger, a public icon, and an honest and tireless fighter, both against discrimination of all forms and for the growth and triumph of the human spirit and values to benefit us all. She began work at the Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historic Park when she was 85. In her blog, CBreaux Speaks, she writes, “Life has never been richer, nor more abundantly lyrical,” and “I’ve grown into someone I’d like to know — were I not me already!”

For more info and to RSVP please visit https://mduuc.org/article/meet-betty-soskin

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Every day it's a-gettin' closer
Traveling faster than a roller coaster
Gifts from you will surely come our way, a-hey a-hey hey
And just how and when is that a-gonna happen ???

ON COMMITMENT SUNDAY, MARCH 11 when we all make our pledges for the 2018-19 year
SO SAVE THE DATE. And be there or be square!!!!
(With a tip of the hat to Buddy Holly)
**What’s Up with Wednesdays?**

On Wednesday nights, we are experimenting with a number of new programs tied to our Make It So goal to be a place of inspiration and restoration for the spirit in these difficult times. Our Vespers service is held on the first and third Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. and on these same Wednesday, Revs. Neal Anderson and Leslie Takahashi are talking about the theological issues which underlie our justice work. We also have a regular offering of “Thin Moments” and a music-based program called Evensong which is happening on the second Wednesday. See the Restorative practices column to learn more.

The variety of programming offers many things to explore and enjoy. EACH Wednesday we have a community dinner from 6:30 to 7:30 where we welcome people of all ages. This is a chance to get a nourishing meal prepared by Gavin Beretvas who has been cooking for us for several years, assisted this year by Noah Reyes, who has grown up among us!

**Spirit Rock Teacher David Richo - Mar 10 from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

Do you feel dissatisfied because you long for a life you do not have? Are you beset by longings for things you cannot have? Are you unable to appreciate what is because of your longing for what can be? If so, please consider attending our seminar with David Richo, a nationally renown author and speaker whose work has brought comfort and calm to many people over the years. Renowned author, spiritual teacher and counselor David Richowill return to MDUUC on February 10 to talk about the subject of one of his recent books. Here is a description from The Five Longings: If you’ve ever had a vague sense that something’s missing from your life, congratulations: That longing for something better is a sign of being fully human, fully alive. But what’s even more wonderful, according to Dave Richo, is that when you identify and carefully examine the things you long for—like love, meaning, freedom, happiness, and growth—you not only discover deep truths about yourself, but you also find that the things you long for were never really “missing” at all. He provides enlightening advice and practices for accessing just this kind of profound self-discovery, illustrated by a wealth of examples from depth psychology, religion, and literature. Our longings in fact point to the presence of something transcendent in us, he shows. In seeking something better, we are seeking that which we already are.

David Richo has been a guest presenter at MDUUC and participants have found his deep knowledge of psychology and spirituality enlightening and engaging. Give yourself a gift and attend this important seminar — and share the light by bringing a friend.

Bring a bag lunch. Desserts and beverages will be provided. Register online at: https://mduuc.org/learn/adult-programs

**Save the Date!**

LGBTQ & FRIENDS Social Justice Committee is at it again with “MAKE IT SO SOCIAL” on Sat, March 24, 5-8:30 p.m.

What does it mean to “Make It So 2020”? Lofty goals or would you like to have a way to put them into action? If you answered YES to the latter, then keep those eyeballs reading. LGBTQ & FRIENDS Social Justice Committee is at it again with “MAKE IT SO SOCIAL” on Saturday, March 24 from 5:00 - 8:30 p.m. Mark your calendar and get ready to dance! All you have to do is show up, have some fun with familiar faces and make new friends feel welcome. You’ll have a hearty vegetarian meal for a $10 suggested donation and then we’ll dance to some Eclectic World Dance Music with some Oldies and Motown thrown in for good measure. Percussion instruments for amateurs will be available to get the energy moving on the dance floor. There will be plenty of table room to sit down on the sidelines to eat and chat, but you won’t be able to resist getting pulled onto the dance floor with all the fun energy flying around. You will not want to miss the March 24 dance! It is for ALL ADULTS...gay, straight, in between...heck, who cares! Marena will coordinate a separate, childcare dinner/activities for MDUUC kids only, up to 17 yrs. FYI: You don’t need a partner for this event, but we won’t hold it against you if you have one!!! Now’s your chance to live your values and whoop it up in the process...if not you, who will?!!

