



# December



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## Summary of Sunday Services 10:30 AM

### **December 3: Holiday Choir Concert: The Spirit of the Season**

Lily Popova, Abraham Peraza and Rev. Susan Manker

Join us as we open the holiday season with songs, music, and reflections on the December worship theme of light. Lily Popova will direct the choir and delight us with special music. Rev. Manker will share a few words with us, and Abraham Peraza will be worship associate.

### **December 10: The Blessing of Birth**

Amy Randall and Rev. Susan Manker

Each birth is a blessing. At this time of year we celebrate the birth of a baby named Jesus and what that means to Unitarian Universalists. This multigenerational service explores the Nativity story and its universal message.

### **December 17: Mything the Holidays**

Rev. Susan Manker

Worship Associate: April Chokshi

Winter comes with fires to chase away the cold, colored lights to brighten the long nights, and traditions handed down through generations to connect us, whether we want them to or not, to our past and an ancient hope. How much of the healing power of the holidays do we allow to touch us, or are there only days of stress and regret? We'll look again at how the myths of these days can reshape our lives and bring us joy, if we let them. The choir will sing.

### **December 24: 10:30 AM - Peace and Joy be to You!**

Rev. Susan Manker and Rev. Maggie Yenoki

Before you rush off to finish shopping or wrapping gifts this last day before Christmas, take a moment to pause and remember what is holy about this time. Let go what is unfinished. Be at peace with what is. We shall uplift the joy of the holidays this Christmas Eve morning.

# December



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## Summary of Sunday Services (Continued)

**December 24: 7:00 PM - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

Rev. Susan Manker, Lily Popova and Abraham Peraza

Let's celebrate this special night with carols sung in candlelight, children snuggled close and jingle bells. Rev. Susan will tell a story she wrote, and there will be special music to lift your spirits, even if they don't need it. We'll follow this hour-long, multi-generational service with refreshments, so BRING GOODIES if you can manage it (but don't bother if you're stressed - just gather everyone up and join us!) Merry Christmas!

**December 31: Painting With Words**

Worship Associate: Jeanne Coats

Poetry is art using words to evoke images and emotions. Everyone who wishes, bring a poem to share.

### Rev. Susan's Message



Happy Holidays, Everyone! The worship theme for December is, appropriately, LIGHT, since this is the season of light in the darkness. Last year I got a Christmas tree pretty early, on December 10, because I love the soft, twinkling lights in the dark living room. They trigger my earliest memories of scooching under the tree with my brothers and sister in our home in Riverside, being so very small and able to crawl under and look up at those mysterious lights, surrounded by the awesome scent of pine.

Presents were important, too, I guess. But more than anything, that mystery of the tree and its lights in the darkness are embedded in me. So I still love to recreate it, as I can, for myself and for my family, every year, in my own attempts to touch the light and the mystery of this season.

We all have our own memories of light in the darkness. For some it is the Hanukkah lights on the menorah, and the giving of one gift each day. For some it is the solstice bonfire on December 21, standing with others as the sun sets and the fires are lit once again. We light candles on Kwanzaa as well, and Diwali (though a little earlier), and St. Lucia. I'm sure I'm missing some. But what we have in common is the darkening of the earth as winter rolls in, and the holy experience of lighting candles, or fires, or plugging in those Christmas lights in the mysterious night.

What makes this lighting of candles in the night a holy experience? I think that comes from each of us in different ways. Some don't have good memories of Christmas, or Hanukkah, or Kwanzaa, or Solstice. Some of us don't want to be reminded of what were disappointments or times of loss.

Each of us, though, can find a sacred moment in this winter season, this holiday season, whether it ties you to your past or not. If you have no good memories, now is the time to create one. What would be a beautiful moment for you? Helping pack holiday food boxes (that was another good memory from my high school years)? Singing carols with someone? Hiking in the woods on a moonlit night in snow (December 3 is the full moon)? Finding a hotel that has a great big fireplace and hunkering down to ponder in firelight (we used to love to go up to the El Tovar Hotel at the Grand Canyon for that).

Be creative. The metaphor of light in the darkness applies not just literally, but metaphorically. Apply it to yourself. Is there need for enlightenment in your life or in the life of someone close to you? An interesting thought to ponder as you light your holy candles in the night.

