

Beacon on the Hill September 2018

From the Ministers

Friends, last month we blessed the backpacks of those heading back to school, or work, or to their next adventure. With their various pens, papers, rulers and laptops, we sent our blessings, that those backpacks might be strong and resilient, and that the owners know they are loved and supported.



It seems to us that everyone could use some blessing, and some supplies. So friends, it's time to do some spiritual prep work.

What might we need to embark on another school year, another church year, another – dare we even say it? – election season? We get daunted just thinking about it; are you, too? What do we need in order to fulfill our mission and vision, and the ends (that is, goals) for our congregation in this year and into the future?

A quick reminder of those ends:

UUCB is a vibrant multicultural, anti-racist, anti-oppressive congregation.

- ***Reaching Out:*** *We embody and share Unitarian Universalism. Our communities experience UUCB as an active and dynamic partner in pursuing societal and environmental justice. People rely on UUCB in times of need.*
- ***Reaching In:*** *We invite people of goodwill to make a spiritual home with us. We celebrate the diversity of our congregation in the fullness of who we are. We reach out to one another across differences to connect*

in shared purpose. We have fun!

- ***Building up:*** *We are generous with our time, talent and treasure. We steward our financial resources responsibly. We are comfortable, open and transparent in discussing both personal and congregational financial matters.*

We'll need some supplies, a sturdy pair of jeans, perhaps, and new soles for those shoes that have almost, but not quite, worn through. We'll need encouragement, perhaps, with a touch of compassion and empathy, and maybe even a teaspoon of a (metaphorical) kick in the rear end once in a while. We'll need the energy to reach out to our surrounding community, the compassion and love to embrace people in our congregation and out in the world, and the dedication to build upon the foundations we already have in our congregation so we can have a sustainable, powerful, vibrant community for many years to come.

To reach out we'll need curiosity and courage. Our surrounding communities in the East Bay are diverse and large, and members of our congregation live in many different neighborhoods.

To reach in we'll need to be ever more welcoming, always seeking to reach our goal of being an anti-oppressive community, and keep having fun.

Friends, what's on your list? And more importantly, how can we support you in getting it?

In faith,

Revs. Christian and Kristin

Sunday Worship Services in September

Sanctuary, 11 am

Theme for September: Vision

September 2 – *Labor and Pleasure*, Rev. Leela Sinha. We think of labor as hard, as grinding, as painful. This sense is as old as Eve, as old as life itself. But is that the only way? What if labor could be a pleasure? Rev. Sinha earned her M. Div from Meadville Lombard Theological School and has served our faith both as a sexuality education trainer and parish minister. Her current ministry is in co-active coaching.

September 9 – *In Search of the “Real” America*, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt. As we get closer to November’s election, the President and his administration continue to refer only to some people as “real” Americans. So, where does that leave everyone else? This week in worship we will reconsider our faith’s central affirmation that all people have inherent worth, and how this simple yet bold claim is the moral foundation our nation most needs right now.

September 16 – *Beyond Certainty*, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt. Nothing in life is certain, but we often live as if it is. Join us as we seek after something deeper and more meaningful than certainty.

September 23 – *What Do You Do With a Vision?*, Rev. Christian Schmidt. Our congregation spent months discovering where we’re being called to go together in our next chapter. In this service we’ll explore what to do with our vision.

September 30 – *Wake Now Our Vision*, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt. This week in worship we will explore potential future directions our congregation might take as we strive to deeply live out our purpose as a liberal religious community in the East Bay. *Note: we will have our first annual All Church Evacuation Drill at the end of the service, followed by a potluck lunch.*

Personal Theology

Sundays, 9:30–10:45 am, Fireside Room

Sept. 2: Rev. Dr. John Buehrens, Harvard College and Harvard Divinity School graduate, former UUA President, retired Senior Minister of the First UU Society of San Francisco. He is also the author of six books, the latest of which is *Transcendentalist Disciples: Spiritual Friendships Among Boston Leaders for Anti-Slavery, Women's Rights, and Social Reform, 1830-1885*. Rev. Buehrens will discuss "***The Transcendentalists: Roots and Wings. Part 1: What You Don't Know You Don't Know About the Transcendentalists.***" He says, "Most of us associate the Transcendentalists with Emerson, Thoreau, individualism and Concord. Yet most of them were committed church leaders, their activism was centered in Boston, and included some dramatic moments, especially in the anti-slavery movement."

