

# This Week on the Peak

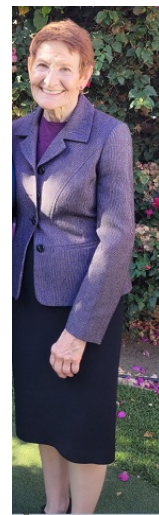


## Mission Peak UU - Fremont, CA The Home of Liberal Religion in the Tri-Cities and Beyond! December 10, 2025

Greetings!

Happy Winter Dear Mission Peak Friends,

The last few days with the change in the weather and the bite of the wind making things feel cold, it seems possible to believe that we are in WINTER. Though what passes for 'winter' in California is mild compared to climates some of us came from earlier in our lives. Winter can make us feel nostalgic. Memories of times with family or friends, perhaps happy events in our childhood. The festive lights that we may decorate with usually brings smiles when driving through a street now filled with colored lights and figures. This can be a time to pause and think of the people we are grateful for being in our lives. We've all just said goodbye (again) to Rev. Jim McKinley, as he ended his Sabbatical time with us. I know we wish him 'safe journey' as he leaves California for wherever life will take him next (and the Poetry Group hopes he'll continue his participation.) We will have services together here at Cole Hall -whether in a seat in Cole Hall or in your Zoom, which allow us to celebrate the beloved community that we *want* to be – and continue to *try* to be.



Still, it is winter, and the weather has turned colder, and I am grateful that MPUUC is participating with the Methodist Congregation (FUMC) to host "Guests" from the Safe Parking Program (SPP). 16 people are participating now in this Fremont City program in which faith communities with property take turns allowing 15 vehicles to be parked on their property overnight, for a month at a time. This is one part of the City of Fremont's Homelessness Response Plan. FUMC offers breakfast and dinner for the SPP Guests in Rooms 7-8 in the Ockerman Building and MPUUC members can participate by offering a meal or attending one of the special events (see below).

**This coming Sunday**, here at **Mission Peak** we are taking up a **SHARE THE PLATE** collection to contribute to the fund for gas cards that will be offered as Christmas gifts to the Guests.

I can tell you from having dinner with SPP Guests Monday night that they are hardworking, funny, generous and still wondering how their lives will evolve from where they are now. If you want to offer a meal, please sign up on the form in the notice below. FUMC has organized special events and everyone at MPUUC is invited to attend, please rsvp to [Secretary@MPUUC.org](mailto:Secretary@MPUUC.org) if you plan to come:

- December 12, Friday: Game Night
- December 19, Friday: Pizza & Ping-pong Night

- December 24, Wednesday: Christmas Eve Dinner (Potluck)\* - this might conflict in time with Mission Peak's Christmas Eve Service
- December 31: New Year's Eve Dinner

There are many ways to be the change we want to see in the world. This winter, put a smile on your face-scientific research says that people have a reaction to a smiling face that causes a positive change in brain function- be a smile in the world and see what change you can create!

See you Sunday.  
Valerie

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## This Sunday's Service:

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



### Christian Nationalism and the Separation of Church and Hate

If Jesus, or any of his disciples, were informed that their ministry to the poor and marginalized in Judea would - in 2000 years - explode into a world-wide movement with billions of followers carrying forth a religion based on their teachings, it's safe to assume they would be surprised at how their 'good news' has been interpreted. They might find it hard to fathom the people that today's Christianity celebrates. But, unquestionably, they would be horrified at the people it condemns. This is a service about the frightening rise of Christian Nationalism.

Rev. Greg Ward and ARO will lead the service and assisting will be Worship Associates Rev. Barbara Meyers and ARO. Erik Alm will be Worship Host. Jo Ann Schriener, Knuti VanHoven, David Johnson and Sharon Davis 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%.

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**SUPPORT the Safe Parking Program this DECEMBER**

The MPUUC has joined with our host church, the First United Methodist Church (FUMC), which is a sponsoring site for the City of Fremont's Safe Parking Program. FUMC hosts the Safe Parking Program Guests for the month of December 2025. We've offered to help with "Hospitality" which means providing morning breakfast or dinner in the evening. Additionally, we will designate the Sunday Service Collection on December 14 as a Share the Plate with FUMC for purchase of Gas gift cards for the Guests.

