



Beacon on the Hill

*The monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Vol. 78 #11 November 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,

Our worship theme for the month of November is “giving praise” and we sure do have a lot to praise here at UUCB. As you’ll read in this issue our congregation is busy living into our mission both within and beyond our walls. In addition to all the good things happening here at church, there is such abundance in our lives this time of year for which to give thanks and praise.

Growing up I used to look forward to November because Thanksgiving was my very favorite holiday. My family always had precisely the same dishes on the table every year, and I think I loved the holiday largely because I knew what to look forward to. But as I grew up the dishes served on the table changed along with the people sitting around it. My cousin’s husband’s rum spiked sweet potatoes came to replace the marshmallow topped version we’d eaten for decades. He and my cousin are no longer married so he no longer celebrates the holiday with my family, but his sweet potatoes remain on the menu. As our awareness of the impact of factory farming grew, Butterballs gave way to heritage-breed pasture-raised turkeys. And in the spirit of more is more, Christian’s southern cornbread dressing will sit alongside my family’s traditional apple chestnut dressing so we can both enjoy a taste of our childhood homes.

Just as the people around my Thanksgiving table and the food upon it has evolved over the years, so too has my observance of this holiday. We find ourselves in an age of awareness building, of truth-telling, of centering voices and stories that have historically been ignored and pushed to the margins. We know that the story of the “first Thanksgiving” so many of us were taught in elementary school is a harmful myth, one that erases the true history of brutality and genocide that European settlers waged upon the peoples indigenous to the lands we call home. So, in light of our national history, what is actually worthy of our thanks and praise this month?

I imagine we each have our own answers to that question. As for me, more than anything else I’m giving thanks and praise this year for the winds of change: winds that blow new people and the new tastes they bring with them into our lives; winds that blow away harmful myths and half-truths even when the reality underneath them requires us to understand ourselves in new ways; winds that blow stories and voices out of the margins and into the center of our awareness helping us to learn and grow. This year, I’m giving thanks not only for the breathtaking beauty of this land I now call home, but also the breathtaking strength of the indigenous people here and all around our country leading and inviting all of us into a more sustainable way of being, of enjoying the abundance of an Earth that truly supplies our every need. And I’m giving thanks for this faith community that challenges and inspires all who are part of it to seek after truth even when it’s hard, to welcome the new to our table, and to learn and grow, give thanks and praise together.

Happy Thanksgiving,

Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt
Senior Co-Minister

Worship Services in November

Sanctuary, 11 am on Sundays

Theme for November: Giving Praise

November 3: Worthy of Our Praise, Rev. Kristin preaching. As a liberal religious community, we are blessed with freedom to seek truth and wisdom from many sources. But how do we know what guidance and teachings to follow? How do we decide what to give authority in our lives? Join us this week as we consider how to discern what is worthy of our praise.

November 11: Interconnections, the Web, and Us!, Rev. Christian preaching. Come join us for a service celebrating all our connections, especially those of the virtual variety! We'll talk about the joy of interconnection, you can livetweet the service (or learn what that means!), and we'll livestream the service, too.

November 17: Music Sunday – How Can I Keep From Singing? How music lets us offer up praise, how singing helps us hold on to ourselves and our deep beliefs, the physical and physiological benefits of singing, and finding something positive in troubles through song.

November 24: Thanksgiving Sunday: Welcome Table, co-led by Catherine Boyle, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt, and Rev. Christian Schmidt. In this service for all ages we will hear the story of Nasruddin's coat, sing harvest hymns, and give thanks and praise as we share in our annual cornbread and grapes communion.

Good Neighbor for November (sharing our offerings)

Organization: RYSE Center

Mission: Through their theory of liberation, RYSE Center (rysecenter.org) creates safe spaces grounded in social justice for young people to love, learn, educate, heal and transform lives and communities. Since RYSE opened its doors, it has served over 4,000 students with sanctuary and healing spaces, counseling and peer support rooms, weekly programs in poetry, computer skills, cooking, spoken word, graffiti art, music and dance. RYSE provides a SAFE space for Richmond youth.

Note: The Social Justice Council is seeking nominations for Good Neighbor recipients in 2020—see page 9.

Special Announcements

The UUCB Nominating Committee for the Board of Trustees is beginning to meet and is looking for fantastic individuals to serve on the board. If you or someone you know is interested, please let us know! We will submit our recommendations by December 1st.

