

Beacon on the Hill April 2018

From the Ministers

We write this in the wake of massive walkouts, in which hundreds of thousands of students—high school, middle school, even elementary—left school to make a statement: that we must work to end gun violence, and that there must be an end to mass shootings in our country. We watched students ask for something simple but difficult: a safer world.



How can any of us do less than these brave students?

Unitarian Universalists have been at the forefront of many of the social justice movements in our country's history, and the time has come again. So many issues matter right now, to us and to our communities: oppression of all kinds, poverty, income inequality, racial justice, immigration, gun violence, the environment, to name just a few, knowing that so many more also matter.

The needs of the world can be daunting. It's important to remember that we're not responsible for fixing everything. But we are responsible for doing what we can, when we can.

For those of us not in school, a walkout is perhaps no longer our best mode of protest. But we have many ways to make a difference:

- In this year, we vote. Hundreds of races at the national level, and thousands at other levels, will be contested in 2018. Making sure that every person who can vote does should be among our top priorities.
- Getting out and supporting candidates and issues. Many of our members have done this and know what a difference it makes.

- Getting involved in government: let our elected officials know what we think and why it matters. Write, call, and show up at their offices and meetings.
- Work with our partners in the community. As a congregation and in our social justice council, we have done work with local, state, national and international partners.
- Get involved (or more involved) in our work as a sanctuary congregation, or in a social justice issue that matters to you.
- And yes, marching or protesting in the streets to make it known how we feel and how many of us there are.

It's a challenging time in our world, and we are called in it to do more than we have done before in order to achieve results we have never known before.

We're thrilled, always, to be the senior co-ministers of a congregation that is engaging deeply with the world's issues, with members and friends that bring such an array of experiences and skills. Together, we can make a difference; how can we do any less?

In faith,

Revs. Christian and Kristin

Sunday Worship Services in April

Sanctuary, 11 am

Theme for Month: Emergence

April 1 – EASTER SUNDAY

- ***Family Service, 9:30 am***, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt with Melissa Rosales, Worship Associate. Join us this Easter Sunday for a shorter service of story, song, and celebrating the power of life and love over death and hate. Nursery care will be available for babies and young

children who would rather spend the service playing. Everyone is invited to join us after the service for our annual brunch and Easter Egg Hunt!

- ***Traditional Service, 11 am***, Rev. Christian Schmidt with Jeanne Foster, Worship Associate. Join us we celebrate in story, song, and sermon the power of life and love over death and hate.

April 8 – *The Ethics of Paying Taxes*, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt. While funding the common good is important, it can be tough to justify paying higher taxes when the government does things with which we don't agree. Join us this Sunday as we consider the ethics of paying taxes.

April 15 – *Tree of Life*, Rev. Christian Schmidt with Ann Riley, Worship Associate. Our lives are defined by transitions like birth, adoption, graduation, new jobs, relationships, divorce, and retirement. This week in worship we will honor the many transitions in our lives and acknowledge how life's seasons have transformed us. We will also dedicate ourselves as a community to the raising of the children among us. If you would like to dedicate your baby or child during this service, please send Rev. Kristin an email at revkristin@uucb.org by April 9.

April 22 – *Earth Day*, Amanda Weatherspoon with Cami Fuller, Worship Associate. Join us for a service in thanksgiving and prayer for the planet we call home. After the Time for All Ages, children in elementary school will join Rev. Kristin in the Fireside Room for Children's Chapel. Middle and high schoolers will join one of our elders for a "Legacy Links" session in the Meditation Room.

April 29 – *Spring Into Action*, Rev. Christian Schmidt with Jim Gasperini, Worship Associate. As the rains leave and the sun shines through, it's time to acknowledge the gifts of spring and consider, too, what they ask of us!

Apply to Become a Worship Associate!

Do you love Sunday services here at UUCB? Have you ever sat through a service and thought, “I’d love to do that!”? Are you excited about new things we might try in our worship time together as a community? If so, please fill out a Worship Associate Application **by April 20**. We look forward to welcoming three more Worship Associates onto our team, and we hope to expand the team’s theological, ethnic, racial, gender, and sexual orientation diversity. Questions? Email Rev. Kristin Schmidt at revkristin@uucb.org.

