

UU Church of Berkeley, 2016-17



Annual Report

2016-2017 Annual Report, Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley

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Our facility hosts thousands of people each year, both from UUCB and the community.

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We are UUCB

379 members

100 youth and children

More than 300 friends

Founded in 1891, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley is a vital congregation and presence in the larger East Bay community.

The mission of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley is to create loving community, inspire spiritual growth, and encourage lives of integrity, joy, and service. We are a welcoming and vibrant congregation, joyously supporting spiritual development guided by individual faith, reason, and conscience. We are committed to serving one another, the church community, the community at large, and the global community. We foster a spirit of generosity and trust that encourages care for our church home and affirms diversity and relationships consistent with Unitarian Universalist principles.

Community Impact

Our church building and grounds have welcomed more than 10,000 attendees (though some of those are folks coming in multiple times!) to community events in our facility that were not church events. We host community groups, parties, weddings, memorials, retreats, rehearsals, concerts and more. Our grounds are also a popular place for both our members and hundreds of neighbors (human and canine) to walk and enjoy nature.

Our programs, especially in Social Justice (see pg. 5) make a difference to the larger community we are a part of, affecting tens of thousands in the East Bay and beyond.

State of the Congregation

We've just come through a long period of getting ready. Since Reverends Barbara and Bill Hamilton-Holway announced their retirement we've been preparing ourselves for this time. It hasn't always been easy. Before Barbara and Bill retired they supported a capital campaign to address the demands of maintaining the church buildings. The congregation was generous but we have an old building and the money raised was used for immediate needs including a new roof and repairing and improving the terrace. Maintaining and improving our facilities is still a major need and has to be addressed.

We made personnel changes and that was painful. We brought our pay structure more in line with our principles and UU guidelines. With the Reverend Greg Ward we made changes that improved our structure and operation and that wasn't easy. We began searching for new ministers, a long process that in the end left us wondering if we would be able to find whom we thought we wanted.

And then the Revs. Kristin and Christian Schmidt found us and we found them. The strength, care and hard work of our Search Committee, so well done, paid off. Kristin and Christian made the move, settled in with their family and became part of our family, and in the beginning of May we affirmed our commitment to them and they to us. The waiting is over. Of course it seems it would be easier to rely on our ministers to lead us to the promised land, a sustainable congregation in perfect quarters leading the way to a perfect balance of nurturing ourselves and serving and improving our community. Fortunately for us, that's not the way UUs and UU congregations work.

Through all of this and for over 125 years the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley has been a strong community with strong leadership and good ministers. There have been some some difficult times, but through it all we have come to today. In my opinion our greatest strength is who we are. My family and I came to UUCB because of the members who call this

their church, their community. We are inspired by and supported by this extraordinary gathering of people.

We can take credit for this because it has always been the congregation that makes UUCB work. Our members and our leadership have met the responsibility of making our community what it is. We have done the work. Now we have new ministers who have joined us in doing that work, who are committed to doing their part in keeping us going and helping us in evolving our sense of self and responsibility. Yes, we have a nagging deficit. It's even worse this year than we originally thought. Financially we are barely keeping up, and deferring maintenance and needed improvements on a sixty-year-old building is not sustainable. Like many churches we have a shrinking and aging congregation. We're not alone in this.

But when I look around at my fellow members, our staff, our community and family ministers and interim ministers there is vitality, energy and people actively engaged in making our community work and in applying our principles and faith in the larger community. We are attracting new members and our programs are strong and active. Now is the time to come together, for the congregation and the leadership to join with the new ministers, to put together their experience and wisdom with ours and define who we are and who we want to be.

In the coming months we will be working on that, one more time like the UUs we are defining our Mission, our Vision and our path to the future. We will take responsibility for who we are and who we want to be and commit ourselves to the work we need to do.

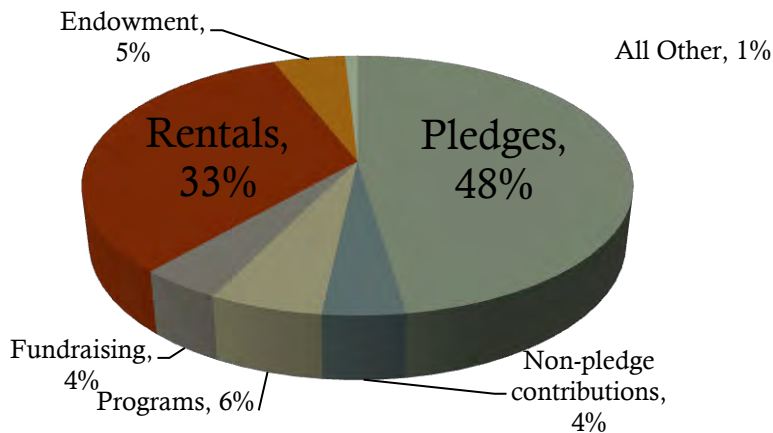
I am very confident knowing our community and now knowing our ministers that we are going to do great things together.