Sept. 9: Rev. Dr. John Buehrens (see above.) **Part 2: "*The Forgotten Female Transcendentalists.*"** He will discuss why we should know more about such women as Elizabeth Peabody, Margaret Fuller, Lydia Maria Child, Caroline Healey Dall, and Julia Ward Howe, among others. Brief stories of each will help to expand our understanding of the Transcendentalists' role in helping to launch the American movement for women's rights.

Sept. 16: Two UUCB visionaries, **Cordell Sloan** and **Karen Voorhees**, discuss their take on what the future is likely to hold for us. Karen brings her knowledge of Big History (PhD, cultural history) and spirituality (36 years as a meditator). Cordell brings his knowledge of UU history, his background in tech, and his own deeply grounded spirituality. "***We Have Seen This Movie Before: Reasons for Optimism About the Future in Spite of Today's Headlines.***"

Sept. 23: Carolyn West, Associate Minister for Worship and Director of Religious Education and a teacher of "World Religions for Curious People" at Northbrae Community Church. She is a published poet, essayist, and storyteller, with an MFA from Warren Wilson College. "***Wisdom Traditions Respond to the Soul's Human Cry.***"

Sept 30: Ron Campbell, multiple award-winning theater artist, poet and Cirque du Soleil clown. ***“Clown Knows: What the Lessons of a Lifetime of Performing Can Teach Us About the Pitfalls (and Pratfalls) of Becoming a Better Human.”***

Humanist Connections

Sundays, 12:30 pm, check kiosk for location

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!

Sept. 2: *What to Do About Fascism* – Anne Fitzmaurice

Sept. 9: *The Future of Green Housing* – Sean Feng

Sept. 16: *Who We Are and How We Got Here* – Marcia Bates

Sept. 23: *The World Without Us: Solutions for Population Growth* – Sherry Fuzesy

Sept. 30: *Scandinavian vs US Societies* – Lee Lawrence

Special Events in September

Sun. Sept. 9 – Solano Stroll. We plan to have a big UUCB contingent in the parade and will have an information booth throughout the day. Parade assembles at 9:30 am. Join us! (See below.)

Saturday, Sept. 15 – Annual Freestone Barbecue Picnic. Have a lovely day in Sonoma County and see for yourself what the congregation will be voting about on October 21. Stop by the Freestone table on Sundays to sign up, request a ride, or learn more about the Freestone Retreat property and the picnic.

Sept. 16 and 17 – Singing auditions for “The Great American Song Book” – see Music Matters below.

Read-Aloud Volunteer Program

Orientations for all volunteers in the Read Aloud Volunteer Program this upcoming school year will be held at UUCB in September. As attendance at an orientation is required, there are two dates offered:

Thursday, Sept. 6, 2:30-4:30 pm, or

Tuesday, Sept. 25, 10:30 am-12:30 pm

RSVP: (510) 237-0725 or info@read-aloud.org

If you're unable to attend either orientation, there will be monthly make-up orientations at the Read-Aloud office.

Join a Chalice Circle this Fall!

Lenore Ralston

Chalice Circles are “small group ministries” of 6-10 people that meet bi-weekly and center on deep and appreciative listening. Speak from your own heart without interruption or commentary on a variety of topics the group chooses. Come experience self-revelation and renewal of spirit through this unique practice. Registration begins in September with the first circles starting up in October. A registration table will be set up in the Social Hall, or contact Lenore Ralston, 510-527-0696.

