



November

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Summary of Sunday Services

November 5: Celebrating Dia de los Muertos: The Spirit of Life and Love

Rev. Susan Manker, Amy Randall and Abraham Peraza

Bring mementos of loved ones who have died and ofrendas for the altar as we celebrate this annual Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead). With ritual, story and song, we'll honor our dead and remember that life continues within each of us in the spirit of abiding love. This is a multigenerational service, and we are excited to have the children with us for this entire celebration.

November 12: UN Sunday: Disarming Our Planet

Rev. Susan Manker and Jeanine Little

So many issues that plague our world, from climate change to racism, refugees, islamophobia, transgender discrimination, economic inequality, violation of indigenous rights, homophobia, and reproductive injustice, have been perpetuated by armed conflict. This year's UUUN Sunday focuses on exploring how disarmament can contribute to conflict resolution and peace building. We will also start UUSC Guest at Your Table this Sunday.

November 19: The Call for a Deeper Justice

Rev. Susan Manker and UUA General Assembly Attendees

The title of this service is quoted from Leon Spencer, one of the three interim presidents of the Unitarian Universalist Association, in his opening remarks at this year's General Assembly in New Orleans. We will share some of the tensions in our movement which have resulted in this call, and the transformations that are still in progress as we move ourselves toward deeper justice. Some of the twelve people from our congregation who attended GA in June will share their reflections on this momentous gathering.



Summary of Sunday Services (Continued)

November 26: Oh We Give Thanks
Rev. Maggie Yenoki

Walking through our days with a thankful heart is one way that we bring ourselves closer to our best selves and devote our lives to the spiritual practice of embracing and embodying gratitude. When we gather together for our Service on Thanksgiving Sunday we will blend the thankfulness we each carry and create a portion of gratefulness that is big enough to fill us to the top with leftovers to share with the world...

Rev. Susan's Message



In our Worship Associates Retreat last month, we decided to work with monthly themes for the rest of this year. The theme for November is gratitude, which is the first theme in Tom Owen-Towle's book, *Theology Ablaze: Celebrating the 50th Anniversary Year of Unitarian Universalism*. Now some of you know Tom quite well, since he has preached here once a year for many years since his retirement from the San Diego UU Congregation. I know him as a long-time colleague, mentor and friend.

In his book, Tom speaks about the resurgence of gratitude in our worship and spiritual lives. He writes, "Everything true, good and beautiful streams directly from a soul full of thanksgiving." What stems directly from that is compassion, and Tom writes, "We can best say thank you to the Creation by stretching our hands and hearts in compassion." (p. 32)

I was watching one of my favorite shows on TV this week, *Lethal Weapon*, and they made a joke about positive feedback which fits in very well with the theme of gratitude. Yes, those of you who haven't found that show may say, "*Lethal Weapon!* Gads!" or "Ee Gads!" But it is a remake of a fun premise about human interaction, and Damon Wayans' take on things is really funny. So in this one episode, the character for Murtaugh (Wayans) is teasing their police captain about how she always focuses on the negative whenever speaking with him and Riggs. Murtaugh asks (and these are not direct quotes), "Haven't you heard about the positive feedback sandwich? You put your negative comment in between two pieces of positive bread. So you say, 'Hey, Murtaugh, what a great job you did catching that thief, although you shouldn't have thrown him off the roof first, but, hey, you saved us a lot of time getting it done.'"

Comedy works when it touches on the truth, and this positive feedback sandwich is a difficult skill for many human beings to learn. There is an entire newish movement called Appreciative Inquiry which bases how we speak to one another on this focus on the positive, or what we DO like about each other, our jobs, our families, our congregation. Our government. Difficult, but in many ways, a much more effective way to make change.

Gratitude helps us “count our blessings.” There was a lot of truth in that old tradition of counting blessings before going to sleep. For children, it helps shape an outlook on what is going right in lives that can be filled with insecurity and abuses, like bullying. What is going right? And, as Tom points out, gratitude leads to compassion, in the best of scenarios.

If you find yourself focusing on the negative (and that can generate a cycle of fear-based actions as well), stop. Just stop, and say, “What DO I like in this situation? What DO I like about this person?” And then make a positive feedback sandwich, where the thing you don’t like is couched in between two positives, before you share your sandwich with others. Or, in the best case, with that person with whom you are in disagreement. You’ll be amazed!

I hope you have very happy Thanksgivings, with lots of positive feedback sandwiches (like turkey sandwiches) to lift you up with gratitude and fill you with hope.