Happy Holidays to you all. May your hearts be filled with peace and love.

Love,  
Rev. Susan

PS Join us for Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 7 pm for candles in the night.

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**Intern's Inklings**  
**Light**

I've been adjusting to a new desk lamp this week. After relying on the same simple, trustworthy light for many years, it suddenly stopped working. POOF. Getting used to how this new contraption works is a challenge that is shining a light on some things I've been able to learn about myself too. The broken one was simple. It used only one specific small incandescent bulb that

actually made the shade quite hot if I left it burning for any length of time. I liked the light it cast and I knew right where that trusty switch was... even on the darkest of nights. This new lamp is an LED with two settings. After fumbling with the cord to find the switch, I try to remember to flip the rocker downward to bring a gentle light that is genuine, warm, and yellowish in color. If I mistakenly push the switch upward it shocks my eyes with the cold, harsh, bluish glare of its phony and artificial light.

Sometimes it takes the loss of a favorite old lamp to open our options and enhance our experiences. Choosing to bask in the glow that warmly invites, rather than enduring the discomfort of a harsh, intrusive beam, is now as easy as the flick of a switch for me when I'm sitting at my desk. I have new

evidence that the type of light we have matters. Is the light that we allow to shine into the space that surrounds us beneficial or harsh? Is the individuated light that we each shine out into the world a light that is warm and welcoming?

When we meet together as a Congregation, whether on Sunday morning or at another event during the week, the blending of our lights creates a uniquely beautiful beam. The warm gentle light of our community is especially inviting and comforting to those who visit during our Sunday Service. Its glow offers guidance and illumination to all, and a safe harbor to any who might be looking for a new way to light their lamp. Your light is beautiful. Keep shining it.

Blessings,  
Maggie Yenoki, Intern Minister

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**SPIRIT LEVEL GRANT**

Call for **MVUUC SHINING STARS** - The Matching Grant for Ministerial Search started Sunday, November 19<sup>th</sup>. We now have \$4,328 from MVUUC Shining Stars!! We are on our way to the \$10,000 goal. Please be sure to mark any contributions for the SPIRIT LEVEL GRANT (SLG). Contributions can be put with the Sunday offering, in the Pledge mail box by the office door, mailed to MVUUC or by the MVUUC website at Stewardship. Remember WHAT YOU GIVE IS WORTH 2X TO MVUUC. Questions contact Barbara Dev [familydev@hotmail.com](mailto:familydev@hotmail.com)

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**President’s Message**

**Board Briefs and Updates — September 2017**

Dear Beloved, BeUUtiful Community,

Did you hear the joke about the new roof? Never mind, it's over your head. Seriously, a new MVUUC roof may be over your head sometime in the near future.

On April 9, we voted to pursue negotiations with CIM regarding their offer to build a church for us or to relocate us. CIM Group, is the corporation that purchased much of the mall and adjacent properties and has offered to build new facilities for us in exchange for some of our land.

Negotiations have begun. On Wednesday, November 15, the Land Use Task Force met with CIM developer, Greg Williams, and three architects. The architects have been working on plans for our campus and presented their first draft. We were all pleasantly surprised with their ideas and their

attention to our needs for a larger sanctuary, a separate social hall, Montessori classrooms, a playground, meeting spaces, RE classrooms, more parking, aesthetics, and beautiful landscaping.

The next step is for the Land Use Task Force to review the architects' proposal, and to review the information that came from our two congregational dreaming sessions in August, and then ask the architects for revisions. The Land Use Task Force will consider every dream and will include all that best serve the needs of the congregation. There will be many, many back and forth conversations with the developer, the architects - and with the congregation. Remember, according to our Constitution, no decisions "to sell, lease, convey, exchange, transfer, or otherwise dispose of or mortgage the real property" of our congregation can be done without a vote of the membership.

Regardless of any decision we may make, the area around our campus will be changing. If we vote for a new facility it means even more change – and change - the unknown - is scary. It can alleviate anxiety if we think of all the positive potential outcomes, even if we don't know exactly what the result will be. For example, we may not know how our campus will look, but we can think about how we will feel - the joy of being in new buildings that meet our needs, with room for all, including those who haven't yet crossed our doorstep. Some of us may be thinking that our current size of 132 members is perfect and are afraid of growth. But I would bet that no one would be willing to bar the door to those who are seeking the very thing that drew us here the first time and keeps us coming back - a liberal, justice-seeking religion and this welcoming, loving congregation of *Many Beliefs; One Community*.