The Chalice Team: Joanne Wile, Dick Sherman, Cynthia Asprodites, Lisa Maynard, and Lenore Ralston

Solano Stroll, Sunday, September 9

A UUCB All-Church Event, Coordinated by Program Council

Come join the fun, representing UUCB in the Solano Stroll Parade! Join our local community in celebrating its diversity and vibrancy. The Solano Stroll is one of the largest street fairs in the country, attracting over 250,000 visitors

annually. It is a great place to meet our East Bay neighbors and to share our enthusiasm for UUCB.

Since 2016, UUCB has fielded impressive parade contingents – marching, singing, playing our kazoos, wearing our “Standing on the Side of Love”(or “Side with Love”) t-shirts and carrying the banners that proclaim our values. Participating in this public event shows our children and youth how UUCB shares our message of compassion and resistance.

So please save the date and plan to join us. This is a great event for the whole family – not too strenuous for little ones or for people with limited mobility. Yellow “Love” t-shirts are available at the Book Table in the Social Hall. You can learn more – and **volunteer to help at our Solano Stroll booth**– by contacting one of these Program Council members:

Social Justice	Beth Jerde	510 918-4336	bjerde55@hotmail.com
Music/Arts	Gail Simpson	510 452-2910	SimpsonDrG@earthlink.net
Adult Ed	Lonnie Moseley	510 388-1444	lonniemoseley@hotmail.com
Family Ministry	Suzette Duggan	510 910-5567	sja072013@gmail.com

Freestone Picnic, Saturday, September 15

All UUCB members and friends—and members of other UU churches in the greater Bay Area—are invited to a picnic at our Freestone Retreat on **Saturday, September 15**, 11 am–3 pm. Rev. Christian will lead a brief worship service at noon. There will be a barbecue lunch (potluck contributions welcome but not required), fun activities, conversation, relaxation, and meditative and worshipful moments. We hope that church members will take this opportunity to become acquainted, or reacquainted, with the Retreat, in view of the big decisions all will be asked to make about its future in the coming

weeks or months. It's a great place to bring the whole family. Carpooling will be organized and encouraged. The address is 10635 Barnett Valley Road, Sebastopol.

If you can't come that Saturday but would like to visit the Retreat, contact Bob Moore (510-913-1009), Terry Stokes (510-725-7850), or Don Klose (510-697-5307).

Workshop: Women and the Wisdom of the Weird

Saturday, October 13, 10 am–3 pm, led by Rev. Cat Cox as a follow-up to her Personal Theology presentation at UUCB, “A Weird Woman Getting Weirder” (listen to the audio [here](#)). \$65 including continental breakfast at 9:30. To ^{Rev. Cathleen Cox} register, please contact [Lonnie Moseley](#).

Family Ministry

Zackrie Vinczen, Family Ministry Coordinator

On August 26, Family Ministry held its Fall Teacher and Advisor Training. With this event behind us, our Religious Education Teachers and Advisors are ready to start their classes. Family Ministry staff and lay leaders are still busily working to finalize all the logistics as our September 16 start date approaches. Our hope in attending to all these details is to provide another year of faith formation and meaningful engagement for children, youth, and families within the UUCB community. We also hope we have some fun along the way.

There are a few events in the months ahead that we are particularly excited about and would like to highlight. One of these events is a workshop on “Parenting & Mindful Digital Life” being offered by Susan Wansing and her colleague Claudia L'Amoreaux. This workshop will “explore the challenges of

technology in our lives and how we can best support our children and teens as they live into the digital world.” It is scheduled to take place on October 6 from 10 am to 12:30 pm in the Fireside Room at UUCB.

Also, the next week, on October 14, Family Ministry and the Program Council will be hosting an All-Church Picnic from 12:15 to 3 pm. This event is a time for members of UUCB to enjoy food and fun together. We encourage everyone to attend and join in the festivities. More details will be shared as the date approaches.