Love,
Susan



Intern’s Inklings

Gratitude

It seems to me that the darkness of this season is doing a good job of gently influencing our internal clocks as it nudges its way into our lives. Just a few days ago I felt surprised to realize that the sun is setting much earlier and bringing the darkness of the day soon after 6:00 pm. As I write this message to you, the New Moon has arrived to bring an even deeper darkness to the night sky as she sprinkles a bit of moonless magic onto our evenings and sleep time.

The increase in our dark hours signals the arrival of Fall, a time we might feel drawn inward to a more passive season of reflection and restoring. Beginning the season of gratitude after a summer so filled with difficult events and unusual expressions of our earth’s climate gives us a hunger for a time of quiet calm. Embracing the Autumn darkness can be good medicine for our overworked spirits, broken hearts, and weary minds.

The serenity that is missing for so many people we care deeply about highlights our call to care for ourselves and each other in powerful ways. For some who are struggling right now, the call to muster up gratitude is simply asking too much. We are fortunate to have our Community to be held by through the seasons. Let’s all do what we can to be taking good care of our souls, so that we can be the helpers who give gratitude from our abundance, and offer peace to all in need. I am grateful for you!

Blessings,
Rev Maggie Yenoki, Intern Minister



President’s Message

Board Briefs and Updates — September 2017

Dear Beloved, BeUUtiful Community,

I’ve heard that if you want to find out what is important to someone you take a look at their calendar and their bank account. I think that is true of churches as well. What would we find out if we examined MVUUC’s bank accounts and calendar? Well, here’s a look at the budget for this fiscal year.

The requested budget was \$320,169, but based on the pledges, painful cuts had to be made in order to balance the budget without taking money from reserves. The final budget was \$307,148; \$13,021 less than requested. The \$307,148 income side of the budget includes:

- \$127,945 in pledges
- \$22,800 in fundraising (including \$10,000 for the matching grant)
- \$10,000 from a matching grant to fund our Ministerial Search
- \$13,420 from miscellaneous contributions such as the Sunday cash offerings and a legacy donation
- \$129,483 in rental income
- \$3,500 in investment income

But what if our pledges covered our whole budget? Could that even be possible? I've done a comparison with other UU churches in our district. Here are the five churches with 103 to 112 pledges for fiscal year 2015/2016:

Pledges	Pledge Income
112	\$240,000
103	\$218,364
103	\$212,316
103	\$194,526
MVUUC-109	\$108,731

You can see we were the lowest at \$108,731. The next lowest was \$194,526. A whopping difference of \$85,795!

And the five other congregations in our UUA District with memberships of 130 to 140 for fiscal year 2015/2016:

Membership	Pledge income
138	\$194,526
140	\$164,560
128	\$152,941
130	\$176,921
MVUUC-132	\$108,731

Again, we were the lowest at \$108,731. The next lowest was \$152,941. The difference this time is less, \$44,210, but still impressive! In fact, if we pledged at the level of the next lowest congregation we could fund *all* of our original budget request and not have to do any fundraising at all! ($\$13,021 + \$22,800 = \$35,821$)

I have been assured that our congregation is not dramatically different than other congregations in terms of demographics so why the huge difference? It's a very good question that will be addressed in the next Stewardship Campaign. In the meantime, it requires personal reflection on what is important to each of us. When we look at our personal calendars and bank accounts, how important is MVUUC? What would inspire you to be more generous with your time and your treasures? What of your own time and treasures can you share to inspire the generosity of others?

Let us all remember that we are part of a beloved community and be generous in our support. We are *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

In order 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

Important Dates

- Saturday, November 4, 12:00 PM —Memorial for Carol Hayward
- Saturday, December 2, 2:00 PM —Memorial for Greta Fryxell
- Saturday, December 2, 5:00 PM —Holiday/Decorating Party

Highlights of the October 11, 2017, Board Meeting

1. Board voted to reconstitute the Ways and Means Committee albeit with the new name "Fundraising Committee."
2. Board to consider proposal for committees to do fundraising with a split between the general fund and the committee at next Board meeting after research and conversation.
3. Amount received from the Oehler legacy is \$500 instead of the anticipated \$5000.
4. Board members working to complete 12-month Interim Ministry Appraisal.
5. Board voted unanimously to approve Jack Little as the member-at-large on the Negotiating Team joining Cynthia Humes, Board representative, and Rajiv Chokshi, Ministerial Search Committee representative, to draft the Financial Agreement as part of the Ministerial Search Committee Packet. Financial Agreement to be approved by Board by the end of the month.
6. Board tabled voting on changes to the Employment Policies and Practices Handbook until next month's meeting when it will be discussed during executive session after the opportunity for more research.
7. Land Use Task Force is waiting for response from CIM before additional action is planned
8. Board members agreed to set-up committees' promotion table as part of their Sunday responsibilities through June 2018.
9. A Worship Service about the UUA General Assembly was referred back to Rev. Susan and the Worship Committee.

