

This Week on the Peak



Mission Peak UU - Fremont, CA The Home of Liberal Religion in the Tri-Cities and Beyond! February 7, 2024

Dear Sandra,

We are in the days leading up to Valentine's Day. Since I was five years old in my kindergarten classroom (with all the hearts and cupids hung around the room), I've realized that learning how to express love was one of the most important lessons ever presented.

The tradition at the time was to send out cut-out Valentine's Cards. The first question to be considered was whether I would send cards to classmates...? (which felt like a clear, 'YES', mostly because I wanted to receive them, and reciprocity felt like part of the agreement).

The next question was how to send them. Would I just sign my name or write something personal...? And would I send them to everyone in the class or just some people in class...? I started out early in my elementary career sending them to everyone and just signing my name. But over the years my philosophy and strategy shifted. At some point, I wanted to be part of the 'cool kids' who preferred to associate with only the right kind of people. And part of it was being careful to not take too many chances and put yourself too 'out there' by writing personal comments. If 'others' discovered that you really liked someone that could mean teasing.

Growing up – older elementary, high school, college and beyond – meant progressively sending fewer and fewer cards. Also, it meant being very careful about what I would say in my cards, careful not to 'lead people on' or make promises I couldn't keep.

Now, I miss those cards. I miss the choices – and chances – they asked me to consider about love.

Now, I'm in a new class. A Year to Live class meets at MPUUC where 14 of us accept the hypothetical challenge of imagining we have a very limited time left to live. We ask ourselves how we would like to live? What changes do we want to make about conformity or living with fear? What chances do we want to take?

I check in weekly with a dear friend of mine who, although not in A Year to Live class, has started having courageous conversations with her partner. They acknowledge the insecurities and fears that have historically kept them from saying all of what's in their hearts. So, they've begun making promises to each other to be braver. They call it being 'Shmoes for love.' Being willing to be wrong. Able to apologize. Face fears and insecurities. Being 'Shmoes for love'.



In this spirit, I want you ALL to know, I love you. I send you my love to carry in whatever space you have to hold it. I keep a space in my heart for your love, too. I hope, collectively, we can ALL be 'Shmoes for love.' Bravely share the love we have without fear or failure. And be amazed at what happens as our love grows. And spreads. Expanding our hearts and building compassion in the world.

Rev. Greg Ward

This Sunday's Service:

Service can be attended in-person at Cole Hall or online. See mpuuc.org/zoom each week for how to attend services.



MPUUC's Annual Love Hero Service

Last Year's Love Hero Award went to Sergio Jaime Lopez who, after three long years, had been granted asylum in the United States. His wife and two boys have also just received permission to come to the U.S. This year's Love Hero goes to another refugee from Nicaragua escaping persecution and having to work through the maze of our politicized immigration system as he seeks asylum. We will introduce you to Patrick Hebbert who the MPUUC Board unanimously voted to accompany. He is seeking asylum due to widespread racial and cultural violence and persecution around his sexual orientation.

Rev. Greg Ward will lead the service and assisting will be Paul K. Davis. Erik Alm and Steve Wallcave will be Worship Host and Von Bringhurst and Peak Performers will provide our music.

Whether you are attending services in Cole Hall or remotely, you can donate and/or fulfill your pledge in the 3 ways shown below:

Mail check to

Mission Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation
P.O. Box 545
Fremont, CA 94537-0545
(If you use Bill Pay with your bank, you could use them to mail the check)

Drop envelope with a check in Mission Peak UU mail slot addressed to:
Mission Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation
We will be collecting this once per week.

Pay on line at <https://mpuuc.org/contact-us/donate/> with credit or debit card.
Note we use PayPal for this and they charge us around 3%.

February's Share the Plate for our 2024 Love Hero – Patrick Hebbert

This month's Share the Plate collection is for 2024's Love Hero, Patrick Hebbert, Patrick courageously left his country of Nicaragua to escape prejudice, persecution and violence. His dream, as a gay man to live and love authentically and to speak up about basic human rights, made it unsafe for him to remain in his country. His hope for asylum includes the dream that he and his loved ones will love according to the dictates of their heart, not the dictates of a prejudiced culture or politicized government. You can help him. Make a check payable to MPUUC with 'Asylum' in the memo line. Donations for Patrick's legal pursuit of Asylum will be collected at the February 11th service. MPUUC will receive your contributions mailed to the office at P.O. Box 545 Fremont, CA 94537-0545 until March 3. Please know that your donations to this specific Love Hero collection are not tax deductible.