Parents’ Night Out, a monthly opportunity to meet briefly with other parents and then have some time away from the kids while UUCB provides free childcare, starts up again on September 8, 4:30–8 pm.

In March of 2019 Family Ministry will be offering a K-1st Our Whole Lives sexual education class. This class makes use of age-appropriate resources to teach children about bodies, births, babies, and family structures. It is rooted in our shared UU values and seeks to affirm the agency and worth of participants. This eight-session class is scheduled to take place between March 3 and May 5 after church on Sundays. There will be an info session on February 10 for families interested in learning more about the program. Please feel free to reach out to Merrin or Zackrie in Family Ministry if you have any questions about this class.

One more update we would like to share with everyone is the decision to not offer a Coming of Age program this year. Part of this decision came about because of other changes to our youth programming that are in the works. This coupled with the time and financial resources Coming of Age requires led Family Ministry to make the decision to hold off on offering this program. We hope to be able to resume offering it in the future, but felt it was wise to focus our energies on other areas of program development this year.

For more information on any of these or other events, we encourage you to visit the Family Ministry section of the UUCB website or the church calendar.

There you will find information about classes being offered and special events we have planned.

Coordinating Team Notes

Deborah Schmidt, Coordinating Team Convener

What is a vergger, anyway?? I had some fun looking it up (I confess to being a closet etymologist). Originally referring to a church official who carried the verge, a staff of office, it is one term for a church caretaker. This usage is common in the Anglican and Episcopalian traditions and also in our oldest American UU churches.

So a hearty welcome to Anthony Cruz, our new vergger, who started August 26. He will work 9–1 Sundays. His responsibilities include opening and closing, running the coffee service, and making sure set-up needs are met. Sound will continue to be run by volunteers, so if any of you have secret roadie aspirations, please come forward!

Being short-staffed this summer, as challenging as it has been, has helped us understand what it takes to run this place and given us opportunities to be more involved. If you want to hear an inspiring defense of volunteerism, just get Mac Lingo going on this subject.

Trainings are underway for the ushers and family ministry volunteers who will help with our September 30 evacuation drill, which will take place near the close of worship service. Many thanks to Greg Lemieux for his meticulous planning.

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.

Social Justice Council News

Literature, Film and Drama Contingent:

Some of us thought a lot was “lost in translation,” even with translators in the room, on August 5th. Shahrnush Parsipur, the LFDC’s guest novelist, memoirist and writer of children’s books, did not understand our awe of her courage, stamina and will to live during four incarcerations in prison, wherein she withstood – and watched others suffer worse – ill-treatment and abuse. We surmised that her writing was her salvation. Many thanks to Fereshte and Frank Mofidi, Mac Lingo, and especially to Susan Singh, who introduced us to Shahrnush. For September, we’re reading the works of Tim Wise: *Dear White People: Letter to a New Minority*, and *White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son*. All are welcome to join us!

Immigrant Justice:

In the campaign to raise money for bond for those immigrant adults detained at the West County Detention Facility by the Sheriff’s department under contract from ICE, UUCB has raised over \$6500 and efforts throughout the area have raised over \$100,000. There are no longer any federal ICE detainees being held at WCDF. Unfortunately for those who have been transferred, this has created negative consequences to their immigration court cases and access to legal counsel and family visitation. We will continue to support them and their families as they fight to come back home. There will be one last interfaith vigil at the WCDF on September 1, 11 am–noon.

The Social Justice Council is soliciting nominations for next year’s Good Neighbor program.

Proposed organizations must be 501(c)3 nonprofits that promote social, economic, racial and/or environmental justice or peace. The organization needs to be based in Alameda or Contra Costa County. We will be reviewing all of the proposed nonprofits at our next Social Justice Council meeting on

the evening of Sunday, September 9. Nomination forms can be picked up at the Social Justice Council table before or after the service. Please turn in your completed form to the social justice council mailbox in the office. If you have any questions, please contact Natalie Campbell at nataliehcampbell@yahoo.com.