MPUUC "Hospitality" Volunteers provide either breakfast or dinner, which is served in Ockerman Rooms 7-8, daily until January 1. There are other FUMC Volunteers who will be present at the same time and will handle the Check-in/ Check-Out process for the Guests. Please sign-up SOON using this [linked form](#) for any date you are available to provide a Hospitality meal service. **For questions and more information**, please email Valerie Stewart at [Secretary@mpuuc.org](mailto:Secretary@mpuuc.org)

**Morning** Volunteers 6:45AM (SPP Check-Out Time: 7 to 8 AM)

Need Hospitality volunteers – Dec. 15,17,18, 20, 22,23,24,25,26,27, 29, 30, 31

**Evening** Volunteers (SPP Check-In Time: 6:00 to 7:30 PM)

**Dinner is served at 6:30 PM, come early to set-up.**

Need Hospitality Volunteers -Dec. 13,15, 17, 21, 22, 26, 28, 29

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## November Share the Plate - Guest at Your Table

Guest at Your Table (GAYT) is the UU Service Committee's annual intergenerational program to raise support for and awareness about key human rights issues. Since UUSC works in more than 20 countries, with over 50 grassroots partners, there are thousands of individuals involved in and who benefit from the work that our members make possible. The program is an opportunity to celebrate grassroots partnership, support human rights, and learn about just four of these individuals—the "guests" in Guest at Your Table.



We will be collecting until December 28.

Write a check to MPUUC with "GAYT" 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 "GAYT" on the memo line) or cash (with a note stating "GAYT") 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 "GAYT" in the message. Note we use PayPal for this, and they charge us around 3%

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Dear Mission Peak Congregation,

Here is the link to the Ministerial Search Profile that has been submitted to the UUA so candidate ministers can learn about MPUUC, its members and its activities. This is offered for your information, NOT for editing. If you have a comment that you think might be useful for the Search Team to consider when interviewing potential ministers next year, you may send it to: [search@mpuuc.org](mailto:search@mpuuc.org)

**Otherwise, we ask your respect in remembering that this has already been submitted and would be very difficult to alter.**

Thank you for your interest in the search process.

Best,  
Beth Schaefer  
Chair, Search Team

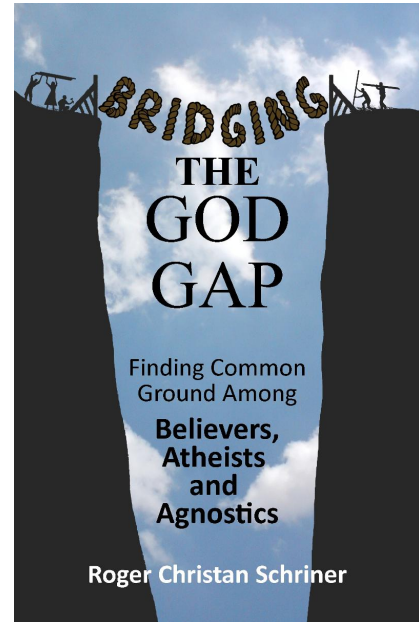
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### A Reminder and Request from Rev. Jim:

**Holiday Season Book Signing:** On December 14 our Minister Emeritus, Dr. Chris Schriner, will sign copies of his books after the service. Do you have family members or friends who are interested in spiritual exploration, theology, philosophy, or ways of reducing stress? They might appreciate a gift of one of these books by Chris.

***Bridging the God Gap: Finding Common Ground Among Believers, Atheists and Agnostics*** shows how to have honest and respectful conversations with those who disagree with us about religion.

"Chris Schriner's *Bridging the God Gap* is well-written, insightful, and chock-full of inspiring, practical wisdom. Getting long-time theological rivals to respect each other as kindred spirits just got a whole lot easier. This book deserves a wide readership. Bravo, Chris!" - Michael Dowd, author of *Thank God for Evolution*



***Your Living Mind: The Mystery of Consciousness and Why It Matters to You.*** Many scholars believe that we can never understand how conscious experiences could occur within the brain. This book wrestles with the remarkable issues associated with this conundrum.

***Feel Better Now: 30 Ways to Handle Frustration in 3 Minutes or Less,*** is a manual for coping with stress and emotional tension, with an approach inspired by Buddhist psychology.