April Good Neighbor (sharing our offerings): [YES Nature to Neighborhoods](#) brings together community partners providing services to youth and families in North Richmond. From their Youth Pathway pipeline that provides a decade of guidance and support to at-risk youth to their Adult Pathway that supports parents and caregivers, YES does the important work of linking local families to health and education resources.

Personal Theology

Sundays, 9:30 am, Fireside Room

April 8: Dr. Bill Garrett, Professor of Philosophy and Religion, has taught at JFK University, San Francisco State, Fromm Institute, California Institute of Integral Studies, and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. ***“Playing with Fire: The Dangerous Infatuation with Hate in 21st Century American Politics.”***

April 15: Rev. Cat Cox, UUCB Community Minister, spiritual director,

teacher, certified dream worker and workshop facilitator. ***“I’m a Weird Woman and I’m Getting Weirder!”*** Rev. Cat says: “I first heard (and immediately loved) this great line from a woman in her 90s. Now I’m claiming it! The original meaning of “weird” is ‘in touch with the other side’—the non-physical dimension of existence. Let’s explore what it has meant for great spiritual teachers through the ages to be “weird” in this sense—and why you might like to get weirder, too!”

April 22: Dr. Steve Herrmann, Jungian psychotherapist; author, poet, teacher and scholar; candidate in analytical training at C.G. Jung Institute, San Francisco. ***“Emily Dickinson: A Medicine Woman for Our Times.”***

April 29: Alex Pappas, former teacher of World Religions at College of Alameda and avid student of the ancient traditions. ***“The Metaphors of Reality: The Ageless Wisdom; Occult, Hermetic and Theosophic Teachings and Their Relevance in Today’s World of Maya.”***

Humanist Connections

Sundays, 12:30 pm, Chrysalis Room

Format: 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). All are welcome!

April 1: *Mindfulness* – Ilse Bartlett

April 8: *Stormy Daniels, Women, and Trump* – Lee Lawrence

April 15: *Thoughts on School Shootings* – Walter Gorski

April 22: *A Platform For a New Party* – Ray Nelson

April 29: *Digital Addiction* – Ilse Bartlett

Special Events in April

Thurs. April 5, 5:30 pm: Our monthly potluck supper will also be a **Passover Seder**. Unfortunately, since this will be partly catered, we have already reached our reservation limit. If you'd like to be on the waiting list, contact Marin Fischer, 510-848-2995.

Sun. April 8, 9:30 am: Thank You Breakfast. It takes a lot of people to make worship on Sunday mornings happen here at UUCB, and the ministers want to say thank you! Worship Associates, Choir members, Slide Volunteers, Ushers, Altar Decorators, Welcome Table volunteers, and everyone else who helps make worship happen on Sunday mornings is invited to join Rev. Kristin in the Social Hall at 9:30 for a special thank you breakfast (vegan and gluten-free foods included). Hope to see you there!

Sun. April 29: Undie Sunday. Bring packaged underwear for GRIP (see Social Justice News for more info).

Coming in May

Fri. May 4–Sun. May 13: Cabaret! Don't miss the Kander and Ebb musical, a fundraiser for UUCB!

Sun. May 6, 12:30 pm: LFDC's 3rd Annual Guest Speaker Luncheon, previously planned for March 4, has been rescheduled. Mark your calendar to hear **Professor James Lance Taylor**, author of *Black Nationalism in the United States: From Malcolm X to Barack Obama*. (More information in

Sun. May 6, after Worship Service: **Doctors of Durability luncheon** in the Fireside Room.

Sat. May 12, 9 am–noon: **Lay Leaders' Orientation & Calendaring Summit** (see Program Council News)

Mission and Vision Update

Rev. Kristin Schmidt

We had great participation in the third phase of our congregation's mission and vision process! Just like the previous two phases, the third featured a conversation on a Sunday after worship (February 18) and one on a Thursday after a potluck dinner and evening worship (March 1). Participation was strong at both with about 75 people participating total. Participants reviewed the data from the previous two phases of the process and then responded to the following reflection questions:

1. If we as a congregation live out our mission faithfully, if we truly allow ourselves to be guided by our values, and if we make great use of the many gifts and resources we have to offer, what will be different about our church 5 years from now? What will look, feel, and sound different?
2. Given who we've been at our best in the past, given all of the gifts we bring as a community today, given the financial challenges ahead, and given the many needs in our wider communities, what are our values calling us to make our top three priorities over the next 5 years?

