

Beacon on the Hill January 2017

From the Ministers

Revs. Christian and Kristin Schmidt



Our worship theme for January is prophecy. When we hear the word “prophecy” many of us think of the prophets in the Bible, or Islam’s prophet Muhammad. For others, this word might evoke an image of a mysterious hooded figure with a crystal ball delivering a prediction about the future. At its core, prophecy is simply the act of speaking truth to power. That might seem innocent enough, but prophets in every place and time always seem to speak truths that threaten to destabilize the status quo.

This month in worship, as our country enters a time when the scope and limits of our leaders’ power are uncertain, we will explore our religious and cultural heritage of prophesy. Carried faithfully by Elijah and John the Baptist, Michael Servetus and Theodore Parker, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper and today’s leaders in the work for justice and equality, the torch of prophetic liberal ministry is now in our hands. As such, we ask you to consider how and where you might be called to speak *your* truths for the sake of a better world.

We are also working with the Social Justice Council to consider which imminent needs in our wider community might align best with our congregation’s resources, talents, and gifts. We are exploring how we might become a sanctuary congregation, how we might offer medical support to elders if Medicare is abolished, and everything in between. We hope you will share your ideas and questions with us and that you will join the Social Justice Council in conversation about this at its next potluck meeting on Wednesday, January 11 at 6 pm.

To help empower our ministry as a congregation even more, we are thrilled to share that we've begun accepting applications for an intern minister to begin next fall! It will be wonderful to share our gifts with a minister in formation and to receive the many gifts they will bring to our ministry together. And as we dream about and discern all we may be called to be and do as a community next church year, we encourage everyone to begin thinking about how much this church and its ministries mean to you, and what time, talent, and treasure you can commit in the upcoming season of stewardship.

In faith and gratitude,

Kristin and Christian

Worship Services in January

Sundays at 9:30 and 11:15 am (except
Jan. 1)

Theme for Month: **Prophecy**

January 1 ***New Year's Potluck***

Brunch, Revs. Kristin and Christian Schmidt. What better way to start the New Year than with brunch at church!

We'll kick things off with a short service of readings and songs, and then we'll break bread and chat together about how we can make 2017 a good year for ourselves, our congregation, and our wider communities. **11:15 service only**

January 8 ***Resist and Release***, Rev. Kristin Schmidt. While anger at injustice can be useful in fueling our work to build a better world, it can easily turn into exhaustion and bitterness. Join us for a worship experience about why our call is to work not for domination but liberation for all, and a ritual to release the grudges that have built up in our hearts.

January 15 ***MLK Sunday***, Revs. Kristin and Christian Schmidt. This week in worship we will honor the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and explore the prophetic work of today's racial justice leaders.

January 22 ***Unacceptable***, Rev. Christian Schmidt. From the figures of the Old Testament to the activists, preachers and leaders of today, the prophetic tradition has and continues to be a vital part of our world. People, often unpopular and marginalized in their time, have told the truth as they see it no matter the consequences. In our time, this tradition has never been more important, and our truth-telling is more needed than ever.

January 29 ***Let It Be a Dance***, Rev. Sue Magidson with Kathryn Jay and dancer Sarah Bush. How might we dance with life's challenges: in and out, back and forth, following and leading, learning and teaching, holding and releasing, engaging and resting, lightly and seriously? Can we do a dance of wholeness – “both/and” in an “either/or” world?

January Good Neighbor (Sharing Our Offerings):

The [Berkeley Food Pantry](#) is a non-profit organization providing monthly bags of nutritious and delicious emergency groceries to Berkeley and Albany residents in need. Through the combined efforts of two paid part-time staff, a core of 50 dedicated volunteers, the Alameda County Community Food Bank, community members, local businesses, and the USDA Emergency Food Assistance Program, we are able to provide enough emergency groceries for 3 days or 9 meals to over 2,000 Berkeley and Albany residents monthly.

Personal Theology Schedule

Sunday mornings at 9:30 am in the
Fireside Room

January 1 No session.

**January 8: The Rev. Kristin
Grassel Schmidt, *Guide My Feet*.**

Rev. Schmidt, UUCB's new Senior Co-
Minister, long-time UU member,
mother, singer, and Star Trek
enthusiast, will share some of her
personal theological grounding and
explore her conviction that growing deeper liberal faith is the most important
work we as a community can do for our hurting world today.