In faith,

Jack Duggan, UUCB Board President

Finances

Income FY 2016-17

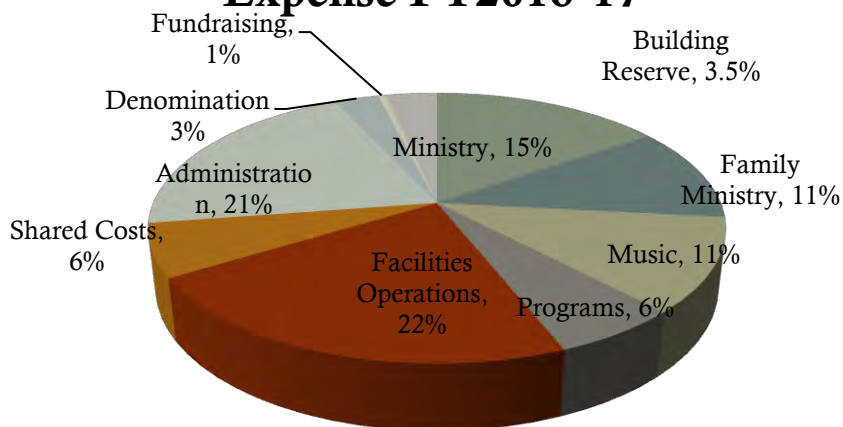


UUCB develops, approves and manages its annual budget. For the past year, that budget, as passed by the congregation, was expected to be \$1,143,829 in income and \$1,153,525 in expenses. (Note that because the fiscal year ends June 30, these numbers are what was proposed, not what has actually been raised and spent, since those numbers were not yet available when this report was published.)

As you can see from the graphs on this page, our income is primarily from pledges and rentals, which together constitute 81% of the total.

Our expenses cover a variety of areas: running and maintaining the facilities, administrative costs, direct ministry, and the various program areas.

Expense FY2016-17



Special Awards

Each year, UUCB honors members of its congregation for their outstanding service.

Linda Laskowski was given the Schweitzer Medal, which is awarded to recipients who have been supporters of Unitarian Universalist churches for at least fifteen years and of our church for five years; who have participated in a number of church functions “above and beyond the normal call of duty;” who have been church leaders; and who have participated in outreach activities.

Jim Gasperini, Susan Lankford, and Larry Nagel were each given the Flaming Chalice Award, in recognition of extraordinary service to our church community for at least five years, having been a supporter of the church, and having been active in one or more principal activities of the church during that time.

Family Ministry



Our ministry with the children, youth, and their families is truly a shared effort. Together with young people, parents, and other caring adults we co-create this wonderful place that is our spiritual home. It takes a lot of time and attention, a lot of people participating and leading. But when you add it all up there's this magical equation that somehow results in a profoundly special religious community.

2016-2017 Highlights

Our annual Bring Your Weight in Food brought in 5,547 pounds of food, and \$4,989 for the Richmond Emergency Food Pantry.

Our Easter festivities included a spring fair with 55 children.

In its second year, our Youth-Adult Team went to Portland for training to deepen and improve their work in supporting our youth groups.

Continuing successes include our monthly Family Spirit Circles, and our parenting groups.

Making it possible

More than 70 volunteers participated in making UUCB's Family Ministry program happen this year, from teaching classes, to preparing materials, watching our children play, and helping form young UUs in many other ways.



Special programs

Our Whole Lives

Some of our youngest community members participated in Our Whole Lives for kindergarten and first graders. In 2017, 13 completed the program, in which they learned about birth, babies, bodies, and families. The class used stories, songs, and activities that are age-appropriate vehicles for sexuality education.

Each year, we offer a rotating set of O.W.L. classes geared towards a different age group.

Coming of Age

Seven of our youth in grades 7-9 completed our Coming of Age program. With the help of our teacher Molly Johnson and mentors, Lucas Kathol-Voillequé, Haley Smith, Noel Garfield, Rota Maynard, Alejandra Robins, Elijah Darquea, and Isabel Augustine spent seven months learning, exploring, and then articulating their own spirituality in "credo" statements, which were then delivered to the entire congregation at a service in June.

Bridging

Our community also celebrated three youth who completed high school and "bridged" out of our youth programming this year: Billy Augustine, Emilie Kathol-Voillequé, and Bella Marshall.

Programs



Social Justice

The work of our Social Justice Council is wide reaching. We continue partnerships with local interfaith programs, our partner church in Homorodujfalu, and within our own congregation.

Our Confronting Racism project, started in 2015, has been a huge success. Two well-attended workshops were held this year; the Literature Film and Drama Contingent continues its series; and we participated (with some 700 other UU congregations) in the Teach-In on White Supremacy, countering oppression inside and outside our communities.

