

This Week on the Peak



Mission Peak UU - Fremont, CA The Home of Liberal Religion in the Tri-Cities and Beyond! January 21, 2026

Greetings!

This past holiday weekend felt life-saving for me. So before I get too far into my message here, let me say, 'Thank you.'

After the killing of Renee Good – and then listening to politicians offer jaw dropping assertions contradicting video evidence – I felt small bits of hope chipping away from my countenance. It continued as I read historical analysis comparing the methodical buildup of ICE to the recruitment strategies of the Third Reich. As a nation, we are now disavowing our NATO agreements which underlie the international stability we've enjoyed since World War II. And we are now allowed to take over sovereign nations.



I'm scared.

I shared on Sunday that Minnesota organizers – and the UUA – put out a call to UU clergy to go to Minneapolis to support citizens terrorized by federal occupation by ICE. I really wanted to go so I could feel resistance around me. But the conversation we had after the service and the Day of Service we had the following day helped shift my thinking. And restore my hope.

During the service we commissioned a team of people to go down to the Irvington Farmer's Market and share fliers inviting the people of Fremont to join us in our MLK Day of service. We had over 150 people attend the Monday event where participants got to talk to a cadre of community agencies and leaders. Care kits were made and personally delivered addressing educational, physical, financial and relational poverty issues. There were three City Council members who participated.

In Sunday's Discussion during the service, we talked about the different ways MPUUC could participate in creative resistance. We challenged people to imagine ways MPUUC could be a hub of positive life-giving strategies that would provide people the opportunities to provide – and receive – essential social and spiritual support. [**HERE ARE SOME NOTES**](#) of what was shared in those discussions.

What the discussion and day of service provided for me was a deeply needed reassurance that we choose to be a community that holds each other – and the people of Fremont – in care. We would like to be a hub of opportunities that offer education, solace, emotional and spiritual support, resources, trainings and hope.

I realized that I didn't need to go all the way to MN to care for those on the front lines. We are all on the front lines. In a world where terror and disorientation are the tools of governance, acts of hope and love are tools of rebellion. When people are so readily dehumanized and targeted because of their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religious views or political affiliation, believing in one another's inherent worth is revolutionary. When leaders become self-serving, corrupt and unreliable, than community and loving communication becomes an act of resistance.

I stayed here to be with you in this on-going act of creative resistance because it's what gives me hope. So, thank you.

Rev. Greg Ward

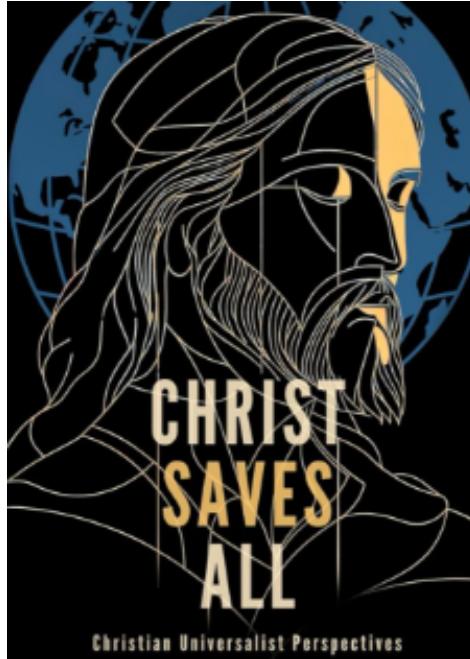
This Sunday's Service:

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

How Jesus and the Universalists Got It Right

For a long time, Unitarians and Universalists stuck with Christianity, trying to improve its bad theology by reforming it from within. Then many of them just gave up the effort and stopped calling themselves Christians. Now here we are in 2025, having voted last year to put "Love at the Center" of our UU self-understanding. To some, that sounds a lot like the central message preached and lived by Jesus. Meanwhile many progressive Christians are moving in the same direction. Have we come full circle? Where is it all going?

Rev. Jay Atkinson will lead the service and assisting will be Worship Associate Rev. Barbara Meyers.. Melissa Holmes will be Worship Host. Jo Ann Schriner, Knuti VanHoven 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.



Volunteer!
Protect Our Democracy!
Have Fun!