In service,  
*Rita Salama*

P.S. As always, you are invited to ask questions, make suggestions, or express concerns. Please contact me or one of the other members of the Board of Trustees.

### **FUN!draising**

To raise the \$22,800 in our budget under fundraising, the Board and the Finance Committee have reinstated a Fundraising Committee (formerly Ways and Means). The emphasis is on FUN! If you like to have FUN and like to plan, coordinate and organize FUN events, please contact Board President, Rita Salama at 509-630-3385, [salamatoyou@yahoo.com](mailto:salamatoyou@yahoo.com).

### **Important Dates**

- Saturday, December 2, 2:00 PM — Memorial for Greta Fryxell
- Saturday, December 2, 5:00 PM — Holiday/Decorating Party

### **Highlights of the December 2017, Board Meeting**

1. An update of the visioning goals from August 2015 workshop will soon be available to the congregation

- 2. Looking for chairs for the Stewardship Campaign and the Fun!draising Committee
- 3. Active Shooter policy has been created
- 4. Interim Ministry appraisal has been completed
- 5. Due to multiple claims, our insurance policy will be cancelled as of 1/7/18. Cynthia Humes is researching replacement.
- 6. Nick Von Glahn and Dave Darrow will be trained on ADT security system.

**Board of Trustees Gratitude**

Thank you to Laura Mulroy for chairing the Adult RE committee and for a successful kick-off of programs.

Thank you to Catherine Rowlee and Maria Wortham for the stunning Día de Los Muertos altar.

**The Board appreciates all those who share their time and talents at MVUUC.  
If you know of someone who deserves special recognition for their service to our community please contact the Board President, Rita Salama.**

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**RE** flections

Many Unitarian Universalists try to figure out how to celebrate the winter holidays, especially Christmas, with their children. How do we give it the right mix of family tradition, respect, and Unitarian Universalism?

Since each person’s spiritual path is different, there is of course no one way to celebrate the season. However, UU families can find meaningful ways to celebrate the meaning of Christmas if they wish.

Even though Christmas is fundamentally a Christian holiday, celebrating the birth of Jesus, we can embrace his values and teachings, and talk about how this closely aligns with our UU principles. Jesus believed we should help those most in need, and so do we. One way is to create philanthropic traditions with your kids.

In our congregation, we even provide some platforms to do this. The Adopt-a- Family tree is one way. This is a holiday gift giving program through Inland Hope Partners. It is designed to help make the season joyous for families who are struggling just to make ends meet. Having children shop for a gift for another child is one way to really teach them about giving.



Another holiday tradition could be filling up the Guest at Your Table boxes with spare change. After these boxes are filled and turned in, children can cover a coffee can or box with paper, donate change, and take a family vote on a charity that you want to help.

Giving extra food to the Beta Center at holiday time is another way for families to help those who need it

Some families celebrate the winter solstice, which also provides a connection. The celebration of Jesus’s birth was moved to this time to coincide with existing pagan rituals, and celebrating the cycles of the earth fits with UU teachings to honor the environment. Talking about the significance of the solstice is another way to teach children about the winter holidays.

Honoring many traditions and different celebrations while emphasizing our seven principles is a very UU thing to do. But, by consciously celebrating with a Unitarian Universalist perspective you can deepen the season’s meaning for yourself and your children and stop the feeling that we are ‘outsiders’ to the season.

Grab your traditions, and celebrate whole-heartedly!

Happy Holidays!

In Faith,  
Amy Randall  
Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration  
Credentialed Associate

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**MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Hello Everyone,

We are continuing along in our search process for a minister. Thank you to all 72 congregants who participated in the congregational survey. We are analyzing the results which we will use in a few ways. We will base questions to potential ministers off of the information gathered from you. You have responded and you let us know your hopes and needs in a minister. You have also let us know who we are as a group.

This is a big month for us in the process. The unveiling of our packets to potential ministers occurs this month. The packets include information on who we are and what we are looking for, along with what we can pay. The Board approved a compensation package presented by the Negotiation Team.