***Do Think Twice: Provocative Reflections on Age-Old Questions*** is for people who enjoy reflecting on the big issues that philosophers, visionaries, and college sophomores find fascinating -- such as moral relativism, the mystery of consciousness, free will, accepting mortality, and the mismatch between human nature and the modern world.

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When eating a fruit,  
think of the person  
who planted the tree.

Vietnamese Proverb







## CIRCLE OF LIFE

YOU ARE ALL INVITED to celebrate and console those in the MP family who need it. Each week you can find those people right here at your fingertips if you click on the [link](#). Let's increase our caring connections with each other with calls when appropriate, cards, emails, offers of help, etc. When you have Joys and Concerns for this Circle of Life, contact the

Encouragement Committee at [ecteam@mpuuc.org](mailto:ecteam@mpuuc.org). Or ask one of us: Greg, Barbara, Sharon, Jo Ann S, Don, Lucienne, Julie

## Midweek Discussion Group

The Minister's Midweek Discussion Group meets on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. The Midweek Discussion Group meets online and welcomes all voices who wish to participate in discussion on interesting topics. The link to the conversation can be found if you [Press here](#)

Dear Friends,

Here is the latest - and probably the last - for the blog on the Ireland Sabbatical Journey. I really would like to post at least a couple more pieces on Irish history and culture to provide context, however, my sabbatical is at an end and it is back to work. I will continue to ruminate and research what I learned from visiting EPIC, MOLI, National Museum, the Unitarian Church of Dublin, Trinity College, Oscar Wilde Museum, etc. I will say a little more on these things in upcoming sermons. For now, I want to thank all of you who have allowed me to take such a trip and share with you all inspirations I came upon along the way.



As always, feel free to ask questions, offer comments or share with others.

### Rev. Greg's Ireland Blog

**Day 1** – SFO ↔ Dublin ↔ Bushmills, No. Ireland ()

**Day 2** – Bushmills, No. Ireland ↔ Sligo (Giant's Causeway, Bushmills Distillery)

**Day 3** – Sligo ↔ Kilrush (Carrowmore Megalithic Cemetery)

**Day 4** – Kilrush ↔ Kenmare (Cliffs of Moher, Poul nabrone, Grange Stone Circle, Kenmare Stone Circle)

**Day 5** – Kenmare ↔ Cork (Dingle, Tralee, Uragh Stone Circle, Drombeg Stone Circle)

**Day 6** – Cork ↔ Kilkenny (Castlenalacht, Blarney Castle, Rock of Cashel)

**Day 7** – Kilkenny ↔ Navan (Brownshill Portal Tomb, Athgreany Stone Circle, Aughnacliffe Portal Tomb)

**Day 8** – Navan ↔ Dublin (Brú na Bóinne)

You may remember that last year, Sustainable Style collected our recycled clothing. Starting Sunday, November 30th, they will again sweep in and help you make the most of these resources. We will be bringing clothing recycling bins for you and your family to donate your collected garments to. Every year, only 13% of clothing is donated or recycled to maximize their environmental and socioeconomic value, while the others account for millions of tons of waste. Sustainable Style encourages the reuse of these precious resources, as we will directly provide all your donations to local second-hand shops to improve the longevity of these materials and help more Fremont locals afford this necessity.



Simply bring your old clothing to Mission Peak UU, and we can work together to improve our Fremont community and global environment!

\*Sustainable Style is a youth-led environmental-awareness 501(c)3 nonprofit organization based in the Bay Area. For more details, visit [stylesustainably.com](http://stylesustainably.com), as we will directly provide all your donations to local second-hand shops to improve the longevity of these materials and help more Fremont locals afford this necessity.

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## ARO Displays Banned Books at Fremont Library

Your ARO (Anti-Racism Anti- Oppression) Committee is making another statement in Fremont. A large wall display showing a variety of children's books that are banned somewhere in the U.S. will go up on December 1 for a month in the Children's Section of the main library. Check it out! As the wall display indicates, none of these books is banned here. Directions for borrowing these books is included. Don Ramie has helped create eye-catching artwork with the ARO team, led by Kathi Bayne and Rev. Barbara Meyers. Visit the display and tell your friends!

