



Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Vol. 78 #10 October 2019

The mission of this church is to create loving community; inspire spiritual growth; and encourage lives of integrity, joy, and service.

From the Ministers

Dear UUCB,

October is an exciting month here at church! The choir is back sharing their vocal gifts on Sunday mornings, religious education classes for kids and youth of all ages are back in session, and so many of you are planning and coordinating and rehearsing for all manner of fun and meaningful events and activities in the coming weeks. This congregation does a lot of good both within and beyond our walls, and this year we hope you will join us in focusing on how we can help more people experience the goodness we've found in, with, and among this community

As we embark on a year of growing and learning together, let us remember the purpose that guides and inspires our efforts. Some faith communities try to grow because they think more people will mean a bigger budget, or they want a larger pool of volunteers for existing activities. Usually, those communities find their efforts unsuccessful or short-lived. Congregations that do experience lasting growth almost always have a deeper purpose at their center, and it is twofold. First, we work to grow because we have found goodness and kindness, inspiration and challenge, peace and community here with one another, it has changed us, and we want to share that goodness with others. Second, we want to grow because when we welcome people of all ages in the fullness of who they are it changes us for the better.

We talk about growth as work not only because of the greeting and welcoming our Membership Committee will do on Sunday mornings, but because community growth asks each and every member of the community to make room inside of ourselves to welcome people whose presence and perspectives and preferences may cause things to change. True, lasting growth is always an expansion that spreads not only outward into new people, but inward into the hearts and spirits of every person in the community. Growth is work because in order to do it well, we must be ready to welcome newcomers not as recipients of who and what we are, but as co-creators, full partners with just as much of a voice and vote as the members who have been with us the longest.

This year, we invite everyone to come on Sunday mornings ready to greet people of all ages and identities, professions and cultures. We invite everyone to take up the spiritual practice of making room for difference, making room for the new. There are so many people in our wider communities whose lives would be enriched with all that our community has to offer. May our congregation come to be a blessing for those who need it, and may we all be blessed in the warmth of the welcome and love we extend to others.

In faith,

Reverends Kristin and Christian

Worship Services in October

Sanctuary, 11 am on Sundays

Theme for October: Sacrifice

October 6: Learning Together Sunday. In our liberal faith we often say that “revelation is not sealed,” meaning that there is always more for us to learn. This week a shorter worship in the Sanctuary will be followed by classes and workshops for all ages all over our campus. Join us for a morning of growing and learning, together! Led by Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt, Rev. Christian Schmidt, and Acting Director of Family Ministry, Catherine Boyle.

October 13: Selkie Mythology, Catherine Boyle preaching; Andrea Brown, Worship Associate. Explore the mythological stories of the *selkie* in this Gaelic-inspired service. The selkie is a seal that turns into a woman but then must give up her human form to return back to the sea. We dive deep into what this ancient motif teaches us about modern life – the sacrifices we make due to burnout and how to be resilient in the face of it.

October 20: Finding Our Place in the Family of Things, Rev. Kristin preaching; Lee Maranto, Worship Associate. This week we will hear from the prophet Micah, the poet Mary Oliver, and consider what is most deeply required of us as we continue our series on the theme of “sacrifice.”

October 27: Remembrance Sunday, Rev. Christian preaching; Karen Elliott, Worship Associate. The Haudenosaunee people (often known as Iroquois) emphasize considering the future – the next seven generations – in making decisions and considering the community. As we honor our ancestors, we'll explore both the last seven generations and the next seven, even in a world in crisis.

Good Neighbor for October (sharing our offerings)

Organization: GRIP

The **Greater Richmond Interfaith Project (GRIP)** (gripcares.org) seeks to eradicate homelessness and revitalize the West County community through case management, enrichment and training opportunities. Its services include the Souper Center, Contra Costa Coordinated Entry “CARE” Center, Family Shelter and Veteran Housing.

GRIP uses a unique approach to meet the complex needs of its consumers, using a Multi-Disciplinary Case Management team. Our team consists of a **Housing Navigator** (identifies and provides the best housing options for our consumers, while eliminating the barriers to attaining housing), **Families in Transition Specialists** (provides intensive case management for identified homeless youth and their families), **Mental Health Professional** and an **Alcohol and Other Drug Counselor**. This Case Management team, along with strategic partnerships with community service entities, provides financial literacy training, employment readiness skill building, mental health and wellness services, and substance use treatment and groups.