A reminder to keep your calendar marked for January 7<sup>th</sup> which is the Beyond Categorical Thinking service and workshop. This is designed to help us as a congregation prevent unintended discrimination in the ministerial search.

Thank you for your continued support and letting us be of service,  
The Ministerial Search Committee

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### Update from the Land Use Task Force—October 16, 2017

Members and Friends,

We thank you again for attending the two August sessions of dreaming/visioning about the possibility of a new facility here at Monte Vista UU Congregation. A total of 54 attended those meetings and shared their ideas about a new sanctuary, fellowship hall, kitchen, classrooms, storage, sustainability, growth, technology, etc. Our team compiled all the giant Post-It notes and created the document *Transcription of Topics—Congregational Ingathering—8/13 - 8/20/17*.

If MVUUC decides to move forward on a deal with CIM Group that owns the mall, your ideas will be used to inform planning, and you will be invited again to be part of that effort. Remember, this document is not a blueprint; it is a sharing of ideas from members of all ages. **Be sure to read the newest information about our most recent visit with CIM Staff in the Board President’s Column.**

The last 3 topics—16, 17, 18—were not available at the first meeting on August 13, so they have much less content. We can work on these topics again in the future.

Please click on the following to link to view or download a copy of the *Transcription of Topics* document:

[Land Use Transcription of Topics](#)

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### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



**NICOLE KNIGHTON**

Nicole is a native Californian but has lived in the Northwest and Midwest. She did enjoy living in the other areas of the country but is glad to be back in CA.

Nicole enjoys the creative arts. She enjoys painting, the theatre, and cooking where she worked as a chef and thoroughly enjoyed it until an injury forced her to pursue another career. She will be studying phlebotomy at the beginning of the year.

Nicole was raised Baptist but found she had to move away from a judgmental religion and through her explorations found CUUPS which brought her to MVUUC. Thank you CUUPS for bringing Nicole to our congregation.

Nicole has a wonderful philosophy of life. She loves all people and wants love to be her guide for living.

**SHANA STEVER**



Shana Stever is originally from Corona and says she experienced some mainstream Christian influences while growing up. She describes herself as an atheist looking for a community of people with shared values for herself, for her husband of 7 years, and for her 4 children (all under the age of 6!).

Some of her interests include holiday crafting, all things children-related and homeschooling. She is currently on hiatus from a position as a veterinary technician.

**Welcome, Nicole and Shana**

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**ACCEPTANCE POLICY FOR MVUUC LIBRARY**

We accept books and other media that deepen the understanding of our faith, enhance our search for meaning and provide guidance for our interfaith journey. Works that affirm the sources of our tradition and promote the seven Unitarian Universalist principles are especially welcomed.

Before donating books please contact Delores Burris, [burr88tm@gmail.com](mailto:burr88tm@gmail.com), or Rev. Ellen Livingston, [revellenuu@gmail.com](mailto:revellenuu@gmail.com), so that we may facilitate the acceptance of your gift.

Works that fall outside our guidelines will be made available to the congregation, donated to the Prison Library, Goodwill, or other charitable organizations.

Thank you,  
Library Team

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**News from the Social Justice Coordinating Committee**

**Second Annual Taste of Fair Trade**

Our Taste of Fair Trade was a resounding success last year, so we decided to do it again! *After church on December 10* you will have the opportunity to sample coffee, tea, baked goods, olive oil, and other scrumptious items at this event. Bring your wallets too, as you can stock up on fair trade goods that day, just in time for holiday baking and entertaining.

Remember, Fair Trade is a way of doing business that aims to keep small farmers an active part of the world marketplace, and to empower consumers to make purchases that support their values. Fair Trade is a set of business practices voluntarily adopted by the producers and buyers of agricultural commodities and hand-made crafts that are designed to advance fair economic, social, and environmental goals. **Look for these logos when shopping!**