January 15: Cordell Sloan, *The History and Theology of Martin*

Luther King, Jr. Cordell Sloan is a UUCB member, a technology guru, a
dream expert, and a jazz musician. In the early 1960s, young Cordell and his
brother Clifford were enrolled by their father, the Rev. Cordell Sloan Sr., in a
white school. When denied admission, Rev. Sloan sued and won, resulting in
the desegregation of public schools in Wilson County, Tennessee.

January 22: Hana Matt, *Increase Your Happiness: Methods from*

***Scientific Studies and the World's Religions (Part 1)*.** Hana Matt has
taught world religions and spiritual direction at Graduate Theological Union
and the Chaplaincy Institute and is an author, spiritual director and
counselor.

January 29: Hana Matt (see bio above.) *Increase Your Happiness:*
Methods from Scientific Studies and the World's Religions (Part
***2)*.**

Humanist Connections Schedule

Sundays at 12:45 pm, followed by a potluck at 2:15 pm. Check kiosk in Atrium for location.

Format: A 10-minute presentation followed by moderated, timed discussion. All are welcome!

January 1: **Why Wars, and Who Benefits?**, Earl Williamson

January 8: **Voting: RCV, and Abolishing Electoral College**, Paul Ulbrich

January 15: **Health Update & Lengthening Telomeres**, Lee Lawrence

January 22: **Fake News**, Stuart Sugden

January 29: **Fear**, Ann Chapman

Special Events in January

See website or “The Week Ahead” for details.

Sat. Jan. 7: [“Cracking the Codes” film and workshop](#), 1 pm

Sat. Jan 14: [Kitchen Summit](#) 10 am, [Jewelry Makers Faire](#) 1 pm

Family Ministry

Merrin Clough, Director of Family Ministry

As the New Year arrives I want to express gratitude for the many outstanding volunteers who give shape to Family Ministry here at UUCB. We have over 55 volunteers who invest time and love into this community by teaching weekly religious education classes, special programs like Our Whole Lives and Coming of Age, and supporting our youth groups, parent groups, and leadership teams. Together we co-create a spiritual home guided

by the transforming power of love. Now, more than any other time, communities like ours with progressive religious values are essential. With all of the political turmoil in our world, what a gift it is to know that there are people here in our community who are practiced in helping children to develop moral compasses attuned to the challenges of these times. Thank you.

Our next Teacher & Advisor Training is January 22 from 12:30 to 3:00 pm. We will explore how to make our programs with children and youth more relevant to the current political climate. We'll share insights and techniques on drawing clear links to our UU values and to events that are happening in the world that are relevant to the children and youth. In addition there will be some safety training and general housekeeping items. Lunch and childcare will be provided. [Please RSVP](#). You'll need an [InFellowship](#) account to do so. If you don't have one, please sign up. It's a huge help to us.

Our Whole Lives – K-1st grades

This January we are offering an outstanding sexuality education class for K-1st graders, [Our Whole Lives \(OWL\)](#), meeting on Sundays from 1 to 2 pm through March.

Rooted in Unitarian Universalist values, OWL supports parents in educating children about birth, babies, bodies, and families. Sessions will engage children with stories, songs, and activities that are age-appropriate vehicles for sexuality education. In addition to eight class sessions, this program is designed to promote dialogue at home with weekly homework activities for parents and children to do together and a helpful parent guidebook.

To learn more about the class, attend the optional **OWL Info Session** on January 22 from 9 to 10:30 am. All participating families must attend the **Parent Child Orientation** on January 29 from 12:45 to 3:15 pm.

Space is limited. [Register your child online](#) at

[https://uucb.infellowship.com/UserLogin/Index?](https://uucb.infellowship.com/UserLogin/Index?ReturnUrl=%2fForms%2f341500)

ReturnUrl=%2fForms%2f341500. If you don't have an [InFellowship](#) account, please sign up.

Community Ministry

Rev. Sue Magidson, UUCB Affiliated Community Minister

In my work as a chaplain at San Leandro Hospital, I serve everyone – patients, staff, and visitors. When I see families and friends keeping vigil at their loved ones' bedsides, I check with them about self care: are they remembering to eat? hydrate? sleep? get fresh air and exercise? take a break? I tell them how easy it is to lose track of these human necessities when focused on a loved one's needs. I remind them that they need to take care of themselves so they can care for their loved one. I advise them to put on their own oxygen masks first.