Upcoming Event:

The Social Justice Council invites you to join us on Saturday, October 13, at 7 pm for a FREE screening of the film **HUMAN FLOW** by Chinese dissident Ai Weiwei. After years of house arrest, he was given back his passport two years ago and relocated to Berlin. He then visited 23 countries within a year, filming refugees in camps around the globe. FYI: This event coincides with Parents Night Out, when the church offers free childcare.

The doors open at 5:30 pm for art-making with Sylvia Parisotto; story-telling with our guests; and light refreshments. FREE — tix REQUIRED: humanflowuucb.eventbrite.com

TRAILER: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVZGyTdk_BY

Will our global society emerge from fear, isolation, and self-interest and choose a path of openness, freedom, and respect for humanity?

Thoughts from Community Ministry

Rev. Sue Magidson, Community Minister

Where is Jeremiah??

UU ministers are trained to be flexible – to have the capacity to serve in congregations *and* in the community. Some ministers spend their careers

serving in one of these settings; others move back and forth between the two. Such is the case with the Rev. Jeremiah Kalendae. Jeremiah began his ministry as the Beyond Sunday minister at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco. When he began serving as Director of Admissions at Starr King School for the Ministry, he became one of UUCB's Affiliated Community Ministers, working closely with our Membership Committee.

Jeremiah took a leave from community ministry last spring when he was asked to serve as sabbatical minister at the First Unitarian Church of Oakland. I'm delighted to announce that he's just begun a three-year contract ministry with the Unitarian Universalists of Petaluma. This means that Jeremiah will no longer be serving as one of UUCB's community ministers. We're grateful for his service to UUCB and wish him well.

Meanwhile, UUCB has four other Affiliated Community Ministers – the Rev. Cat Cox, the Rev. Jane Ramsey, the Rev. Theresa Hardy, and me. We're ordained UU ministers who have chosen to focus our professional ministries in the community and to formally affiliate with UUCB. In practice, this means that our paid work is in the community and that we each contribute voluntarily to UUCB.

For example, my “day job” is as a hospital chaplain. Over the years, I've contributed to UUCB by preaching, leading midweek evening worship and programs, speaking at Personal Theology, and serving as one of the Sunday chaplains. I've been a member of UUCB for over twenty years, and am delighted to serve my beloved community in this way.

Partner Church Committee News

Stephanie Ann Blythe, Reporter

Even though UUCB will not be the host congregation for the 2018-2019 Balázs Scholar, we want you to know something about Reverend Lehel Molnár. He writes:

“I graduated from the Berde Mózed Unitarian High School in my home town of Székelykeresztúr, Hargita, Romania during the communist era in 1987, and I continued my studies at the Unitarian Faculty of the Protestant Theological Institute in Kolozsvár between 1990-1995. After finishing my Unitarian theological study, I was appointed as the archivist of the Hungarian Unitarian Church Archives at the Headquarters of the Unitarian Church, as well as I was assistant minister at the First Church in Kolozsvár where I served for nearly two years. I took part in a professional training as an archivist in Debrecen (Hungary) between 1996-1997.

“My wife, Éva Szabó, is presenter and editor at the Transylvanian Hungarian Television; her television program’s name is Faith Life. She is studying applied theology at the Babes-Bolyai University here in Kolozsvár. When we married in 2014 she had already 3 children; I am their foster father. The biggest child is a girl Ágnes 21 years old, the second one is a boy Nándor he is 18 years old and the smallest is also a girl Boglárka. She is 11 years old and will come with us to Berkeley.”

As always, any hospitality you can provide the scholar and his family are very welcome. Bicycle helmets; BART tickets (really helpful); tickets to shows, plays and museums; dinners, outings anywhere in the Bay Area are among the things you can offer. One of us has even provided music lessons! In a few months we will need donations of winter clothing for the family. There are so many ways you can help and enjoy getting to know our international guests.