**Share the Plate, December Offering**

Our second Sunday Share the Plate offering for December will benefit the **Community Meals** program. MVUUC's involvement with this important outreach started in 2010, when Joe Emmert, a trained professional chef whom we were fortunate to have among our membership for many years, responded to a request from the group's coordinator, Chris Hartmire from Pilgrim Place. After the start of the Great Recession in 2008, Chris had a vision for a program that provided hot, quality meals to anyone who was hungry, with no questions asked. He set about making that vision a reality by partnering with congregations throughout the Claremont area. Joe made sure that the meals prepared by MVUUC were of gourmet quality, and recruited a number of other members to help assist in the preparation of each one we served. Today, our congregation is one of seven in the area that continues the tradition, serving hot meals at 3 p.m., three Sundays a month to all comers, at Sumner Elementary School in Claremont. We team up with the Friends Meeting in Claremont to serve every other month, and while many in our congregation have taken part in either the cooking or the serving end of the Community Meals Program, there are probably many new members and visitors to MVUUC who may not even know we're still involved. If you're interested in learning more and possibly helping out, feel free to contact either David Becker, Lyn Shaible, or Jani Monk for more details. Your contributions will support the purchase of the food we serve, and checks should be made to MVUUC with the notation "Community Meals."

**November Offering**

Our second Sunday Share the Plate offering for November went to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, or NAMI. NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. It is an association of hundreds of local affiliates, state organizations and volunteers who work in our community to raise awareness and provide support and education to those in need. Our MVUUC contact person is Harry Ragland. For more information about the National Alliance on Mental Illness or to contribute, see: <https://www.nami.org>. To see what NAMI does locally, check out: <http://namipv.org>

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MVUUC Calendar – December 2017

MVUUC Calendar, Founders' Room, Minister's Office, Patio / Outdoors, Room 1, Room 3, Room 8, Sanctuary, Tentative, Dec 2017 (Pacific Time) Worship

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
					10:30am - Staff	12pm - Private @ 2pm - Celebration of 5pm - MVUUC Holiday
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
8:45am - Freethinkers 10:30am - Holiday 12pm - Ministerial 12pm - RE Council 2pm - African Drum	6:30pm - Circle Singers		10:30am - A Course in 6pm - Personnel 7pm - Finance 7:15pm - Meditation	6pm - Choir Set-up and 6pm - Music and 7:30pm - Choir	10:30am - Staff 6pm - Private @ 7pm - CUUPs Liquid 9pm - Private @	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
8:30am - Men's Group 10:30am - The Blessing 12pm - Fair Trade 12pm - Ministerial 12pm - RE Council 2pm - African Drum		10am - Buuk Group @ 5pm - Evensong Set-Up 7pm - Evensong @	10:30am - A Course in 6:30pm - Board of	6pm - Choir Set-up and 6pm - Facilities 7:30pm - Choir	10:30am - Staff 2:30pm - Knitting	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
8:45am - Freethinkers 10:30am - Mything the 12pm - Ministerial 12pm - Social Justice 2pm - African Drum	6:30pm - Circle Singers		10:30am - A Course in 7:15pm - Meditation/CI	6pm - Choir Set-up and 6pm - Membership 7:30pm - Choir	10:30am - Staff 6pm - Private @ 7pm - CUUPs Liquid 9pm - Private @	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
10:30am - Peace and 12pm - Ministerial 2pm - African Drum 7pm - Christmas Eve	Happy Holidays	5pm - Evensong Set-Up 7pm - Evensong @	10:30am - A Course in	4pm - Social Justice 6pm - Choir Set-up and 7:30pm - Choir	10:30am - Staff	
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
10:30am - Painting 12pm - Ministerial 2pm - African Drum						

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Office Hours: Weekday mornings, 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM  
Telephone: 909-626-0520, Office email: [officeadmin@montevistauu.org](mailto:officeadmin@montevistauu.org)

Rev. Susan Manker (Tuesday, Thursday: 9:00 AM - 12 Noon)  
Bookkeeper: Judy Bixel (Tuesday, Wednesday: 8:00 AM - 12:00 Noon)  
Office Administrator: Tricia French (Monday, Thursday, Friday 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM)  
Facilities Assistant: Joyce Armenta (Tuesday, Friday: 6:30 AM - 11:30 AM)

**Membership**

We encourage all inquiries about becoming part of this wonderful, warm and welcoming community.

For more information, please contact Elizabeth Meehan at 949-290-2615



Send newsletter articles to [officeadmin@montevistauu.org](mailto:officeadmin@montevistauu.org) by the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month.

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