We would all do well to heed this advice as we fear for the health of our country. Our collective sense of urgency and alarm is similar to what comes with a dire prognosis: we've received horrifying news, and the day-to-day updates keep getting worse. No one knows what lies ahead. There are serious reasons for concern *and* there is much we can do to make a difference. In order to care for our country and those most vulnerable, we will need to take excellent care of ourselves. It's going to be a long haul.

As we step up to these challenges, may we find healthy rhythms of rest, reflection, and re-engagement. May we seek out joy, laughter, love and beauty. May we prioritize kindness, compassion, and justice. May we be gentle with ourselves and others. And may we remember to take periodic breaks from the news!

Coordinating Team Notes

Lisa Maynard, Coordinating Team Convener

Happy New Year!

For years, as an employee and later as a volunteer, I have focused on finances and budget planning in January. Our church fiscal year, like that of many organizations, begins July 1, and it takes us a few months to complete our budget process, from initial planning through congregational approval. These financial ponderings at a time of short days and cold weather help me to focus on renewal and possibilities, instead of hiding under my blankets and waiting for spring.

Our co-ministers have brought a fresh perspective and a wealth of training and experience to our congregation. The CT has been discussing their ideas for use of our resources to foster community, hope and action in 2017 and 2018. One priority we have already established is the hiring of an intern minister, and indeed the search for an intern has begun! Our church has long supported ministerial development this way, and has benefited from the energy, time and thoughtfulness of our interns.

Be sure to look for announcements of budget information sessions, so that you can learn about ideas and proposed changes for the 2017-18 fiscal year!

A note about work in the Safir Room, the Chrysalis Room, and the upstairs Conference Room: progress has been made, and the work to put these rooms back into use will continue in January. We can't predict the dates of availability yet. We will be able to provide more timely information in the weekly announcements (The Week Ahead via email, the pink announcement sheet available at church) as contracts are finalized. As before, groups with activities scheduled in these three rooms are notified by our scheduling coordinator as she adjusts reservations to accommodate the activities while the rooms remain unavailable.

The Coordinating Team meets twice monthly, on the first and third

Wednesdays from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. If you're interested in attending, please contact me (lbmaynard3@me.com) to verify our schedule and meeting place. Questions for the CT? Email CT@uucb.org.

Treasurer's Report

Happy New Year!

The UUCB budget cycle: how is the sausage made?

Our Fiscal year 2017-2018 budget cycle has begun.

Budget request forms have been distributed to programs (lay leaders) and departments (staff). These are due back to me by **January 23**.

Prior to receiving these forms, I will meet with the Coordinating Team to review opportunities and risks for the coming fiscal year.

Once I have received the program and department budget requests, I will update the budget template.

February: The draft budget is submitted to the Coordinating Team. Draft budget numbers are given to Stewardship.

March: Commitment Sunday. This year Stewardship expects pledges to be received on time! (Good luck with that.) I am here to encourage you to consider turning in this paperwork sooner rather than later.

Why does getting the paperwork in for pledges on Commitment Sunday matter?

Without timely receipt of pledges, it makes the next steps more difficult:

April: Finalize budget. We prefer to take the guesswork out of will the late pledges materialize? Or should we start cutting line items? This is always a

difficult choice and the one most crucial to moving forward with presenting the budget to the board of trustees, and then ... drum roll please:

May: Presentation of the Budget to Congregation at our Annual Meeting.

That's our recipe. Start the New Year with planning your budget to be ready to turn in your pledge on Commitment Sunday in March. Thanking you all for joining our annual budget ritual.

Namaste,

Mary M Muehlbach

Social Justice News

Cracking the Codes Saturday, January 7th from 1 to 5 pm. The entire congregation is invited to attend this Confronting Racism conference spearheaded by the LFDC (Literature, Film and Drama Contingent of the Confronting Racism Project) with thanks to the financial support from UUCB's World Peace Committee. UUCB members and friends attending will engage in talking about the system of racial inequity and implicit bias, prompted by stories in the film. This intensive training leaves people with new questions and the inspiration to engage in change. Hold the date and pass the word. Snacks as well as childcare will be provided.

Social Justice Council Next Monthly Potluck/Meeting is on Wednesday, January 11, 6 pm, Fireside Room. We will make a decision to determine our meeting schedule (i.e., either second Sundays or Wednesdays, or alternating). Representatives from our Good Neighbors have been invited to (briefly) educate us on their work.

