

Beacon on the Hill December 2016

From the Ministers

Revs. Christian and Kristin Schmidt



If you walked up to a stranger on the street and asked them what they know about the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, what would they say? If you asked your neighbor in the pew the same question, what would they say? And what would you say?

Our monthly worship theme is presence: how we are and how we are perceived. What does our physical, virtual, and community presence mean? To whom are we present? How are we present to them? And ... is that the way we want to be?

We'll be asking questions this month: what does being present mean? How can we be fully present in a world that calls us constantly in so many different directions?

For 125 years, this congregation has been a fixture in the East Bay. We've been a presence for liberal religion, a voice for justice, reason, and compassion. Tens of thousands have passed through our doors, have been a part of worship, and learned in our religious education classes. Even more have been affected by our social justice efforts in the wider community. We've been a presence.

With new ministers and entering into a new era in our congregation, it's time to ask what presence we might like to have now and in the future. No doubt we'll carry many things from the past, and add or replace some others.

This month, we'll be asking questions about who we might become as a

congregation: should we consider becoming a sanctuary congregation? What would it mean for us to sponsor a refugee family? Should we envision our presence in the community in new and exciting ways—satellite congregations, mission centers, bigger presences at community events, like we had this year at the Solano Stroll?

These are (some of) the questions. As we explore them in worship this month, we invite you to explore some of them in your lives. Who am I? To whom am I present? And what do I want that to be like?

Come, explore these issues with us this month!

In faith,

Christian and Kristin

Special Events in December

Friday, Dec. 2, 7–9 pm: **Youth Holiday Party & Yankee Swap**

Sundays, Dec. 4 and 11, 10 am–1:30 pm: **Holiday Fair** with a silent auction; sale of handicrafts, decorations, food, and recycled gifts; craft activities; light lunches; gift wrapping service.

Saturday, Dec. 10, 1–4:30 pm: **Christmas baking and decorating party** (contact [Ann Harlow](#))

Saturday, Dec. 10, 2:30–5 pm: **Sacred Ecstatic Music** workshop with Rabbi Tsvi (see below)

Saturday, Dec. 10, 4:30–8 pm: **Answering the Big Questions** discussion with the co-ministers for parents, guardians and grandparents

Sunday, Dec. 18, 6 pm: **Messiah Sing-Along** (see below)

Sunday, Dec. 18, 7 pm: Mist Tree Moon Circle Solstice Celebration

Monday, Dec. 19, afternoon: Help create our tinsel labyrinth with Jim Acock and Carol Carlisle (please schedule in advance by emailing Carol or call 510-967-3672)

Saturday, Dec. 24, 5:30 pm: Volunteers needed to serve dinner at GRIP shelter (contact arielwest@yahoo.com)

During this season of giving, please donate generously, as you are able, to:

- The Holiday Fair and Silent Auction
- the Staff Appreciation Fund
- the Ministers' Discretionary Fund (Christmas Eve offering)
- the church's General Fund or Endowment, if you are inclined to give some extra support and take a year-end tax deduction (gifts of appreciated stocks are welcome!)

Worship Services in December

Sundays at 9:30 and 11:15 am (except Dec. 25)

Theme for Month: **Presence**

December 4: **From You I Receive,**

Rev. Kristin Schmidt with Mary

Muehlbach. This week in worship our

Pastoral Associates will help us reflect

on what it means to be fully present with one another and how giving and receiving the experience of feeling truly heard can transform us as individuals and as a community.

December 11: **Music Sunday: Carols & Lullabies**, Bryan Baker with Jeanne Foster. This Sunday explores the music of the visionary songwriter Leonard Cohen, who died in November. We will also rejoice in Bay Area composer Conrad Susan's cycle *Carols and Lullabies*, which draws on Latin American musical traditions of the *Posada* (a ritual re-enactment of Mary and Joseph's search for a lodging in Bethlehem, performed in the days before Christmas).

December 18: **Together in Darkness and Light**, Rev. Christian Schmidt and Merrin Clough with Cordell Sloan. Many traditions have framed this season of shorter days and longer nights as a triumph of light over darkness. Join us this Sunday as we explore what the darkness, too, has to teach us about patience, faith, and hope. This is a service for all ages.

December 24: **Christmas Eve**, Revs. Christian and Kristin Schmidt will be at both services

- **5 pm, Family Service**, with Merrin Clough and Kathryn Jay. In this shorter service geared toward children and families, we will hear the Christmas story, pray together, sing carols, and light candles. Everyone is invited to bring cookies to share after the service!
- **10 pm, Lessons and Carols**, with David Roberts. In this contemplative service, our gifted choir will help us weave together sacred narration, modern poetry, prayer, traditional carols, special music, and candlelight for a refreshing take on the Christmas story.

December 25: **No 9:30 service, 11:15 service only. Holiday "Jeans 'n' Jammies" Sing-along.** We will gather in the Fireside Room for a relaxed service shaped by winter holiday songs and carols. People of all ages are invited to come to church in their jeans or jammies!