Write a check to MPUUC with "Asylum" in the memo line and mail to:
Mission Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation
P.O. Box 545, Fremont, CA 94537-0545
(If you use Bill Pay with your bank, you could use them to mail the check)

Drop an envelope with a check (with "Asylum" on the memo line) or cash (with a note stating "Asylum") in our mail slot addressed to: Mission Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Pay online at <https://mpuuc.org/contact-us/donate/> with credit or debit card. Choose "Special" as the donation type. Please state "Asylum" in the message. Note we use PayPal for this, and they charge us around 3%



CIRCLE OF LIFE

Each week, we post the previous Sunday's Joys and Concerns that we were given permission to share. We encourage you to make room in your heart for the hopes and fears of your fellow members. Reach out to celebrate and console those you care about. Here are the [Joys and Concerns](#) for the past 4 weeks. If you would like your joy or concern to appear in the Wheel of

Life, contact the Encouragement Committee at ecteam@mpuuc.org

Midweek Discussion Group

The Minister's Midweek Discussion Group meets on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. This week we will be exploring the most crazy – or courageous – things we have done for Love. What were the risks we took and what response did our efforts have? We welcome all voices who wish to participate in discussion on interesting topics. The link to the conversation can be found if you [Press here](#)

Seeking Someone Handy!

Are you good at fixing things, or figuring out what needs to be done to maintain a building? Due to Graham's imminent departure, the Facilities Chairperson position is open. This is such an important way to help keep Cole Hall up and running smoothly for worship and so many other activities that we hold dear. You DON'T need to do all the work yourself -- a team can help with some tasks, and we or FUMC can call professionals as needed! If you want to learn more or already know you'd like to help out, please contact Beth Schaefer at president@mpuuc.org Thank you for considering this important position!

Asylum Committee Updates

Sergio Jaime, the asylee we have been accompanying the last few years, has told us that his wife and two small boys will be arriving from Nicaragua on March 8, 11:45am, at San

Francisco airport terminal 1. He invites any of us who can to greet them at baggage claim with signs and balloons. A big welcoming party will let the family know they are welcome in this country, despite all the obstacles Sergio faced when he first came here.

The Board voted to accompany a new asylum seeker, Patrick, who will be at this Sunday's Love Hero service.

Message from our Choir Director:

All current and former members and friends of the choir are encouraged to bring any choir music in their possession back to MPUUC this Sunday, 11 Feb, for re-filing. Thank you in advance.



FELLOWSHIP CORNER

We're planting a native plant garden!

Have you noticed how great the garden bed on the west side of Cole Hall is looking? MPUUC families came together last month to sheet mulch what was a barren, weedy plot. It got covered with living compost which will help attract earthworms and other invertebrates that will loosen the soil. It was then covered with a layer of cardboard to block the light to smother any weeds and finally a layer of bark mulch to keep the lower layers moist and looking beautiful. Next up we'll begin planting some natives, starting with a manzanita. Please be in touch with Ariel if you would like to help us, native plant donations warmly welcomed.



Valentine card making party at Abode's Sunrise Village Emergency Shelter

Sunday February 11th from 1-3pm

MPUUC members and friends are invited to join with residents to make valentine cards for those you love. Snacks, supplies and inspiration will be provided. Please let Ariel know if you can come, dre@mpuuc.org

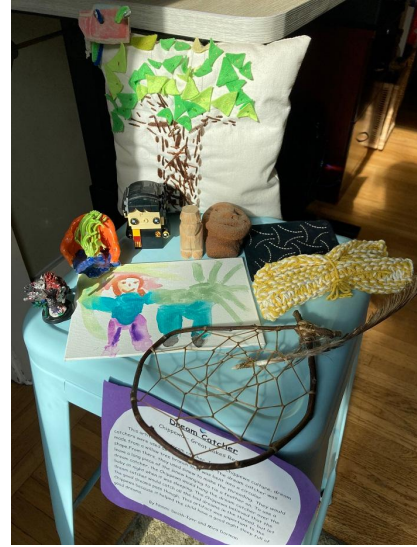


Pot-luck dinner and gallery walk- featuring *your* art!