We recorded everyone's responses, combined a few that were very similar to one another, and then everyone got to vote for their top three choices. Both conversations were energy and excitement-filled, but perhaps the most significant thing about them is that the two wound up independently identifying the same three priorities for the congregation:

- Financial sustainability
- Connect with our wider communities – become a place the whole community comes to learn, connect, heal, and grow
- Connect within – get to know one another across programs, become more multigenerational in all that we do

At its upcoming spring retreat, the Board will reflect deeply on these priorities and create some specific, measurable goals for the congregation to work toward together. In our system of governance (policy-based governance), we call these goals “ends.” Then, once the Board has written these ends, the Coordinating Team will work on coming up with ways that we can begin to measure how the congregation is achieving those ends.

For example, a Board might choose to write the following end: “The congregation will eliminate the deficit it has accumulated over the next 5 years.” This is an achievable goal, it is easy to measure, and by achieving it the congregation will move closer towards its overall priority of financial sustainability.

President’s Column

Jack Duggan

At the

April Board of Trustees meeting I will make a motion for the Board to recommend to the congregation that we sell the Freestone property. The motion if it passes will be voted on at a September Congregational Meeting. This has been a long time coming, and I think now is the time to call for a vote. The Board cannot sell Freestone, only the Congregation can make that

decision.

When my family joined UUCB in 2011 we were introduced to Freestone by an enthusiastic member of the committee and invited to join and contribute any skills we might have to the upkeep of Freestone. The next year we went to Freestone for the first time and enjoyed a weekend with two other families from the church. We visited Freestone a couple more times.

Freestone has a geodesic dome with a communal area and kitchen and three bedrooms and a deck with a view through the woods and hills that calms the soul. It sits on approximately ten acres of wooded land with large oaks and redwoods. It is about sixty miles from Kensington, between Sebastopol and Bodega Bay. It is a stunning piece of property. If you haven't visited Freestone and want to, I'm sure the Freestone Committee will help you do that.

Unfortunately, the dome itself has not aged well. It is coming apart at the seams and the deck and other structures need serious repairs. Two years ago it was determined that the structure was unsafe to use and since then the Freestone Committee has done some work but there is a real need for substantial investment and a professional contractor.

The Freestone Committee has worked valiantly to do what they can, but a real update is needed and that takes money. The most optimistic and conservative estimate to repair Freestone will take \$50,000 and probably much more. To make Freestone a viable and enduring option will take much more than that, upwards of two or three hundred thousand dollars. In the beginning, to build the dome and provide funds, one of the four Freestone parcels was sold and there are two remaining parcels that the committee has talked about selling to raise funds.

The remaining parcels may not be developable and it is probably more valuable to sell the property as a whole. Even if we did sell parcels to raise funds for Freestone, that is not a sustainable solution. The funds would be short of what's really needed and only put the problem off until the next time

maintenance and upkeep require another capital input. Freestone is not sustainable.

This year we have been struggling with the financial sustainability of our congregation. We are using \$750,000 from the board-designated endowment, albeit from the earnings, not the principal, to make long delayed repairs to the buildings on the Kensington campus. This was a difficult decision for the congregation to make. Like a homeowner who has a home and a second property and is struggling to maintain their home and keep it in repair, now is not the time to keep a second property that is badly in need of repair. Selling Freestone is a sacrifice that will cause our congregation anguish but it is a decision that needs to be made.

Selling Freestone is not a solution to our financial situation. The proceeds of a sale would add to our financial stability but more importantly would relieve us of the financial obligation to maintain Freestone with funds we don't have. We need to focus on what we genuinely need to be sustainable and unfortunately in my opinion Freestone is not part of that. If the board makes the motion, now is the time for questions and comments. Let the discussion begin.

Ordination of Amanda Weatherspoon

Hello, UUCB Family!

I'm excited about my upcoming Ordination! Ordination ceremonies ritualize the passing on of tradition, the introduction to a new phase in ministry, and the mutual commitment and promise between the congregation and the minister. I am honored to share this sacred ceremony with all of you! While my future isn't clear just yet, I am held by a faith and tradition which I love and am committed to knowing that I will always land exactly where I need to land. Serving this faith allows me to live fully into my personal values and strengthen our shared values. I approach this time in my life with

excitement and wonder for the gift that the Divine has provided to share in the joys and sorrows of life in a community that breathes life into a dying world. What a Blessing!