– *Gwenn White, Marta Tobey, Don Klose, Randall Hudson, Ariel Smith-Iyer, Logan Stump-Vernon.*

Honoring Our Volunteers: Friends, we want to honor and recognize those around UUCB who help make this community run. If you know someone who deserves to be recognized, send a note to revchristian@uucb.org (Subject line: Volunteer) before the 15th of the month, and we'll choose one or two people to be recognized each month. Thank you!

Personal Theology

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

Nov 3: Bill Garrett, retired Professor of Philosophy and Religion, taught at JFK University, San Francisco State, Fromm institute, CIIS and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. ***The Enemy of the People.***

Nov 10: Murshid Kiran Rana is a senior teacher in the Sufi Way, a mystical community that has its origin in the teachings of universal Sufism introduced in the West in 1910 by the Indian mystic Inayat Khan. Kiran lives happily in Alameda with his wife, **Jeanne Rana**, a poet and fellow-Sufi who is also a member of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland. At their Sufi center, Bay Dervish, they hold gatherings for meditation, invocation and music, offer personal guidance, and facilitate intimate conversations about the inner life, creativity and awakening. Kiran also teaches an online webinar called *A Taste of Sufism*; currently he and Jeanne are offering a ten-month-long program in Berkeley called *Sufism and the Art of Loving*. ***Two Stories: How Kiran and Jeanne Found Sufism Found Them.***

Nov 17: Kiran Rana & Jeanne Rana, see bio above. ***"I follow the religion of love: whatever way love's camels take, that is my religion and my faith."*** — Ibn 'Arabi

Nov 24: Cordell Sloan, UUCB Trustee; technology guru; dream expert; jazz musician and son of Rev. Cordell Sloan, Sr. Cordell says, "There have been a number of times in my life (and I'm sure yours too) when necessity, that fecund mother of invention, required a personal reinvention. I've had a number of occasions requiring a makeover of myself as well as studying others pursuing a growth-driven journey, and from each of these experiences, I find that there are many factors that consistently come into play when we succeed in renewal." ***My Toolkit For Self-Invention.***

Humanist Connections

Sundays, 12:30 pm, Safir Room

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).

The Humanist Connections discussion group meets 12:30-2:00 every Sunday. We discuss issues with social, ethical, political, and artistic implications. Topics are chosen by vote a month in advance by the group, and then scheduled for the following month. All are WELCOME to come and join in the discussion.

After the discussion, we have a potluck and further discussion. Newcomers welcome.

Co-Chairs of the group are Marcia Bates mjbates@ucla.edu and Anne Fitzmaurice buckley@lmi.net Contact them with any questions.

November's Discussion Topics:

November 3: The value of poetry and literature in life. Ray Nelson and Hope Carroll

November 10: Short topics written down by attendees, put in a hat, and drawn randomly for discussion.

November 17: Jade and amber in antiquity. Don Anderson

November 24: What we do for peace of mind. Diane Rusnak

Special Events in November

2019 LAWRENCE LECTURE: On Friday, November 8, from 7 to 9 pm: Anti-racist author and speaker **TIM WISE** will present: “Not Giving Up: Maintaining Our Commitment to Justice in Unjust Times.” Noted among the most prominent anti-racist educators in the U.S., Wise has been speaking to audiences nationally and internationally for 25 years, and hosts the podcast “Speak Out with Tim Wise.” He is the author of seven books, including his latest: *Under the Affluence: Shaming the Poor, Praising the Rich and Sacrificing the Future of America*, and his highly acclaimed memoir, *White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son*. Tickets are available at uucb.brownpapertickets.com; or, to save the fee, you can purchase them from Dorothy Herzberg or Mimi Bull at the book table, or from Ray Westergard or Camille Parker.

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!

Thursday, November 28, 12 noon–4 pm: THANKSGIVING DAY AT UUCB. Following an intimate worship service in the Fireside Room, we will have a Thanksgiving feast. We provide the turkey and Rev. Kristin's stuffing; the rest is potluck. Sign up on the info table outside the office. Contact [Ann Harlow](#) about the dinner or [Mary Muehlbach](#) about the service.