See you in March...

Nancy Newhart
Chairperson, LGBTQ & FRIENDS Social Justice Committee & “MAKE IT SO SOCIAL”
HATs OFF . . . . . . THANKS:

★ Elaine Bush for Songleading in our New Years Eve service!

★ To. Jo Gelinas for all her work in the office and her leadership in Evening Song and Vespers.

★ To Kathy Vail and Bob Boster for their generous time and support in organizing the cookie receptions following all three of the Christmas Eve services! And thank you to Michelle Paquette and the many others who baked delicious cookies to share.

★ To Rosemary Kadoch and Suzanne McPhee for all the help with the Beacon and Order of Service

★ To Jean Wilcox for her longterm help with editing

HATs OFF! Honors, Accolades, Thanks! We encourage gratitude and appreciation throughout MDUUC. Send “short and sweet” admissions to thanks@mduuc.org

New Publications Submissions Forms

We have new forms and procedures for submitting information to publications and calendar for events, room reservations, Beacon articles, and announcements for the order of service and weekly email.

Please go to https://www.mduuc.org/instructions-publications-forms for information and instructions on how to submit your stuff.

We also have a new online version of the Beacon that at https://www.mduuc.org/the-beacon, where you will find links to more info, registration pages, more images and all upcoming events.

Have You Noticed?

Facilities Committee Column

Have you noticed:

• A new, 14’ tall light pole has been installed in the central area, next to the steps leading to the upper patio. This is in response to the concern that, as we have more evening activities, people using their cell phone flashlights might not be the best lighting solution at night. We hope this helps!

• That we have covered the new TVs in the Gilmartin Building with simple curtains to deter the possibility of theft.

• That we have been working with the Sanctuary Working Group to plan in more detail the logistics of accepting an immigrant into Sanctuary.

• That the Scaff Building is warm and comfy with the new heaters that were installed last fall (with the Scaff Refurbishing Project).

• That, at the January Building & Grounds (B&G) Work Party, Laural Roaldson gave classes on how to prune fruit trees to a reported 8 people. We will continue this activity at the February 3, 2018, work party, so please join. Bring work gloves and wear clothing fit for working on a hillside. Also, bring any hand pruners and/or loppers you have but mark them with your name so they will be returned to you. And THANK YOU, Laural!

• Shameless Advertising: We need more help at the monthly B&G Work Party, so please consider coming. It’s the first Saturday of each month, 9:00 am-noon. We have inside & outside jobs for everyone, no matter what your skill level is. It’s a great place to meet people and we’d love to see more teens and young adults. Come help, have fun with other good folks like yourselves and help save our church money by volunteering. Thank you for all you do for MDUUC.

Pastoral Visitors Committee is looking for the following items to increase our pastoral visitors library:

1. Small Portable CD Players w/ wo head phones.
2. Head phone for portable CD Players
3. Books (Light, easy novels, self-help, inspirational) on CD’s.

These items are for our visitors to loan to our congregants who might be supported in listening to books. If you have any of these please feel free to contact one of the co-chairs of the committee: Patricia Craven or Carol Fidler-Hasse.

This donation would be greatly appreciated.
HOW TO STAY IN THE LOOP

- Find us on Facebook
  www.facebook.com/mduuc/ and like our page!
- You can also follow Rev. Leslie Takahashi on Twitter
  twitter.com/leslietakahashi @LeslieTakahashi.
- The Friday email can be viewed at www.mduuc.org/news/newsletter/weekly-announcements/

Laurie Lewis & The Right Hands at Devil Mountain Coffee House
February 16 8:00 p.m.

Bluegrass with a Berkeley twist. Laurie Lewis offers a sound all her own, and she’s accompanied by an virtuoso-packed band—the Right Hands.
“… combining elements of bluegrass and pure country to form her own seamless mix.” – Billboard
$25 suggested donation ($5 for children 6-15, under 6 are free) go to mduuc.org for more info and tickets.