My Ordination will be on Saturday, May 19, at 2 pm at UUCB. All are welcome! But please email amandaweatherspoonord@gmail.com to let me know you will be coming so my Ordination team can plan the reception meal for the guests coming.

Sincerely,

Amanda Weatherspoon, UUCB Intern Minister

Thoughts from Community Ministry

Rev. Jane Ramsey

Sometimes

We/I just fall down

And all the old demons rise to the top

When this happens there is only one thing to do

Move within that dark cloud

Move, one step at a time.

In meditation they teach as you try to calm and center your mind, and your

mind wanders....they teach you to take note of where your mind is wandering and let it go.....

So too, as one may be slogging through life when depressed and those negative thoughts fill up your mind....note those thoughts and let them go.....

Moving...one step at a time.

Know the mist *will* lift

It will happen

Have faith

Coordinating Team Notes

Deborah Schmidt, Coordinating Team Convener

The Board has appointed an Oversight Committee for the building repairs recently approved by the congregation:

Larry Nagel from the Building and Grounds Committee, with Susan Lankford as alternate; Ira Nelken from the Endowment Committee, with Lenore Ralston as alternate; Jane Lundin from the Board of Trustees; and Tom Tripp and David Roberts from the congregation, with Randall Hudson as alternate.

A preliminary planning meeting to define cooperative processes and responsibilities was held on March 25 with Coordinating Team members and additional members of the Buildings and Grounds Committee. The Oversight Committee will meet soon to craft their mission statement.

We have an exciting new vision for UUCB fundraising, in which team members across program areas come together to design fun, profitable, non-labor-intensive events that appeal both to diverse UUs and to our wider community.

How about Paint Nite? We provide child care, bring in a food truck, and have a specialty company run a group painting adventure for us. Or an evening of folk dancing? An outdoor June Jubilee? An Easter sunrise worship service in Arlington Park? A Makers' Fair?

Have you already thought of some other beyond-the-box ideas? If so, then you are exactly the sort of creative person we need! Are you looking for an opportunity to become more involved with the UUCB community? It's possible that no volunteer path can transport you to the heart of the community more quickly.

No other volunteer experience is required. Being new to the way things work around here could be a real plus. You could even be a brand new member.

The energy and possibility generated by the Fundraising Team have huge potential not only for boosting our budget but for building the kind of truly intergenerational community we all believe in. We would love to hear from you!

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

Program Council News

Suzette Anderson Duggan, Program Council Rep for Family Ministry

It's Spring! With the end of the church year in sight, it's time to start planning for next year. A church as active as UUCB takes a lot of planning. We do this through the magical collaborative process that takes place at the **Annual Calendaring Summit**—this year on Saturday morning, May 12, 9-12.

Lay leaders from committees and groups come together to schedule meetings

and events for the next twelve months. We try to get everything you love at UUCB onto the church calendar—from Chalice Circles that focus on growing the soul to Adult Education Workshops that stimulate the intellect; from Congregational Meetings in which the membership gets down to business on voting on proposals put before it to favorite y'all come gatherings like Love Songs and Chocolate that showcase our musical talents and lift up the spirit; from ongoing programs like Religious Education that dependably steward our youth in UU values to traditional gatherings (yes, UUs have traditions and rituals) like Christmas Eve Service where the community gathers from far and wide to celebrate. And if a proposed event or date or space overlaps with another group, then the lay leaders negotiate and work it out in the spirit of our covenant.

The Program Council and Coordinating Team are preparing the agenda. Look for an email with more information about how to participate. And make sure your group or program is represented at the Summit. Contact your Program Council Rep if you have questions.

Social Justice Council News

Sheldon Jones, Reporter

Undie Sunday, April 29: As done in the past, we will have our annual **UNDIE SUNDAY** on the last Sunday in April, which gives you the opportunity to donate packaged underwear, as well as socks and pajamas, to the residents of the GRIP (Greater Richmond Interfaith Program) Family Shelter. This tradition is one of the many ways that UUCB has lovingly supported GRIP over the years. So please bring your gifts of packaged underwear, socks and/or pajamas for men, women, and children, and put them in the collection basket next to the Social Justice table. BTW, your donations don't have to be limited to underwear—any clothing for the GRIP residents would be most appreciated. Thank you. If you have questions about this, contact Ray Westergard, raywest2@sbcglobal.net.