Each month we share our offerings from the Sunday worship services with local non-profit organizations serving the community, particularly those serving people in need. This year those were Bay Area Community Land Trust, the Unitarian Church in Homorodujfalu, Romania, Read Aloud Volunteer Program, Greater Richmond Interfaith Program, Richmond Emergency Food Pantry, Berkeley Food and Housing Project, Alameda County Community Food Bank, The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, Berkeley Food Pantry, WriterCoach Connection, YEAH!, Planting Justice, and Developing Indigenous Resources.

In the coming year, we will undertake two new projects, working towards becoming a certified Green Sanctuary, and in supporting sanctuary efforts and being in solidarity with oppressed peoples in our larger community.

Personal Theology

Our long-running Personal Theology series, which features a wide variety of speakers on an equally wide variety of topics, had another very successful year. A slight change in the starting time, to 9:30, allowed for smoother scheduling to finish well before the late service.

Speakers included many of our own community members, as well as noted speakers like Tet Gallardo and Matthew Fox.

Attendance at Personal Theology averaged 42 people, down slightly from last year's 47 but in line with previous years.

Humanist Connections

Our weekly gathering for discussion of varied issues from a humanist perspective continued this year, averaging about 24 attendees despite having to move for much of the year from their usual gathering place in the Safir Room because of renovations there.

Chalice Circles

Our spiritual deepening groups, called chalice circles, had eight circles this year with a total of 92 participants. Four of those were themed: Intergenerational, Social Justice, Recent Bereavement (lost partner or spouse), and Yoga. The other four selected topics to follow during the course of the year.

Worship

Worship at UUCB is a central part of our community. We gather on Sunday mornings, some Thursday evenings for vespers, and on Christmas Eve. In the Schmidts' first year as senior co-ministers, we had a wide variety of worship programming, including traditional services of this congregation and a few new ideas, like the Cornbread Ceremony just before Thanksgiving.



Average attendance in Sunday morning worship was right at 200 people. Our ushers counted 10,346 attendees, plus 770 at the two Christmas Eve services.

In addition to our co-ministers, other speakers, including lay members of the congregation and guest ministers, provided services on racial justice,

sexuality, and other topics. Our team of Worship Associates provided worship leadership each Sunday in conjunction with the ministers. Our music program provided a range of musical styles, including gospel, classical, show tunes, folk songs, various small group pieces, and organ and piano instrumentals.

Music

Our fabulous music program, under the direction of Bryan Baker and with support from our music committee, had another strong year. All told, some 400 people participated in providing music at UUCB in 2016-17. That included 300 who attended and sang in the Messiah Sing-Along, and about 100 players in other events and services (about 65 in the benefit concert with organist Katya Kolesnikova, Bryan, and the Kensington Symphony), and 100 singers (including the UUCB choir, the choir from the San Francisco UU church, and guests) who joined for events and services. We hosted and participated in special events like the musical "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" in October, the Messiah Sing-Along (our annual December fundraiser), Love Songs & Chocolate in February, Keyboard Extravaganza (Kensington Symphony Orchestra with Bryan and Katya in concertos), and the Mozart Requiem concert in April—a joint UU choir project, fundraiser, and community builder with volunteers from the community singing and playing.

Our Facilities

Several renovations around our terrace were completed this year: the brick paving was raised to the level of the indoor flooring, new benches and plantings went in, the doors were replaced, outdoor lighting was enhanced, and a ramp and automatic door made it all more ADA accessible.

It is a beautiful but aging facility, and the need for increased maintenance work has increased greatly in recent years. Current projects include renovating the Safir Room and removing trees, as many of the trees planted in the 1960s are dead or dying. Many other trees, including native live oaks, will remain and are expected to flourish with more sunlight reaching them.

It is a well-loved and well-used facility. We hosted multiple church events that do not fall on Sundays. Pine Crest School and longtime tenant Skytown Cooperative Preschool continued to lease our buildings during the week. We had more than 10,000 visits from renters at special events, including weddings, memorials, marker celebrations, and concerts, as well as musical recordings in the wonderful acoustics of the sanctuary.



Completed in 1961, the building has housed UUCB for 56 years now, providing worship, learning, and community space for tens of thousands.

Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley

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Senior Co-Ministers: The Revs. Kristin Grassel Schmidt and Christian Schmidt

Director of Administration: Mary Ellen Morgan

Director of Family Ministry: Merrin Clough

Director of Music: Bryan Baker

Office Administrator: Alisa Gould Sugden

Coordinating Team Convener: Lisa Maynard

Program Council Conveners: Ann Harlow, Jean Gleason

Board members: Jack Duggan, Jean Gleason, Richard Hanway, Kathryn Jay, Lee Lawrence, Jane Lundin, Cindy Maxim, Mary Muehlbach, Deborah Schmidt, Virginia Silver-Rimbach, Maryann Simpson, Logan Stump-Vernon, Mitch Sukalski

Affiliated Community Ministers: The Revs. Cathleen Cox, Theresa Hardy, Jeremiah Kalendae, Sue Magidson, and Jane Ramsey