You know whom to bring any and all donations, it’s [Stephanie Ann Blythe](#) or [Anne Greenwood](#) at any time.

Music Matters

Bryan Baker, Director of Music

Luminescence, our choir of adult singers, starts its regular season in September. On the 9th we will sing at

the Solano Stroll, and from the 16th on, the choir will joyfully offer music in Sunday services. We welcome new members. There is no audition needed. Come try out a session any Thursday night at 7:30 in the sanctuary. *Try it; you might like it*



Ola Gjeilo, the young Norwegian-American composer whose “Luminous Night of the Soul” was the focus of a Music Sunday two years ago, will be back this year. We will sing his beautiful new work “Sacrīs Solemniis” with words by our own Deborah Schmidt in October. December holds the beloved

Sing-along *Messiah*; February brings the happy, light-hearted romance of Love Songs & Chocolate; and that towering master Ludwig von Beethoven brings together UU choirs and orchestra in March. And, in conjunction with the People of Color Caucus, we will sing part of Dave Brubeck's inspiring work on reconciliation, "The Gates of Justice" with jazz trio.

Donna Davis is holding auditions for **The Great American Song Book**: show tunes and popular songs of the 1920s, '30s and '40s including George Gershwin and Cole Porter are still being sung by today's entertainers. We are hoping to see some new faces and hear new voices in this, the Fall show for Theatre of the Blue Moon. Auditions are September 16, 1–4 pm and September 17, 7–9 pm in the Sanctuary; performances are October 12, 14, 19 and 20. To schedule an audition, please call Lynne Cahoon, [510-526-5638](tel:510-526-5638), after September 1. Be prepared to sing, memorized and a cappella, one of these three songs: "You Made Me Love You," "You Took Advantage of Me," "I Cried for You." (You may ask for a starting note.)

Yours in harmony,
Bryan

Project Oversight Committee Report

**Larry Nagel, Ira Nelken, Jane Lundin, Dave
Roberts, Tom Tripp**

Our Architect, who is also serving as Project Manager, has prepared bid packages and received contractor bids for the projects approved by the congregation on January 28.

Bid Package 1, Safir Room & Skylights: This bid package includes new exterior wall and windows, new interior finishes of walls, ceilings and floors, lighting, heating and cooling, as well as repair and replacement of adjacent skylights and clerestory windows above the Safir room, which contributed to the damage.

Status: Contract has been awarded, and work will be starting in late August, with completion anticipated in January of 2019.

Bid Package 2, Exterior Painting, sealing, caulking and rafter tail repairs: This package is generally intended to repair and secure the outside of the main building, and repair the rotted rafter tails.

Status: Two Bids have been received and are being reviewed by the Architect, who is expected to make a recommendation by September 1.

Bid Package 3, Main Atrium Skylights: Repair and/or replacement of the leaking atrium skylights.

Status: The architect continues to work on this bid package and has secured some preliminary estimates from various contractors.

With the contract awarded for Bid Package 1, bids received for Bid Package 2, and with a current estimate of Bid Package 3, the committee currently anticipates that this work will all be completed within the allocated budget. Feel free to direct questions to any of the committee members.

Buildings and Grounds Committee

After a hiatus, the committee met with Rev. Christian, Deborah Schmidt and new lead facilities coordinator Warren Smith on August 23. We scheduled a work party for volunteers to help spruce up the buildings and grounds on the morning of Saturday, October 13. We hope to see you there!

Meetings of the committee will now take place on Thursday afternoons at 4. The next one will be on October 4. If you would like to join the committee, contact Larry Nagel (lwn@att.net) after September 30.

The County has presented us with one more hurdle in the permitting process for cutting down our dead and dying Monterey pines: a review by the state Fish and Wildlife Department, with a public comment period. This process should be completed by the end of September, after which we will solicit new bids for the work.

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 now the **20th** of the month. Please try to be on time! **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 on 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