Friday, November 29, 11 am–3 pm: BUY NOTHING DAY*:

The day after Thanksgiving doesn't have to be about shopping all day and overspending on holiday presents. Instead, join us at church and connect with the *presence* at the heart of the winter holidays. Here's what the day will include:

- **Potluck Lunch:** Bring your Thanksgiving dinner leftovers and any other yummy non-alcoholic food and drink you'd like to share. It will be fun to sample one another's traditional holiday dishes and make sure our leftovers don't go to waste!
- **Service and Sing-along:** After lunch we'll gather in the Fireside Room for some centering words and holiday singing.
- **Holiday Crafts:** Kids and adults alike will enjoy making holiday-themed crafts. Whether you use them to decorate your own home or you give them away as gifts, it will be fun to be creative together.
- **Clothing Swap:** Got lightly worn clothes your kids have grown out of? Have some clothes that are still in good shape but aren't your style anymore? Bring them to Buy Nothing Day so someone else can enjoy them. Keep an eye out in The Week Ahead for more details.
- **Sharing Love, Affirming Dignity:** Retail workers put in very long hours with little recognition or reward on this busiest shopping day of the year. So, at the end of our time together, we will carpool to El Cerrito Plaza and give cards of encouragement and gratitude to the people working in the shops.

**Buy Nothing Day was first organized by artist Ted Dave in Vancouver, Canada as “a day for society to look at overconsumption.” Since then it's spread to 65 countries and inspired millions of people to consider the impact their holiday traditions and regular spending habits have on our planet.*

Reflections from Family Ministry

Catherine Boyle

This month we focus on Giving Praise. While this Praise (note the capital P) bestowed upon a God (if you are a theist) or something intangible within ourselves, humanity, whether living or dead, is worthy of it. We are heirs of a great Faith, a legacy of love, and I would like to tell you this month of one of our beloved Universalist ancestors: Clara Barton.

She opened the first free public school in New Jersey. She served as the first female clerk in the US patent office. She continued her service to humanity as a great supporter of women's rights and suffrage. Somehow in all this, she found time to found the American Red Cross.

She is best known for her courage in the bloody fields of the Civil War. "I will remain here while anyone remains," she wrote.

She accompanied her brother David, quartermaster to the Eighteenth Army Corps, when he was sent down to South Carolina to attack Charleston. It was here that she found another great ancestor of our faith, Universalist Frances Dana Gage, who was working with the former slaves in the area.

Gage influenced Barton to expand her view of injustice not solely from the suffering of wounded soldiers to a broad perspective, critical of how society and culture treated those considered less.

She began speaking for Susan B. Anthony at women's suffrage events before veterans, "Soldiers!" she would cry. "God only knows women were your friends in time of peril, and you should be [theirs] now."

It is in this line that I see the radiance of our faith. Her dedication to ridding the world of injustice is what makes Clara worthy of not only Praise but replication. The desire to serve the community, and to speak up for injustice, that desire to live a life of love, a life of knowledge, guides us into living lives worthy of Praise.

Clara was a pioneer for humanity, acting and living in new ways. She pressed on and shone like the diamond of our faith. We are a multifaceted faith and all part of the same journey, and like Clara Barton, we are agents of love, serving something greater than ourselves.

When I look out into this congregation, I see a great radiance—a gem of a faith that expresses itself differently in each facet reflected in your faces. We are a multifaceted faith and all part of the same journey, and like Clara Barton, we are agents of love, serving something greater than ourselves. We are aware of the interconnectedness of all of humanity, all our siblings, that all people are worthy of respect, of rights, of justice, of compassion. Barton shone a light on a way of living in this world to make it a more fair and just place, and together, we continue that tradition.

In this tradition of love, in this season of gratitude, I invite you to reflect upon a spiritual ancestor of your own. It could be a blood relative, or it could be a historical figure that you feel a special affinity to, or perhaps it is a person still living whom you admire. Consider: Why does this person inspire you? What can you learn from them? How, now, are you living fully into yourself? I invite you to ask your family the same question (and if your child says Ryder from Paw Patrol, that's a bow wow wow option!) and reflect together on gratitude for the lessons taught in the past that help us live today.

I hope to hear about your discussions and learn about your beacons soon.

See you at church,

Catherine

From the Board of Trustees

Jack Duggan

These are tough times at Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley. I am often accused of being too negative about our prospects, but I think some people don't hear my optimism about our congregation. I truly believe we are a strong and vital community and I am sure we are going to survive.

So, these are tough times for us at UUCB. This is the time in our community when we are coming out of denial, that change is no longer an option, it is a necessity if we are going to survive. So, like a lot of us personally I think we should move off the hill, but on the other hand if we're going to survive, we need to make the hill work for us. In other words, I don't know for sure what we should do with our assets, how we should be planning to use them. I have opinions, but I don't have answers yet. I still need more honest and open discussion with a vision we can articulate and share.