MPUUC has collaborated with the **League of Women Voters** of Fremont, Newark and Union City and the **Youth Voter Movement** to register over **13,500 future voters** from our local high schools, since 2018. We hope you will join as a volunteer this year!

Adult volunteers collaborate with energetic student leaders to make VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVES a success for all high school juniors and seniors. There are tasks for all: greeting students, distributing/ collecting materials, answering questions, proofing/sorting/counting forms, handing out treats, etc. We provide the logistical info, supplies, snacks, and camaraderie. Just bring a democracy-for-all spirit (maybe a friend) and enjoy the multi-generational impact.

There are morning and afternoon shifts (approx. 0800-12:00 and 11:45-3:30)

[Event Dates, High Schools, Cities](#)

Jan 23, Fri Mission, Fremont

Jan 26, Mon Washington, Fremont

Feb 02, Mon Irvington, Fremont

Feb 04, Wed Conley, Hayward

Feb 10, Tue New Haven Acady, Union City

Feb 18, Wed Bridgepoint, Newark

Feb 23, Mon American, Fremont

Feb 27, Fri Newark, Newark

Mar 12, Thur Logan, Union City

PLEASE USE THIS LINK TO SIGN-UP ON OUR VOLUNTEER FORM:

<http://bit.ly/4q6aoGp>

[Click here for flyer](#)

In the end, we will
remember not
the words of our
enemies, but
the silence of
our friends.

Martin Luther King Jr



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. 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](#) [Press here](#)

FELLOWSHIP CORNER

Saturday Jan 24th 6-8pm Potluck, game night and scrapbook event

Bring a tasty dish to share, a favorite game and/or your keepsake notes/cards/photos from 2025 and bind them into a little book to take home. All scrapbook supplies provided, feel free to bring any art you want for the cover and invite a friend!

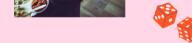
RSVP required by end of day Fri 1/23 use [this link](#)

MPUUC invites you to:

Potluck / Game night / Scrapbooking



Saturday Jan 24th
from 6-8pm



Bring a tasty dish to share, a game you like to play and/or some special items from the last year you'd like help getting bound together in a keepsake book.
Cole Hall 2950 Washington Blvd.



RSVP REQUIRED BY FEB 1/23.
USE THE QR CODE OR
EMAIL ARIEL DRE@MPUUC.ORG

GET IN TOUCH WITH US!
2950 Washington Blvd
www.mpuuc.org
dre@mpuuc.org



JUSTICE CORNER

Reparations

On **Sunday, January 25, 2:00 p.m. at the Oakland Asian Cultural Center**, there will be a free screening of the award-winning 30 minute film "Reparations".

Here's the trailer: <https://www.newday.com/films/reparations> The film does a powerful job making the case for reparations, and why non-Black groups like the AAPI community need to get behind it as allies.

Here's the announcement for the Sunday, 2:00 p.m. [January 25th Reparations screening at the Oakland Asian Cultural Center](#), followed by a panel with Pastor Mike McBride (who is among the leaders of the [ARRT coalition](#)), the filmmaker Jon Osaki, and me. The event is free.



UUSC: Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Today, our thoughts are with the people of Venezuela who are facing sudden instability, uncertainty, and violence because of the recent actions of the Trump administration.

UUSC is deeply concerned by our government's increasing aggression and foreign interference. We join with the UUA in condemning U.S. military strikes against Venezuela.

We are also reminded that our partners around the world serve as a counterpoint to abuses of power by building alternative systems and communities of care in the wake of increasing militarism.

UUSC urges our elected leaders to follow their example by pursuing peace and upholding human rights and international law.

UUSJ Annual Faith in Democracy Series, 202

In the United States, most of us value resolving disputes without violence, political or otherwise, unlike the type of violent expression we experienced during the January 6th riots and insurrection of 2021.

This week, on **Tuesday, January 6**, our friends at Franciscan Action Network (FAN) are hosting the annual 'Faith in Democracy' series to help us remember that fact and move forward to restore a properly functioning and fully representative democracy. This year, they have organized two events around themes of New Vision and Facing Challenges:

- An Interfaith Concert (in-person or online via YouTube)
- A Policy Panel (virtual only)

UUSJ is a proud co-sponsor, and we, as Unitarian Universalists, are invited to join — be sure to review the details below.