Personal Theology

Sunday mornings, 9:30-10:45 am, Fireside Room

October 6: Dr. Steven Herrmann, Jungian psychotherapist; author, poet, teacher and scholar; candidate in analytical training at C.G. Jung Institute, San Francisco. Steven will give an overview of Jung's spiritual vision as it developed over time and encompassed many fields of religion and a variety of myths across the world. ***Carl Jung's Spirituality: Living the Symbolic Life.***

October 13: Terry Patten, a personal coach, teacher, and author of four books who has worked for thirty years to integrate ancient and modern practices for raising consciousness. ***What's Really Happening in Our Crazy World, and How Can We Be the Change We Want to See?***

October 20: Ifasina TaMeicka L. Clear is a "queer, hood, Southern Bell" who resides in Oakland. Ifasina is a spiritual artist passionate about creating meaningful spaces to engage the body, heart and mind in the plight of personal liberation and deepened community connection. ***All Bodies Centered.***

October 27: Dr. Markate Daly has a Ph.D. in Ethics from the University of Wisconsin. She's a long-time active member of UUCB. Her research has been a cognitive science-supported vision of social connection and what that means for theoretical ethics and social organization. She has presented her research in various publications and conferences. She will talk about how the science coming out is supporting a deeply social rather than individualistic understanding of human nature . . . and how ethics will have to change to take account of this social reality. ***An Ethics of Trust.***

Humanist Connections

Sundays, 12:30 pm, Safir Room

October 6: The book *Kochland* about the Koch brothers – Sherry Fuzesy

October 13: The book *She Said* about the Harvey Weinstein scandal – Marcia Bates and Lee Lawrence

October 20: How we handle hurt feelings among us – Diane Rusnak

October 27: How standards of beauty originated in our hunter-gatherer past – Don Anderson

Format (most weeks): A 10- to 15-minute presentation followed by moderated, timed discussion and a potluck at 2 pm (bring a dish to share or donate \$5).

Humanist Connections explores human flourishing and the transcendent in the absence of the super-natural. Our discussion topics include issues relating to morality and ethics, human development, evolution, the nature of the universe, love, the capacities of the brain, free will, the latest scientific research and discoveries, and other topics of interest. We include humanists, agnostics, devout atheists, freethinkers, religious naturalists, interested theists, everyone. Your ideas and participation are welcome.

Special Events

Saturday, October 19, 3 pm: ZACKRIE VINCZEN'S ORDINATION. Our congregation is honored to perform this ceremony that enables Zackrie to be called The Reverend. A light reception will follow the ceremony in the Atrium. ALL people of the congregation are invited to take part in this once-in-a-lifetime moment for Zackrie. In our denomination, the power to ordain a person to ministry resides solely with a congregation. Our Board recommended, and the congregation unanimously approved, this request – and now we, the people of UUCB, will carry this to fruition. Please attend on October 19th. There is no cost to you to attend, however, if you are able to make a donation to defray expenses for this event, checks payable to UUCB and marked “ordination” will be appreciated. Please see a member of the Ordination Task Force if you have questions and/or can offer a helping hand with the reception. Jean Hyams, Lynne Cahoon, Marta Tobey or Anne Greenwood will be glad to speak with you.

Sunday, October 20: ALL-CHURCH PICNIC AND FIELD DAY after the service. Come celebrate the joy of community by staying an hour or two for food, conversation, and movement! For more info or to volunteer, contact Suzette Anderson-Duggan, acting Convener of the Program Council, sja072013@gmail.com, 510-910-5567.

- Picnic – Please bring a dish or beverage to share (at least six servings) that can be served cold or at room temperature for our quarterly potluck lunch. Drop off in the kitchen before the service.
- Movement – All ages are welcome to participate in field games. There will be a bounce house, face painting, and much more. Ifasina Clear, who is the guest speaker at Personal Theology that morning, will teach some dance moves for all kinds of bodies in the Social Hall at 1:00.
- This event is an opportunity to connect with someone who is either new to the church or new to you. Activities will be in the Social Hall, Terrace and the fenced playground adjacent to the north parking lot. You can picnic out there, on the Terrace, or in the Social Hall, but plan to get up, move around, and enjoy this multigenerational event.