Board of Trustees Gratitude

Thanks to all who participated in the facilities work party on October 7.

Thank you to Amy Randall and Marlene Terrazas for organizing the Camp de Benneville retreat, (about 40 people attended!), and to Kay Pearlman for taking - and sharing - pictures of the weekend.

**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.**



RE flections

When our new fiscal year began on July 1, 2017, I was given new responsibilities. In addition to Children’s Religious Exploration, I am now in charge of Adult Religious Exploration.

With my Adult Committee members of Laura Mulroy Little, and Catherine Rowlee, we got off to October.

On October 3, we showed the movie *13th*. DuVernay explores the history of racial United States, focusing on the fact that are disproportionately filled with African-



Religious Exploration (chair), Jeanine a wonderful start in

“Filmmaker Ava inequality in the the nation's prisons Americans.” All the participants that saw the film thought it was well worth it, and we are considering showing it again.

We also began two classes in October which have been well attended. **The New UU** is offered Sunday afternoons. It is a four-week class that deepens your understanding of Unitarian Universalism by exploring who we are and what we believe.

The other class, **Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life** deepens your awareness of contemporary issues in a five-week class exploring economic inequality and classism. It runs on Tuesday evenings.

Two small group ministries, Finding Heart Chalice Circles, also began last month with facilitators Rita Salama and Maria Wortham. Maggie Yenoki’s group will begin in January. This is a great way to get to know others in the congregation and share what you care about deeply. Rev. Susan Manker is overseeing this program.

A book discussion, more movies, and more classes are on the burner for the new year. If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me. We hope everyone who wants to participate can find something that interests them.

Exploration is a significant part of our adult lives as Unitarian Universalists. By learning, contemplating new perspectives, and working towards a deeper understanding of ourselves, one another, and our world we become part of a greater whole acting for peace and justice.

In Faith,

Amy Randall
Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration
Credentialed Associate

MINISTERIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

Hello fellow MVUUC members,

We are progressing through our timeline of tasks. Our team is doing the finishing touches on the congregational survey. We will be consulting the Ministerial Transition Coach Nancy Edmundson before we present the survey to the congregation. We are hoping to get it out to you by the end of October, and at the latest the beginning of November. We would like at least 60% of the congregation to participate. All the information will help us to find a minister that fits the needs and desires of the congregation. It also helps us to represent our congregation’s identity and direction for our future.

We have submitted the paperwork for the Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop to the UUA Transitions Office. The workshop will be held in December or January. This workshop is designed to help us as a congregation prevent unintended discrimination in the ministerial search. This is for the entire congregation and will include a Sunday worship service.

The Board has selected a negotiating team that will put together the contract for the new minister. The negotiating team consists of Cynthia Humes, Jack Little, and Rajiv Chokshi. Rajiv will be representing the ministerial search committee during the negotiations.

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

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, or Rev. Ellen Livingston, 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



Wheel of the Year

A Pagan Perspective on the Seasons

Musings on Friday, October 13th, 2017

A lot has been written about Friday the Thirteenth, much of it nonsense. There is nothing inherently unlucky about this much maligned day. In fact I consider it very lucky, as my mother was born on October 13th, and this October her 108th birthday happens to fall on a Friday (she lived to be 96). Although, by the time you read this, the date will have long passed; there is enough interesting material about it to warrant another look. (Our next Friday the 13th will not occur until April.)

At any rate, up until the patriarchal revolution, both Fridays and 13s were held in the very highest esteem. Both the day and the number were associated with the Great Goddesses, and therefore, regarded as the sacred essence of luck and good fortune.

Thirteen is certainly the most essentially female number -- the average number of menstrual cycles in a year. The approximate number, too, of annual cycles of the moon. When Chinese women make offerings of moon cakes, there are sure to be 13 on the platter. Thirteen is the number of blood, fertility, and lunar potency. 13 is the lucky number of the Great Goddess.