Sunday, May 6, LFDC, Annual Guest Speaker Luncheon (postponed from March 4). **Professor James Lance Taylor** is the author of *Black Nationalism in the United States: From Malcolm X to Barack Obama*, which earned a 2012 “Outstanding Academic Title” from *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*. He is a former president of the National Conference of Black Political Scientists, served as chair of the Department of Politics at the University of San Francisco 2012–15, as faculty coordinator of the African American Studies Program 2015–17, and chair of the Committee on the Status of Blacks in Political Science for the American Political Science Association, 2016–17.

Partner Church Committee News

Stephanie Ann Blythe, Reporter

The Transylvanian Partner Church Committee is embarking on a program of revitalization. We have a busy spring calendar to launch this program, and you are invited to any and all of the following events!

Sunday, April 8, following the service, is our famous goulash lunch. Enjoy goulash, noodles, salad and dessert all for one low price. A la carte is available, too.

Saturday, April 21, 2:30 pm at Starr King School for the Ministry is the Spring Balázs Scholar Tea. This year’s scholar, Rev. Emese Bodor, will engage in lively conversation with Rev. Sofia Betancourt,* who has recently served as one of the co-presidents of the U.U.A. and was the first woman to do so! Suggested donation is \$25. Please contact Arliss Ungar at Balázs@ungar.us to RSVP or further information. (*Sophia also did her internship at UUCB.)

Sunday, May 20, 9:30 am in the Fireside Room, Balázs Scholar Rev. Emese Bordor will be the Personal Theology speaker. She will speak on “The Importance of Education in Transylvanian Unitarian Communities.” This

topic relates to our ongoing Village Education Fund in our Partner Village of Homoródújfalú.

Saturday, June 2, 7 pm in the Fireside Room, join us for a dessert social with conversation and presentations on Transylvania and Unitarians. We will wish Rev. Emese Bodor a fond farewell to UUCB. Our past intern minister, Zackrie Vinczen, will talk about his experience as the 2017 Balázs Exchange Scholar.

Can't wait? Want to get involved? Contact Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net for all the details.

UUCB Activities Looking for New Participants

Yoga for Men and Women

A new weekly yoga session will start on Tuesday, April 3rd, at 2:30 in the Fireside Room. Yoga is a great way to exercise those muscle groups that are getting flabby and to teach you how to relax. In this session we stretch and breathe and meditate while listening to music. At the end of the session you will feel revitalized and ready to conquer the world. Come to the first session and see for yourself. If you have any questions call Phyllis at 510-647-8537 evenings Tuesday to Friday.

Bluegrass and Folk Ensemble

Meets each Sunday at 1 pm in the UUCB Music Room. No experience necessary! The UUCB "Blue Folk" Ensemble aims to build community where people with no musical experience and people with a lot of musical experience can join together to create music that draws on the social justice foundations of American Folk and Bluegrass traditions. The only requirement for membership is a desire to play, sing, or just enjoy hearing acoustic guitars, banjos, bass, etc., make traditional, contemporary and progressive acoustic

music. For more information please contact co-chair Ralph Nelson at taxhelp@financial-harmony.com or 510-828-6215.

Channing Club

A free-wheeling, un-led discussion group and potluck. Topics are not arranged in advance and range from philosophy to spirituality, politics, and science. Meets 6-9 pm, fourth Sunday of each month, in the Fireside Room. Ongoing for over sixty years. For more information, call Marin Fischer 510-848-2995 or Kevin Langdon 510-524-0345.

Buildings and Grounds Committee

Larry Nagel

Work continues on the process of preparing Request for Proposals (RFPs) for the renovation of the Safir Room, the repair of the skylights above the Atrium and the Breezeway, and the mitigation of dry rot in the rafter tails of the roof. Progress has been slow due to the weather and some personal issues with key committee members.

The Board of Trustees has established the Oversight Committee, which is comprised of five church members, consisting of a representative from the Building and Grounds Committee, a representative from the Endowment Committee, a representative from the Board of Trustees, and two congregants in good standing appointed by the Board of Trustees. The committee will have its organization meeting soon.

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.

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.

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

Social Justice email list: Email sejones1950@gmail.com