So why are these good times for us. Because the old answers aren't working for us any longer and it's making us all uncomfortable. It's not time to quit and leave; it's time to work harder. These times demand new answers and we're working on it. We're out of denial. We haven't agreed yet how to keep the baby and throw out the bath water. Maybe some of us have, but I don't think we've quite figured out how to do it together.

So, the big question for our community is sustainability. It can be done in a myriad of ways. We must sustain ourselves with a vision that includes and inspires us all. No one is going to have it their way. We are all called upon to make sacrifices, to be together; to give some things up, to adjust, to change our minds.

We need a unified vision that inspires all of us. The good things happening at UUCB demonstrate our vision, but it needs to be articulated and committed to in a way we can share it. With a unified vision we can begin to ask ourselves the questions we need to answer. Does this contribute to our vision? Is this something we need? Is this something we can do without?

We need to work on building consensus. I think it's a mistake to expect that a consensus means everyone agrees. To me it means putting the survival of the community first and then everyone agreeing to go along with the decisions made. It means personal sacrifice and it means trusting our leaders. Consensus is a way of going forward.

What we need to be is a visionary community that pays its bills. Having a vision doesn't make it happen and paying our bills is not the end goal of our community. Practical visionaries, that's a hard practice, especially in a group that is a community – and above all, UUCB is an active and vital community.

Note: Each month a different member of the Board of Trustees writes this column so you can get to know them better and get a sense of the issues dealt with by the Board. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Board as a whole.

Coordinating Team Notes

Tess Snook O’Riva, Executive Director

Talk about rolling with the punches! I sit here a day after staff and I spent many hours running around, making phone calls, and researching options to ensure a wedding, a memorial, and our Sunday services could proceed as planned, even if we had no electricity. It was intense.

Now that I can use my computer, it occurs to me to stop for a moment and appreciate what this mini-emergency brought out in us, and indeed, in many others. I was inspired by one of the most calm and reasonable brides in my experience; someone who understood that there were things happening out of her control, and ours. Instead of raging or blaming anyone, she complimented us on all that we were trying to do to make their special day happen. She focused on the most important thing to her – ending the day as a married person.

Our staff exceeded expectations as we came up with multiple creative solutions for light, sound, and kitchen needs for these events. Family, friends, and congregants came forward to offer their solutions, especially after we found that there was not a generator to be rented or bought from Sacramento to San Jose! (We looked.) Time and again we heard, “What do you need?” and “How can we help?” It reminded me that even with the strongest of winds, with all hands on deck, we keep sailing forward.

“She stood in the storm, and when the wind did not blow her way, she adjusted her sails.”

— Elizabeth Edwards

Although it feels like there’s a lot going on, this congregation has shown its resilience and ability to move forward with the mission, despite the winds of change buffeting us. And together we can continue to prepare for the changes ahead by engaging in deep conversations, stocking the pantry (so to speak), and holding space for each other and our community.

My specialty is stocking the pantry, so staff and I are preparing for disasters and other emergencies as best we can going forward. We have added a few things to our stockpile, like long-lasting batteries, large portable lights, and a portable, self-contained speaker system, and will be getting a small backup generator soon. We will review our procedures for evacuations, earthquakes, and blackouts. We are also applying to be a partner with the Kensington Fire Protection District to store emergency supplies on site to be used for the entire community.

Let us not forget that November is also a month for gratitude. I am grateful we only lost power for less than 24 hours. I am grateful I work with awesome people who roll with the punches better than most I have worked with. And I am grateful that I support a community that supports their community when they are most in need. Thank you all.

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.

Music Matters - "Sing for Peace"

December offers two opportunities to enjoy beautiful music, find some holiday spirit, and help raise money for UUCB's general fund. One is a long-held tradition and one is brand new.

- Young folk will lead a musical event on Sunday, December 8 at 1 pm titled Sing for Peace: A Holiday Concert and Cookie Buffet. This will be joyful and focused on secular pieces and music of peace. Featuring Katie Lipka and our dear Youth and Children's Choir, Luminescence choir, instrumentalists, soloists and guest musicians, this is a fundraiser for the church's general fund, as well as a fun raiser for the entire community.
- It's the Messiah Sing-along! On Sunday, December 22 at 6 pm we will gather in our hundreds to sing this evergreen masterpiece. The orchestra, the soloists, and the audience join in re-awakening Handel's glorious music. This oldest Messiah sing in the Bay Area will include a new surprise or two this year. Hallelujah!