In light of the election, our ministers are looking toward the Social Justice Council to discern, seriously consider and determine, how best we can serve the most vulnerable. Their suggestion is that we find one area to focus on so they both can help to direct the entire congregation to work on addressing

this one area. Our mission for this meeting is to consider all suggestions gathered at our last meeting and come up with one area of focus.

Training in Nonviolent Communication – February 18, 1–5 pm.

This workshop will follow up on the Cracking the Codes training and is an opportunity to learn skills to communicate with people who have had life experiences that are different from yours.

LFDC (Literature, Film and Drama Contingent of the Confronting Racism Project) At our December 4th meeting it was interesting to hear the recorded passion of Margaret Mead and James Baldwin as they rapped on race relations in the world of the '70s, especially for those of us who had read the book. (And we all gained a deeper appreciation for modern-day pod casts and ear buds ... as we listened to them on 33-1/3 records!) Skipping January, **our next meeting will on February 5th** in the Fireside Room at 12:30, to discuss J.D. Vance's book: *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*. Contact: camilleparker@comcast.net.

Social Justice Sponsored Project Applications

Each year the UUCB Social Justice Council presents to the congregation a proposal for a “Sponsored” social justice project for approval at the May annual congregational meeting. A sponsored project is one that would receive congregational support in the form of resources, such as worship time, funding, etc.

For the second (church) year in a row, the sponsored project has been “Confronting Racism.” It has held several very successful events, plans to hold more, has put out educational materials, and formed discussion groups.

To apply for sponsorship of your project, you need to gather a group of members who commit to devoting time and energy to the project, and you must complete an application for submission to the Social Justice Council. The completed application must be submitted by March 1, 2017 to

maw.jane@gmail.com.

More Opportunities to DO Social Justice

Ceasefire Walks 7 pm Friday nights in Richmond contact maw.jane@gmail.com.

Volunteers Needed: to “Read Aloud” with elementary school children in Richmond and San Pablo. Contact [Judy Sam](#).

Volunteers Needed: at GRIP to prepare and serve lunch to hungry and homeless people at the Souper Center in Richmond. Monthly, fourth Tuesday – contact [Ray Westergard](#).

Immigration Vigil: First Saturday each month, West County Detention Facility, 5555 Giant Highway, Richmond; maw.jane@gmail.com to carpool.

Social Justice Table: Be sure to take a look at the Social Justice Council table each Sunday for what’s new, and encourage newcomers to check it out.

Thursday Nights at UUCB

Gather at 5:30 pm – Dinner at 6 pm –
Vespers at 7 pm

Please join us for Richie Dawkins’s wonderful catered suppers at church on Thursdays.

January 5: Dijon and Maple Glazed Pork Loin with Roasted Apples (or Tofu Version for Vegetarians); Thyme Roasted Potatoes; Roasted Broccoli with Carrots; House Salad; Chocolate Mousse

January 12: Chicken Tikka Masala (or Tofu Version for Vegetarians); Saag Paneer; Channa Dal with Cauliflower; Saffron Basmati Rice Pilaf; House Salad; Mango Pudding Cake

January 19: Pasta Bolognese (or Florentine for Vegetarians); Roasted Herbed Vegetables; Caesar Salad; Chocolate Hazelnut Tart

January 26: Mediterranean Chicken (Crispy Falafels for Vegetarians); Pearl Couscous Pilaf; Hummus; Babaganoush; Pita; Garlicky Sautéed Spinach; House Salad; Sorbet and Cookies

Reservations: Email suppers@uucb.org or sign the sheet outside the office. Deadline is 10 pm Tuesday. **Vegetarian and gluten-free options by advance reservation only.**

Adults: \$15 (includes wine, light snacks, and dessert). Children under 12 eat for free! Two adults + two youth ages 12-18: \$35.

Vespers is an intimate half-hour (or less) worship service in the Fireside Room, led by one of our co-ministers or worship associates, with meditative music, a reading, singing, and a story, participatory activity or homily. Come check it out!

Tree of Life

Dorothy Herzberg

No information received this month. *The “Tree of Life” celebrates and marks events in the life journey of our members. If you have items to share, please submit them to Dorothy Herzberg, dorothyherzberg@gmail.com.*

**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 membership information 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.

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

Deadline for submissions to the February Beacon is January 15. Submit items to beacon@uucb.org.