Saturday, October 26, 9 am: JOIN TEAM UUCB FOR THE GRIP HARMONY WALK Join us for this year’s Harmony Walk on Saturday, October 26! Walk with our interfaith neighbors to raise money for the Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP), which provides shelter and resources for homeless families, plus meals every day of the year for the hungry and homeless in Richmond. Strollers, scooters, and wheelchairs welcome! Check in 9 am at Nicholl Park, at MacDonald Ave and 31st Street. Warm-up, walk/run/roll, and festival with DJ and booths to follow. For more information and a pledge form, stop by the Social Justice Table or contact Ladie Malek (510-932-7378, ladie.malek@gmail.com).

Sunday, October 27: Special Congregational Meeting after the service. Members, watch your mail for the details.

Friday, November 8, 7 pm: LAWRENCE LECTURE: TIM WISE, *Not Giving Up: Maintaining Our Commitment to Justice in Unjust Times*. Tim Wise is called “one of the most brilliant, articulate and courageous critics of white privilege in the nation,” by Michael Eric Dyson of Georgetown University. Tickets: \$20 general/\$10 students (no one turned away for lack of funds) at <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4365474> or at the door.

Saturday, November 9, 12 noon–4 pm: Our Social Justice Council presents Pachamama Alliance’s inspiring and interactive **AWAKENING THE DREAMER SYMPOSIUM**. We will renew our deep appreciation for the interdependent web of life and each other, inspiring commitments to wise actions within our communities to address the climate crisis, environmental devastation, and injustice. Free!

Family Ministry

Worship: A Time to Pray and Play

Introducing the “Prayground” in the Sanctuary for a More Inclusive Sunday

Visit the Sanctuary and you’ll notice some changes recently including the Chalice and the Memory Book moving for safety and accessibility, and the installation of the “prayground” – the rug in the front of the Sanctuary by the chancel with beanbags and toys. The prayground is a major part of the church’s plan to welcome and include parishioners of all ages to their Sanctuary.

Traditionally beanbags and felt toys have not been part of a church’s Sunday inventory. Understandingly, it may be quite a surprise to see them among the candles, organ and pulpit but with this experiment, I hope their place amongst the Sunday sundries becomes just as accepted as a candle or a chalice.

Studies have shown that children learn by doing and being a part of things. If there is to be a future of Unitarian Universalism, it is on the shoulders of the children. Currently in our faith, once graduated from high school, many children raised in Unitarian Universalism leave it. When asked why, they cited that they felt uncomfortable and unfamiliar in Sunday Service which was completely alien to them having spent every Sunday in Religious Education. Church is not a home for them. It was not a Sanctuary. It was only a classroom for an hour or so. It is no wonder then that much like the school classrooms are left behind by growing up, so was the church’s.

To grow lifelong UUs, it must start from the very beginning. Familiarity with hymns and rituals start by being surrounded by them. The prayground puts the worship service on the eye level of children for the entire time they are there. The ministers are front and center, not distant strangers from a pew. Beanbags and toys make the space inviting to the youngest among us, making the church a comfortable and fun place to be. There may be concerns that the children aren’t engaged with worship if they are playing with a toy; yet play and pray at this young age are interchangeable. I think of one story where a colleague told about her family having a discussion in the other room from a child coloring. Later talking with the child, she was surprised to hear her recite their conversation verbatim. The lesson here is that children are listening, even when you may think they are not. Among the toys, they are learning what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist.

In Hinduism, the Sanskrit word *lila* means divine play. This is the idea that reality is the Godhead expressing Itself to experience creation, everything is connected to each other through this dance of existence. Play itself is as holy as an act of prayer because it is humanity celebrating the divine. Therefore, intentional acceptance of all the sounds of life, whether it be a song of praise, a giggle or a poem, it all connects us to the multitude of generations within our congregation and makes our Sanctuary a truly holy place.

I hope you support this welcoming experiment for the next few months. The Family Ministry Committee and I ask for your feedback and suggestions during the process. We all are working together for a future for all at UUCB and in our wider faith.