Please join us for a moving interfaith musical expression of solidarity, followed by a stimulating conversation about how people of faith can stand up for democracy in 2026 as the United States approaches critical midterm elections.

- All of us at Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice

Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression Committee (ARO) Recommendations



Wednesday, January 14 • 5:00 – 6:00 pm [SURJ Action Hour \(VIRTUAL\)](#)

Join **SURJ National** to take action together over Zoom and show up against Trump's illegal, immoral agenda. Each Action Hour will have a training portion so you'll have everything you need to plug in and make an impact—like calling and writing representatives and making public comments on government websites. Newcomers to SURJ will get an orientation in a Welcome Breakout. Can't make this one? These Action Hours occur every other Wednesday—check the 2026 schedule [here](#).

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

8th Principle Learning

8th Principle UU Learning Community

Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice

As we hold the people of Venezuela in our hearts and prayers, we offer this resource, excerpted here, to congregations. Please consider sharing it widely in your communities.

"Caracas, January 3rd

There is something simple
which power forgets
and clouds of smoke
and the roar of rotor blades
cannot conceal.

There are people there.
Wherever “there” is
on the frontlines
of every empire’s effort
to manifest dominion.

Just. People.

Running on the sidewalk,
panicked at the borders.
cans of food and children’s toys
rattling even now in the trunk of a car that,
for today (meu deus), still starts..."

<https://www.uua.org/.../ingoodfaith/solidarity-venezuelans>
#Venezuela #Solidarity #UnitarianUniversalism #Peacemaking

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

[Click here](#)



Board Briefs

The Board met on January 13, 2026. Trustee At Large Michelle Wallace was absent due to health matters. The next Board Meeting is scheduled February 10th at 7:00 pm. All are welcome to attend. Meetings are by Zoom. Contact Secretary@MPUUC.org for the link.

1. The Board affirmed an earlier electronic vote to approve Jennifer Culp to be the Canvass Co-Chair with Chair DeAnna Alm. The Canvass Committee will be working with the Treasurer who will draw up an estimated budget for the coming year. The estimate at this time is that MPUUC will need to increase pledges by 15% over this year.
2. Rev. Greg will be holding a “Worship Summit” on January 24 with all those in the congregation who participate in creating Sunday Services. The goal is to establish lines of responsibilities and re-distribute tasks in anticipation of his retirement and a new minister onboarding with MPUUC.
3. The Sunday Service on January 25 will be conducted by Guest Minister, Rev. Jay Atkinson.
4. The Search Team reported that as of the meeting date five individuals have submitted applications, representing a variety of ages, cultures and ministerial experience from 0-12 years. The closing date is February 2. When all applications are received the Search Team will begin to schedule Zoom meetings with the applicants. They are currently consulting with various sources to develop questions and role-playing in practice interviews. The Team wants to base their assessment on the quality of what the candidate can bring to MPUUC, not merely compare one candidate to another.
5. The Board reviewed the existing Board Policies as required by the Bylaws, a new Sec. 19 was approved to describe the “Rites of Passage” services that MPUUC members are entitled to, other minor corrections were approved. The updated version of the Policies will be uploaded to the website within the month.
6. We are still exploring the options to install a ramp on the cancel in Cole Hall to make the raised platform more accessible. Any design and installation must be approved by FUMC. Jay Steele created an excellent presentation and Valerie Stewart will discuss it with the FUMC Board.
7. The MLK Day of Service project planned by MGCB Director Ariel Smith-Iyer was approved to accept donations to help cover costs. Everyone expressed their appreciation for the excellent effort by Ariel in organizing the project, creating a “public-facing” project to involve MPUUC with the larger community.



8. MPUUC is undergoing the annual UUA Certification process which must be completed by February 2, with reports to the UUA. Our Office Administrator Sandra Lange, President Jay Steele and Membership Committee with coordinate to complete the report.

For complete board minutes or other board info go to the Members only section of our web site at: mpuuc.org/about-us/members-only . For more details about meetings or questions email president@mpuuc.org

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
Representative Ro Khanna (202) 225-2631
Senator Alex Padilla (202) 224-3553



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