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## FELLOWSHIP CORNER

## JUSTICE CORNER

### [Unitarian Universalist Service Committee \(UUSC\):](#)

### [UUSC Invites UU's to Support our Partner-led Delegation to COP30](#)



This November, the 30th UN Climate Change Conference will be held in Belém, Brazil. Also known as COP 30, the convening offers member countries and attendees the opportunity to discuss and negotiate action on climate change. Grassroots leaders can share their firsthand experience and advocate for sustainable solutions. UUSC is supporting eight of our partners in attending COP 30. [Champion their efforts by showing your support on social media by clicking here.](#)

[Read more about the conference here.](#)

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### [UUSC Blog: Diligent Hope: From the Pacific Islands to New York](#)

"We are not drowning, we are fighting!" proclaim the grassroots leaders of the Pacific Islands. At September's Pacific Rising conference in Fiji, UUSC partners from across the

region reconnected for the fourth convening. They are united by their experience confronting the impacts of climate change, and they gather to exchange bold, local solutions to address the crisis. I witnessed firsthand their shared fears, unique challenges, rigorous care, and unwavering ambition.

[Read the full post here](#).

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### [Join UUSC's Resistance Network](#)

UUSC's rapid response hub mobilizes people of faith and conscience to defend freedoms and protect communities facing injustice. Whether resisting civil society crackdowns, defending trans and non-binary communities, supporting people in migration, or countering climate regression, our network acts with urgency and solidarity.

[Click here to learn more and join the network](#)

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### [Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression Committee \(ARO\) Recommendations](#)



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#### [Thursday, December 4 • 7:00 – 9:00 pm](#) [Know Your Rights Workshop](#) (IN PERSON)

Friends of La Peña Immigrant Rights Committee and East Bay Sanctuary Covenant invite you to a free community training that will cover how ICE operates and collects information and what to do during an ICE encounter. It will prepare advocates and allies to give urgently needed "Know Your Rights" information to community members. RSVP required.

Location: La Peña Cultural Center, 3105 Shattuck Ave, Berkeley

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#### [Friday, December 12 • 12:00 – 1:00 pm](#) [SURJ Bay Area Action Hour](#) (VIRTUAL)

Want to take tangible steps to end racial injustice and white supremacy? Want to make your voice heard in the current political climate? Join a SURJ Action Hour! This is one way to truly *Show Up for Racial Justice* through collective action. We meet over Zoom to take concrete steps together: calling elected officials, signing petitions, sending emails, etc. Closed captioning will be available in the main room of Action Hour calls. We'd love to have you!

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### **SAVE THE DATES!**

#### [Thursdays, January 29, February 12, and February 26 • 6:00 – 9:30 pm](#) [SURJ Bay Area Winter 2026 Study & Action](#) (VIRTUAL & IN PERSON)

Join this three-session Study & Action curriculum designed to get to the core of what we need to know about systemic racism so we can respond to the current moment with integrity. We'll examine how white supremacy shows up in our daily lives and ground

ourselves in the long tradition of anti-racist practice. Between sessions, we'll commit to take action together with one of the two SURJ campaigns—Palestine Solidarity Campaign and the Invest in Community Campaign that's working toward reimagining public safety. The 1st and 2nd meetings will be held on Zoom. The 3rd meeting will be held in-person in Oakland, CA, with a hybrid Zoom option for those who cannot make it. Free and registration is now open.

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## 8th Principle Learning

**US Airstrikes in the Caribbean and Implications for Domestic Militarization in U.S. Cities**



Brett Heinz, Global Policy Coordinator for Economic and Climate Justice, American Friends Service Committee (the Quakers), will speak to us about U.S. airstrikes in the Caribbean, the broader history of efforts to merge the War on Drugs with the War on Terror, and implications we need to be aware of for the Trump administration's domestic militarization and threats to use the Insurrection Act to target U.S. cities militarily.

**Policy Talk with Brett Heinz, American Friends Service Committee**

**This Event Dovetails with our Monthly No Frills Action Hour: Constitutional Law, Not Martial Law:**  
<https://bit.ly/ActHour-November>



Thursday, November 20  
8:00 p.m. ET • 7:00 p.m. CT •  
6:00 p.m. MT • 5:00 p.m. PT  
RSVP: <https://bit.ly/Airstrikes-Militarization>



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## DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

[Click here](#)



**UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

JUNE 14 – 21, 2026

MEET THE MOMENT: TOGETHER EVERYWHERE

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## 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 12pm.**



# 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](https://www.house.gov)

Representative Ro Khanna (202) 225-2631

Senator Alex Padilla (202) 224-3553



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