Yours in harmony,

Bryan

Holiday Fair

EVERYONE can help make our annual **Holiday Fair, December 8 and 15**, a fundraising success. During November you could bake and freeze goodies for the bake sale; create handicrafts to donate (50% or 100% to UUCB), and set aside or bring in recycled gifts, jewelry, holiday decorations and holiday attire (all in like-new condition, please). Most valuable would be if you can donate a **silent auction item of an event** you will host sometime in the following six months. Volunteers will also be needed to set up and clean up the sale, organize hands-on craft activities, and serve a light lunch. And, of course, we hope you will shop at the fair! See the green letter and donation/volunteer form enclosed with your pledge statement or pick one up at church on Sundays. Questions? Contact Ann Harlow, annharlow@pacbell.net.

Social Justice Council

The Literature, Film & Drama Contingent's (LFDC) Third Annual Fishbowl took place October 6, where four cis-gendered women and three cis-gendered men swam separately, answering questions posed by lead fisher-person, Julie Rogers (whose work on these events is wonderful!) while the rest of us listened and ate fish food. Smiley (Ralph) Nelson opened and closed the Bowl. Enjoyed most re sexism was: "Why do we say, 'Oh boy!' and 'Oh man!' but we never say, 'Oh girl?' or 'Oh woman?'"

Next up for LFDC: November 3rd is our date with **Shanthi Sekaran**, who will join us to discuss her novel, *Lucky Boy*. Natalie Campbell will chair the meeting. Ms. Sekaran's second novel is said to be "a gripping, obsessive, character-driven narrative of sacrifice and identity—where the lives of two women become forever tangled in the roots of motherhood." Another said of it: "How lucky the reader who gets to devour Sekaran's extraordinary, necessary novel. *Lucky Boy* is both timely and timeless.... Shows us how we are connected and how we are, perhaps irreparably, divided. It swept me away and took a little piece of my heart with it."

In other Social Justice news:

Members of the Social Justice Council are working hard on their Sponsored Projects, particularly the Climate Crisis as well as other issues that spring up in these turbulent times.

Norie Clarke reached out to the Student Climate strikers at UC Berkeley on September 20 to promote the Code Pink's Peace vigil at the Creech Airforce Base and our November environmental justice forum with the Pachamama Alliance at UUCB on November 9. In so doing, we learned how to be more effective on campus.

Sheldon Jones and Jim Gasperini joined ministers from Starr King Theological Seminary at the Climate Action Strike rally in Sproul Plaza, where people of all ages joined to demand decisive action by politicians and governments to save the planet and the futures of our youth.

The **Environmental Justice** Sponsored Project reminds UUCB members and the wider community of the upcoming Educational Workshop training in advocacy for our planet in crisis, Saturday, November 9 at UUCB.

Norie Clarke participated in two non-violent actions with Code Pink and Veterans for Peace at Creech AFB and Nellis AFB. Ten people were arrested at Creech, including Norie, and it was covered on national TV's Democracy Now with Amy Goodman. The Air Force wants Nellis to expand, taking 2.9 million acres of leased BLM land in Nevada and into the National Desert Wildlife Preserve created by President Roosevelt to protect the Bighorn Sheep. Furthermore, the US military has a larger carbon footprint than 140 countries combined. Watch for a letter-writing campaign this month to Congress to say ENOUGH!

From the **Confronting Oppression** Sponsored Project: SAVE THE DATES!

- People of Color Caucus (POCC) Meeting, December 8, 12:30-2:30 pm
- Joint People of Color Caucus/Whites Opposed to White Supremacy caucus Meeting, December 15, 12:30-2:30 pm

Good Neighbors for 2020: On Sunday, December 8, at UUCB's final Social Justice Council meeting of the year, we will take a vote to select the 12 nonprofit organizations for the Good Neighbor program in 2020. In order to do that, we need to hear from the congregation. Are you familiar with any local nonprofits that might need some recognition and a monetary boost? Let us know!

These are the guidelines for any organization you nominate:

1) it must be a 501 (c)3 nonprofit organization that promotes social, economic, racial and/or environmental or peace. The nonprofit should not have mainstream support.

2) The nonprofit must be a local Alameda or Contra Costa County organization

3) UU social justice initiatives or organizations may also be included.

We have nomination forms at the social justice table – just turn your nomination in to the Social Justice mail box by November 3rd. Please come to the December 8th meeting if you would like to hear the nominees speak about their organizations. You are welcome to vote for the finalists, as well! Any questions? Contact Natalie Campbell at nataliehcampbell@yahoo.com or 510-909-7092.