Saturday, March 23rd 5-8pm in Cole Hall

Let's come together to share a meal and to share our

creative endeavors! Maybe your kiddo made a beautiful painting or put together an amazing report for school. Maybe you have a bit of embroidery or a new song you want to share. Whatever it is, you're welcome to bring it this night and lay it out in the "gallery" where we all can admire it, learn a bit more about each other and nurture the growth we affirm in our congregational mission. Helpers at clean-up are much appreciated. Contact Ariel with questions. All family-friendly art is welcome:)



Fremont Earth Day with our partners at Tri-City Interfaith Council
Saturday April 20th



JUSTICE CORNER

30 Days of Love 2024: Imagining an Interdependent Future

January 15 - February 14, 2024

[See full details](#)

Side With Love has announced 30 Days of Love 2024! The annual month of spiritual nourishment, political grounding, and shared practices of faith and justice, 30 Days of Love will go from Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January 15) through Valentine's Day (February 14).

UUSJ is cosponsoring or offering several events in the spirit of collaboration with [30 Days of Love 2024](#)



Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression Committee (ARO) Recommendations

Virtual Retreat for BIPOC-identified folks:

"You are not Alone: Ancestors and Activities for Resilience in 2024."

**This Saturday February 10th
10am-1pm PST**

Bay Area DRUUMM and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley (UUCB) DRUUMM Members invite folks who identify a BIPOC (black, indigenous, and people of color) to a virtual Zoom retreat this Saturday.

In the midst of life's challenges, this retreat offers a sacred space for connection and healing. We will bring forth and delve into the wisdom of our ancestors as we explore timeless practices that cultivate resilience. Through guided discussions, reflective activities, and shared experiences, you'll find solace in the company of like-minded individuals.

This retreat is a sanctuary for fostering a sense of community, providing support, and discovering the strength that lies within each of us. Come and embrace the power of shared stories, ancestral wisdom, and resilient activities to navigate the uncertainties of 2024 together. You are not alone; join us on this journey of healing and empowerment.

Please RSVP to AdultEd@uucb.org to receive the Zoom Link for February 10.

Partner Voices with Transgender Gender-Variant & Intersex Justice Project

Join SURJ Bay Area's next online Partner Voices event to learn what's going on with the incarceration of Black trans/TGI people after SB 132. TGI Justice Project is a group of Transgender, Gender-Variant and Intersex people – inside and outside of prisons, jails and detention centers – creating a united family in the struggle for survival and freedom. Learn how they forge a culture of resistance and resilience to fight against human rights abuses.

DAILY • 12:00 – 12:30 pm
[Jewish Voice For Peace: Power Half-Hour for Gaza](#)



Many of us are grieving, angry, scared, and confused. Wherever you are, you are needed urgently now to act to interrupt the genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. Join Jewish Voice for Peace in channeling our grief and fear into action. "Power Half-Hour for Gaza" is being held on Zoom daily. Call on Congress to demand they stop fueling violence, get messaging resources for having hard conversations with people in your life, and help counter the media narratives beating the drums of war against Palestinians.

8th Principle Learning

Hold the date!
Wednesday, February 21, 2024
7:00 - 9:30 PM

Soul Work Revisited!

Soul Work: anti-racist theologies in dialogue is one of the most important books in my library! The book, edited by Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley and Nancy Palmer Jones, was published in 2002 by Skinner House Books. It has been more than 20 years and Soul Work is as relevant today as it was at the time of a critical moment in advancing antiracism in Unitarian Universalism. This is UU history that all who care about the 8th Principle need to know.

I am excited that some of the contributing authors to **Soul Work** have accepted the invitation to be with us. More details will be provided soon. Meanwhile, save the date and register at the link below.

Please note that we usually meet on the second Wednesday of the month. In February, the second Wednesday is the 14th, Valentine's Day. We dare not compete with that! Instead, we will meet on the third Wednesday, February 21st. We hope that you can adjust your schedules and that we will see many of you there. -- Paula

Zoom meeting information

When: February 21, 2024
7:00 PM Eastern Time Zone (US and Canada)

Register in advance for this meeting:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcsd-GhrzstHtDGFK9pj8cqdXgMvagi2W8G>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

A co-production of WQED and the Center for Social Solutions (CSS) at the University of Michigan



How are reparations happening in the U.S. if not at the federal level? Through the lens of the 2023 DOC NYC film festival, we talk to the filmmakers and subjects of THE COST OF INHERITANCE to explore the film, the controversy surrounding reparations, the cases setting the groundwork, and why the issue can only be solved together. (Continue reading by pressing [here](#))

Denominational Affairs

General Assembly 2024 June 20-23. GA is a Virtual Program in 2024. For details about scholarships and early bird registration (March 15 deadline)



Click [here](#) for more information

Pacific Western Regional Assembly: Registration Opens January 4! Mark your calendars for April 19-20, 2024!