Representing as it does, the number of revolutions the moon makes around the earth in a year, 13 was the number of regeneration for pre-Columbian Mexicans. In ancient Israel, 13 was a sanctified number. Thirteen items were decreed necessary for the tabernacle. At 13 years of age, a boy was (and still is) initiated into the adult Jewish community. In Wicca, the pagan goddess tradition of Old Europe, communicants convene in covens of 13 participants. Thirteen was also auspicious for the Egyptians, who believed that life has 13 stages, the last of which is death -- the transition to eternal life.

Held holy in honor of *Shekinah*, the female aspect of God, Friday was observed as the day of Her special celebrations. Jews around the world still begin the observance of the Sabbath at sunset on Friday evenings when they invite in the Sabbath Bride. Friday is the Sabbath in the Islamic world. Friday is sacred to Oshun, the Yoruba Orisha of opulent sensuality and overwhelming femininity, and also to Frig, the Norse Goddess of love and sex, of fertility and creativity. Her name became the Anglo-Saxon noun for love.

Friday the 13th is ultimately the celebration of the lives and loves of Lady Luck. On Her doubly-dedicated day, let us consider what fortuitous coincidences constitute our fate—the lucky blend of just the right conditions, chemistries, elements, and energies that comprise our universe. The way it all works. The way we are. That we are at all —That, despite whatever major or minor matters we might think are unlucky, we have somehow managed to remain alive and aware. The next Friday the 13th, let us stand in full consciousness of the miraculousness of existence and count our blessings. Thank Goddess!

Doggerel for Friday the Thirteenth

If I had my 'druthers
When Friday's on the thirteenth day
I'd fete it over all the others,
A very special holiday

My pagan past calls to me
Asking that I contemplate
Thirteen as it used to be
A boon, and not a thing to hate

People used to hold it dear
Reverence for its special place,
Not an article to fear
Or a symbol of disgrace

Thirteen months in the Lunar year
Thirteen, our Lady's special Friday
Thirteen's a coven, so we hear
At thirteen, a person comes of age

So cast your fear and doubt away
Come join me in their celebration
Friday! Thirteen! Hooray, hooray
Subjects of our veneration

Until next time, Blessed be
Jeanne Coats

MVUUC Calendar – November 2017

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
20	30	31	1 10:30am - A Course 6pm - Personnel 7pm - Finance 7:15pm - Meditation	2 6pm - Choir Set-up 6pm - Music and 7:30pm - Choir	3 10:30am - Staff 4pm - Set Up - Altar	4 8am - Set Up @ 12pm - Celebration 1:30pm - Reception 3:30pm - Clean Up @
5 8:45am - Freethinke 10:30am - ~Celebratin 12pm - Ministerial 12:30pm - Adult 2pm - African Drum	6 6:30pm - Circle	7 6:30pm - Adult	8 10:30am - A Course 6:30pm - Board of	9 6pm - Choir Set-up 6pm - Facilities 7:30pm - Choir	10 10:30am - Staff 6pm - Private @ 7pm - CUUPs Liquid 9pm - Private @	11 10am - Worship
12 8:30am - Men's 10:30am - ~UN 12pm - Ministerial 12pm - RE Council 2pm - African Drum 3:30pm - Freedom	13	14 10am - Buuk Gruup 5pm - Evensong Set- 6:30pm - Adult 7pm - Evensong @	15 10:30am - A Course 7:15pm - Meditation	16 6pm - Choir Set-up 6pm - Membership 7:30pm - Choir	17 10:30am - Staff 2:30pm - Knitting	18
19 8:45am - Freethinke 10:30am - ~The Call 12pm - Internship 12pm - Ministerial 12pm - Social Justice 2pm - African Drum	20 6:30pm - Circle	21 6:30pm - Adult	22 10:30am - A Course	23 Happy Thanksgiving - Office Closed 4pm - Social Justice 6pm - Choir Set-up 7:30pm - Choir	24 10:30am - Staff 6pm - Private @ 7pm - CUUPs Liquid 9pm - Private @	25
26 10:30am - Oh We 12pm - Ministerial 2pm - African Drum	27	28 5pm - Evensong Set- 7pm - Evensong @	29 10:30am - A Course	30 6pm - Choir Set-up 7:30pm - Choir	1	2

GENERAL INFORMATION

Office Hours: Weekday mornings, 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Telephone: 909-626-0520, Office email: 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 by the 23rd of the month.



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