Behind the Scenes

Alisa Gould Sugden, Office Administrator

Many things are different at UUCB this fall, including the renewed focus that your staff has on increasing the rentals of our facility. This church offers an important ministry to our community by providing use of our space. At the same time, our rental income is an increasingly significant income stream to our congregation's budget. The 2019-2020 congregational budget includes \$110,000 as our goal for rental income for this church year.

In addition to income, these rentals also bring with them some growing edges. As some of you have learned when trying to schedule your group or committee's event on the church calendar, the prime time for rentals is Fridays and Saturdays, and on Sundays after 4 pm. Most of the time we avoid these prime-time slots when planning recurring activities throughout the year. Keeping this in mind as we go forward allows us to meet the needs for church activities while maximizing rental income. If a rental opportunity comes through during the year that would need a church activity to move to another room, your understanding and willingness to be flexible will increase our ability to meet multiple needs.

"Today's Activities" posted on the kiosk that you see as you walk in the front door is our road map. Staff use it to know what set ups are needed; members and visitors use it to find out which room their activity is in. This is why we encourage everyone to reserve space for their activity with Lissa Roos Parker, our Scheduling Coordinator. We want all activities to be marked on our road map! And this will become even more important as the building gets more use.

Over the years, the use of our space by renters has increased, and will continue to do so as we manage our fiscal responsibilities and do the work necessary to repair and maintain our nearly 60-year-old building. Expanding the ways we share our space with others is a culture shift which has its challenges. But it also offers us a chance to practice flexibility and resilience, two qualities associated with the success of all kinds of organizations over time.

Partner Church Committee

Stephanie Ann Blythe

Let's go to Transylvania! Yes, the Partner Church Committee is going to Transylvania in 2020, including a visit to our partner church in Homoródújfalú. Our friend Mark Sumner, choir director at UU Society of SF, is leading a choir tour to Hungary and Transylvania. All are invited, singers and non-singers alike. The in-country dates are June 9-18, 2020. There are add-on tours to Bulgaria and Greece and a cruise of the Greek isles. Our UUCB group will break away from the main group to spend several days in Homoródújfalú. If you want to go, you'll have to act fast. A \$350 deposit is due by November 15. You have questions (cost, itinerary etc.) and we have most of the answers. Our contact information is below. We can't wait to hear from you!

We will refer to this trip as both a tour and a pilgrimage. The tour aspect is obvious, but the pilgrimage aspect is a personal one. Transylvania is part of Romania, but we travel to its heart where the people are Hungarian, and their form of Unitarianism is unique. It becomes a pilgrimage when you allow your heart and soul to be captured by these warm, generous people, and when you can disconnect from the hubbub of our normal lives. This is what brings us back, again and again.

In the meantime, mark your calendar for the Balázs Scholar Tea on Saturday, December 7, at 2:30 pm at Starr King School for the Ministry. Suggested donation is \$25. You can RSVP to Arliss Ungar at balazs@ungar.us. This year's scholar is Rev. Elöd Szabó, here with his wife Kata and two sons.

Contact Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net for all the details on the pilgrimage tour, the tea, and all things Transylvanian.

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 few 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.

On July 18, PG&E inspected our natural gas lines and found the main feeder line to the building was corroded and had a sizable hole in it. Thanks to a tremendous amount of work by Tess O'Riva, the main has finally been repaired and we again have gas in the campus.

We have been experiencing communications troubles with our fire alarm system in the Pine Crest school for months now and Protection One has not been able to fix the problem. Finally, we convinced Protection One that the only solution was to combine the two alarm panels, and that work was completed in October. There have been no further line errors.

Finally, this will be the last Buildings & Grounds Committee report from me. I am moving to the Treasurer position, and Jane Lundin has agreed to take over the task of running the Buildings & Grounds Committee. Before leaving, I want to extend a tremendous thank you to all the members of the Buildings & Grounds Committee who have given me their support and assistance and guidance in the past four years. I am eternally grateful to each and every one of you.

If any of these projects fits your interests and your skills, we would love to have you on our team. Please contact Jane Lundin at (510) 778-9055 or jmlundin@toast.net. Or, just drop in at the Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting, the first Thursday of every month at 4 pm in the Safir Room.



Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley

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Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Covenant of Right Relations

Love guides this church.

The quest for truth and justice is its common purpose.

To give thanks, listen deeply, speak with care, honor our differences, and seek and grant forgiveness –

These things we covenant with one another.

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 an “introduction 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>

PHONE: 510-525-0302

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS:

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Lonnie Moseley (Adult Religious Exploration)

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)
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