Blessed be,

Catherine Boyle

Acting Director of Family Ministry

From the Board of Trustees

Cindy Maxim

In 2013, my partner Jean and I came to UUCB in search of community. We wanted a welcoming and engaging place where we could spend some peaceful time surrounded by thoughtful, committed people, listening to beautiful music and inspiring words. And we found it. We dipped our toes into the river of this congregation through chalice circles and one-time events like harmony walks and concerts, and found it was the place for us.

Now, you may not know this about me, but I am a dyed-in-the-wool introvert. I'm the person who thinks six people at dinner is plenty. Jean is not. In fact, it's fair to say that she's as extroverted as I am introverted. So, when I was asked if I might be willing to serve on the Board of Trustees, my first response was "don't you want to talk to Jean?" And imagine my surprise when I actually heard myself saying yes! For me, it's a way to give back to this congregation who welcomed us with open arms and to help make sure it's there for everyone who needs it going forward. I'm really proud to serve on a Board whose other members feel the same way.

For me, UUCB is a lot more than the sum of its parts. Sure, we have some pretty wonderful people who make up those parts, but in the end it's about the whole. Like any good community, UUCB has members who bring differing perspectives and priorities. Sometimes we disagree about whose perspective is right, or about which priority should . . . well, take priority. But in the end, we're there for one another. We go to Pride marches and Solano Stroll with each other, we show up for protests, we try to make change in our society as a whole, and we're there for kids who are graduating high school. We need this kind of community now more than ever, and it only gets stronger when we invite more people to join it. I hope UUCB will always open its arms to new people—even the introverts—so they can find their place, too.

Coordinating Team Notes

Tess Snook O'Riva, Executive Director

I have greatly enjoyed learning all about UUCB. My adventures through files, boxes, closets, and basements have revealed a rich history of the love and dedication of everyone here.

At its core, I believe my job here is to facilitate our mission while upholding UU principles. Every project we undertake and system we implement must be through this lens. If it doesn't create loving community, inspire spiritual growth, or encourage lives of integrity, joy, and service, we shouldn't be spending our time and resources there.

I have been involved in many of the changes to our space that will support a loving community and be more welcoming to a wide range of people. From moving pews to create a space for children so they can be more engaged in services on Sunday, to improving building access for people with mobility challenges, we are pursuing projects that help **all** people feel more welcome here. Having a space where certain people have to go through a side door to get in or must go to a different room so they don't bother anyone is not welcoming.

Along those lines, the generous donation of a wheelchair-accessible ramp to the chancel is moving along. Jane Lundin is helping us implement her gift in a thoughtful, inclusive way. I have already hosted one information table after services where people were able to look at the pictures of how the Sanctuary will look after it's installed. The ramp will go along the east wall up to the door of the music room, removing just two panels of the tiled divider wall under the projector screen. The design has already been modified to impact Sanctuary

seating as little as possible, resulting in half-pews for only the first four rows in front of the organ. Pictures are available in my office during business hours.

We are also welcoming new groups and rental types into our family. We have multiple Girl Scout troops that are meeting at UUCB, as well as other youth groups. All groups with children are required to abide by our safety policies. We will be rolling out a more inclusive rental policy encouraging rentals for all kinds of life events and coming of age parties.

It is my understanding that in the past UUCB has hosted a Thanksgiving Dinner for the community, but I have not heard of a champion for this year. If anyone is interested in being the lead on this project and forming a team, please contact me at ED@uucb.org.

The Coordinating Team meets on first and third Thursdays from 10 am to 12 noon. If you're interested in attending, please contact the Executive Director to verify meeting time and place. Questions for the CT? Email ED@uucb.org.

Behind the Scenes

Tess Snook O'Riva, Executive Director

One of our responsibilities as staff includes responding to walk-ins and phone calls from people who need help. As a church, we are an entity that people turn to when they are struggling mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and financially. It is consistent with our mission to help people and to try and make it easier for them to accept our help and support. Many times it's hard to even ask for help, and we work to remove those barriers.

One of the recent changes has been to remove all charges, and even donation baskets, from the food area after services. Although we have financial concerns, the few dollars raised from those efforts do not balance out the fact that we had people not eating because they couldn't afford to pay. We heard from visitors that seeing references to donations for our hospitality negatively impacted their impression of our church and made them feel like they could only attend if they could afford to contribute. Once this feedback was heard, we removed the baskets.