Elevate your Unitarian Universalist experience by immersing yourself in the 2024 Pacific Western Regional Assembly. This is more about more than geography; it's a community of individuals like you, representing local UU congregations and communities. Your active involvement is not just valued – it's indispensable. Whether you choose to participate virtually or in-person at the inspiring First Universalist Church in Denver, this gathering promises an enriching and enjoyable experience, fostering connections among individuals

and congregations. Friday evening kicks off with a compelling keynote conversation between our UUA president, Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt, and the new President and General Minister of the United Church of Christ, Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson – both remarkable women of color dedicated to justice work. More details can be found [here](#).

Outside Mission Peak

You are invited to a free program on gun violence prevention, sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark and Union City.

Please share this invitation with your friends, neighbors, and communities. *Save the Date* and join us! (Details below)

Sponsors a free event

Beyond Thoughts and Prayers: Responding to Gun Violence

Saturday, March 2, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.

Niles Discovery Church, 36600 Niles Blvd., Fremont, CA

Gun Violence has been an issue of public health and safety in our nation for many years and it worsened during the pandemic. No other developed nation has as many guns, as much gun violence, or as many gun deaths as the U.S.

LWVFNUC will feature speakers from Brady United Against Gun Violence. Brady is one of America's oldest gun violence prevention organizations, and its history of success goes back decades. Learn facts about gun violence, Brady's programs to reduce gun violence, and what you can do to support sensible change to keep our nation safer.



Kath Tsakalakis is a Brady National Board Member, NorCal Regional Council Co-Chair, and co-leads the San Francisco Brady Chapter. She worked for 20 years in strategy consulting, including two years in South Africa where she survived an armed carjacking. Her understanding of guns from three years in the British Army has turned out to be very relevant to life as an American citizen. Kath finds hope in the overwhelming support from a majority of Americans for background checks on gun sales. She supports Brady "because of the mission, strategic focus on practical initiatives and the can-do approach."



Shikha Hamilton is Vice President of Organizing at Brady and has worked on the issue of gun violence since 2000. She's held various roles with Brady, including Chapter Leader, State Chapter President, and member of the Board of Trustees. Shikha is a licensed attorney in California and Michigan. She uses her skills to support efforts to prevent gun violence and to help others advocate for sensible gun laws. She is most proud of her work in California where she lives and continues to work with local chapters to pass laws that have been instrumental in reducing CA gun deaths by 51%.



Toni Shellen is Past President of the Tri-City Alameda County Brady Chapter and served as a member of the CA Brady Executive Committee for ten years. She is a Bay Area native who earned her degree and teaching credential at San Jose State University and went on to teach elementary school in the Fremont Unified School District. She was a founding member of Pax Christi Fremont, and is a member of the Tri-City Interfaith Council and the League of Women Voters FNUC. Toni believes we must work to end gun violence to leave the world a better and more peaceful place for children today and future generations.



Mission Peak Money Matters: Contact Info

Responsibilities for Mission Peak UU's financial process are shared between our Congregational Administrator, Sandra Lange (office@mpuuc.org) and our treasurer, Jay Steele. (treasurer@mpuuc.org).



- Sandra handles most ongoing operational tasks, such as pledge tracking, reimbursement requests/status, contribution statements, stock donations, and the like. If you are submitting a reimbursement request, please send to both office@mpuuc.org and treasurer@mpuuc.org.

- Please send any questions to both the treasurer email (treasurer@mpuuc.org), which is being monitored by Jay Steele and also to Sandra (office@mpuuc.org). This will ensure that any financial questions are answered promptly.
- **Important note** - if you are making a stock donation/pledge, please notify Sandra at office@mpuuc.org and treasurer@mpuuc.org immediately and note that our broker information changed this year.

Making announcements

If you've ever had an announcement you wanted to share about an upcoming MPUUC event or meeting but didn't know how, you're in luck. This [Announcement Sheet](#) will go directly to Sandra, our Administrator (to put in the OOS); or to a Board Member (to announce at a Sunday service. Deadline for posting Sunday announcements is Thursday at 5pm.

ACT NOW!

Call your Elected Officials!

Calls can make a difference! Contact your representatives to alert them to your views!

Assembly Member Alex Lee 408-262-2501
Representative Eric Swalwell 510-247-1388 or go to house.gov
Representative Ro Khanna (202) 225-2631
Senator Alex Padilla (202) 224-3553



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