We will continue to find ways to financially support our mission, and we understand that some congregants can financially contribute right now and some cannot. But they all must feel welcome to break bread with us. Food is a way of connecting with self and community, and through providing space in the hospitality budget and with the generous support of our kitchen volunteers, we are able to sit together and enjoy loving community.

Thank you for your help in supporting our staff working in support of UUCB and its mission. Comments and suggestions for future articles can be sent to ED@uucb.org.

Social Justice Council

The Social Justice Council, with additional monetary support from the congregation, made lunches on a Saturday in September for about 150 volunteers building Tiny Houses for homeless youth, creating a community within Youth Spirit Artworks, our Good Neighbor for June.

We had a Social Justice table in the UUCB booth at the Solano Stroll, and organized the making of signs expressing our values to be carried in the parade.

The Literature, Film and Drama Contingent discussed the Unitarian Universalist Association's Common Read for 2019, *Justice on Earth: People of Faith Working at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Environment*, edited by Manish Mishra-Marzetti and Jennifer Nordstrom. We discussed how our dominant culture perpetuates philosophies that continue racial and environmental injustice as well as perpetuates much of the environmental devastation. Racism in early environmental movements pushed out many who sought to connect racial and environmental issues. Finally, we asked what a "focus on environmental justice" calls us to do. (And, because many of us felt such an urgency about the state of the environment, we thought about adding an "E" to our name: The Literature, Film, Drama and Environmental Justice Contingent!)

On September 20th we joined with the worldwide Climate Justice Strike throughout the Bay Area to make our leaders take notice before the international climate summit the following week. And we advertised our own Symposium at UUCB, Nov. 9th, noon to 4 pm:

The **Awakening the Dreamer Symposium** is a transformative educational workshop that explores the role people can play in developing an environmentally sustainable and socially just future. The workshop model is presented in conjunction with Pachamama Alliance training and empowering us to act for an environmentally sustainable planet, our home, Earth.

Do come. It should be life changing.

Partner Church Committee

Stephanie Ann Blythe

News flash from Transylvania: Our Partner Church minister in Homoródújfalú, Rev. Gyerő Attila, is engaged to be married! He writes, "On the beginning of the summer finally I got engaged. The name of my fiancée is Susan (in Hungarian is Zsuzsanna), and she's living in Brassó, about 80 km from Homoródújfalú. She is a jeweler and she's making jewelry from different semiprecious stones like ruby, mountain crystal, jade and so on. We hope that in the near future (maybe next year) we will have our wedding too." We've been hearing rumors for a while, now it's happening.

The Balázs Scholar for 2019-2020, Rev. Előd Szabó, and his family paid a visit to UUCB on September 8 and he was invited to light our chalice. Here's a little bit about him: He is the grandson of a Unitarian bishop, one of many Unitarian ministers among his ancestors. Előd was born in Kolozsvár and attended the Protestant Theological Institute, where Transylvanian Unitarian ministers receive their theological training. After serving as assistant minister in Székelyudvarhely, in 2007 he became the Unitarian minister in Ürmös, a town about 25 miles north of Brasov. Ürmös has about 2,000 inhabitants, half of whom are Roma (Gypsy). Előd met his wife Katalin (Kata) in Ürmös. They married in 2012. She is a kindergarten teacher who now stays home with their two small sons, Magor who is six and Rego who is three. Magor attends first grade at the Berkeley Arts Magnet School. The children speak a few words of English they learned in pre-school. It turns out Attila is from Ürmös where Előd is the minister.

Anne and I are starting to plan a pilgrimage to Transylvania. Who, what, where, when, and how are being determined at this time. The Partner Church Council has some intriguing tours including a Roots 2020 pilgrimage that would appeal to both clergy and laypersons. Mark Sumner, the UU San Francisco choir director, has plans for next June as well. Do it ourselves? Maybe. Contact Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net if you want to get in on the action.

Endowment Project Oversight Committee Report

Randolph Hudson, Jane Lundin, Larry Nagel, Ira Nelken, Tom Tripp

The congregation voted in January 2018 to authorize the expenditure of up to \$758,000 from the endowment fund to complete five specific projects, including (1) Safir Room, (2) rafter tail repair, (3) painting, caulking and sealing the main building, (4) skylight replacement, and (5) mold investigation and remediation at the religious education building. The congregational vote also established the “oversight committee,” charged with reporting status to the congregation.

The Safir Room has been completed, along with the adjacent skylights, and other associated work in that area. The mold investigation in the Religious Education building has been completed and did not discover mold. The architects have completed their investigation and design for the main atrium skylights and the painting caulking and sealing, all of which has been bid, but not awarded to a contractor.

The total cost incurred for the completed work, including design, permitting and construction totals \$286,988, leaving a balance of \$471,012 for the remaining work. Due to other significant facility concerns, and ongoing discussions about priorities, the Board has requested that the balance of the endowment project be “paused” until further notice. The work on “hold” includes the rafter tail repair; painting, caulking and sealing the main building; and the remaining skylights in the atrium.

Buildings & Grounds Committee

Larry Nagel

We have had three very successful work parties this year, and we are planning our last work party of the year on Saturday, November 16 to spruce up the grounds. The party runs from 9 am until noon, but if you show up at 8:30 am you’ll be treated to breakfast prepared by our own Lynne Cahoon. Hopefully, the sun will be shining, and we can attend to outdoor gardening activities.

The HVAC task force has been working hard on determining the best choice for a replacement for the main Sanctuary furnace, which failed a couple of months ago. After a thorough review of the available options, the task force is recommending replacing the furnace with a new, more efficient gas-fired furnace. This option is the least expensive and has the best chance of completion before the cold weather sets in. We realize that this recommendation will disappoint some congregants, and the task force really wanted to go with a heat pump solution, but the cost and time to install just didn’t work for us.

If any of these projects fits your interests and your skills, we would love to have you on our team. Please contact Larry Nagel at (510) 558-0842 or lwn@att.net. Or, just drop in at the Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting which is the first Thursday of every month at 4 PM in the Fireside Room.



Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley

1 Lawson Road

Kensington, CA 94707-1015

Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Covenant of Right Relations

- We covenant to build a religious community guided by love and sustained by respectful relationships.
- Believing that building healthy relationships is a spiritual practice, we aim to listen appreciatively, speak with care, express gratitude, honor our differences, and assume good intentions.
- We endeavor to communicate directly, honestly, and compassionately, particularly when we are in conflict.
- When we hurt one another, we will try to forgive, make amends, and reconnect in a spirit of love.
- In celebration of the common purpose that unites us, we will do our best to abide by this covenant.

MEMBERSHIP in this Unitarian Universalist congregation is open to all who see this church as their religious home and the principles for which the church stands as their own. People who wish to join participate in a “pathways to membership” session, sign the membership book, and commit to supporting this church through participation and financially. To become a member, please contact our Membership Co-Chairs, Lonnie Moseley or Paul Hudson (membership@uucb.org), or speak with one of the co-ministers.

NEWSLETTER ITEM SUBMISSIONS: Submit announcements and articles by email to beacon@uucb.org. Due to limited space, we do not publish announcements for events occurring outside the church community. **The deadline for submissions** is the 15th of the month. **Questions?** Please email beacon@uucb.org. (Beacon is compiled by Kathleen Baumgardner and edited by Ann Harlow.)

WEB SITE: <http://uucb.org>

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS:

To subscribe to the email version of this newsletter or “The Week Ahead at UUCB,” email administrator@uucb.org. You can also find both newsletters at the uucb.org website under “News.”

UUCB general discussion list:

http://groups.google.com/group/uucb_discuss/about

Email list for families: Email family.ministry@uucb.org

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Staff (partial list)

Co-Ministers: Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt (510-592-8738, revkristin@uucb.org) and Rev. Christian Schmidt (510-592-8738, revchristian@uucb.org)
Executive Director: Tess Snook O’Riva (ext. 305, ed@uucb.org)
Acting Director of Family Ministry: Catherine Boyle (ext. 307, family.ministry@uucb.org)
Office Administrator & Facilities Coordinator: Alisa Gould Sugden (ext. 306, administrator@uucb.org)
Rental Manager & Scheduling Coordinator: Lissa Roos Parker (ext. 312, lissamarda@uucb.org)