December Good Neighbors (Sharing Our Offerings):

Alameda County Community Food Bank has been in business since

1985 ... with a vision toward a day when they can go out of business. Through a network of 240 strategically placed member agencies—food pantries, soup kitchens, child-care centers, senior centers, after-school programs and other community-based organizations—as well as their own direct-distribution programs, the Food Bank distributes enough food to provide 540,000 meals weekly.

The [**Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano**](#) stores and distributes donated and purchased perishable and nonperishable food items. They distribute food directly to low-income people at community sites and make food available for other nonprofit organizations serving the ill, needy and children. The Food Bank works to reduce food waste, feed hungry people and raise public awareness of issues related to food and hunger.

Personal Theology Schedule

Sunday mornings at 9:30 am in the Fireside Room

Dec. 4: “*How Might We Build a More Empathic*”

Culture?” Edwin Rutsch is the founding director of the Center for Building a Culture of Empathy and the founder of International Empathy Trainers Association. The center’s CultureOfEmpathy.com website is the internet’s most comprehensive portal for empathy-related material, including interviews with over 300 experts on the topic. He is a world traveler, a “seeker,” a documentary filmmaker and has worked in the computer technology field. In his travels, he has interacted with a wide variety of cultures and peoples from all walks of life and learned to see and feel the common humanity of all people on the planet.

Dec. 11: Rev. Jeremy Taylor, D.Min. will discuss ***“Looking Below the Surface of Appearance: Ethical and Historical Necessity of Acknowledging the Unconscious.”*** Dr. Taylor is an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister and a Professor of Dreamwork and Archetypal Studies. He has worked with dreams for over forty years. He blends the values of spirituality with an active social conscience and a Jungian perspective. He is the founding member and past president of the International Association for the Study of Dreams. He has written four books integrating dream symbolism, mythology, and archetypal energy.

Dec. 18: Join us for another seminar by **Dr. Jeremy Taylor** (see bio above). ***“An Oak Tree is NOT an Unsuccessful Evergreen: Finding Our Own Unique Paths Through the Forest of Conventional Possibilities.”***

Dec. 25: No session. Enjoy the Holidays!

Humanist Connections Schedule

Sundays at 12:30 pm, followed by a potluck at 2 pm. Check kiosk in Atrium for location.

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

Dec. 4: **Causation and Certainty**, Paul Ulbrich

Dec. 11: **Rana Foroohar's *Makers and Takers***, Marcia Bates

Dec. 18: **Superheroes and Talking Animals: Archetypes of Alienation**, Ray Nelson

Dec. 25: Christmas—church closed

Reflections on Family Ministry

Merrin Clough

The post-election time has been intense for those of us who are politically minded with progressive values.

Personally, I've felt awash with emotion. Grieving the news of Trump as president and anxious about the future of our nation. Exhausted by these long campaigns and the tense distance between each side. I know I am not alone.

With tears in their eyes, I have listened as parents ask what this will mean for their children. We had hoped for another path into the future. One shaped by justice, equity and compassion. Instead we wonder how to prepare our children for a world where bigotry still holds firm to power.

The disappointment was overwhelming until I realized that my parents wrestled with similar questions. Likely their parents did too. That's why they brought us to church. A place to be nurtured by the words and deeds of prophetic people and the wisdom of the world's religions. To give us a spiritual home guided by the transforming power of love.

Considering that, I now see that what feels like an unbearable twist of fate is

in fact the turning of a page in a long story. I see, too, that for generations Unitarian Universalists have responded to hate with love, to fear with compassion. We are a uniquely American faith that has evolved to respond to difficult times just like this.

Our religious heritage and theology has been slimmed down into seven principles to better guide us in these modern times. Today I'm grateful for their streamlined nature. Take a moment and [reread them](#) with the election in mind. It seems that each one was written for this very moment.

So in the wake of political turmoil, remember you are not alone. In fact, our church is at the ready. Though we may not yet know exactly what is needed of us in these uneasy times, as UUs we do know how to move forward into an anxious future. Like those who came before us, we will stand on the side of love.

Guided by our covenant. Enriched by worship. Together in doing social justice and service work. Through programs like Our Whole Lives and Coming of Age. In religious education classes based on our core principles, and by empowering and supporting our youth. We will help our children develop moral compasses attuned to the challenges of our times, so that they too can turn a page in this age-old story.

Though reading the headlines spikes panic deep in my heart, I take a breath. I trust that we will do all we can to ensure that our progressive religious values are guiding lights in this dark time. And so here is my prayer for us. Like those who came before us, may we become that transforming power of love that reshapes lives and guides our country toward justice, equity, and compassion. May it be so.

Family Ministry Programs

Answering the Big Questions

Sat., Dec. 10, 4:30–8 pm

Struggling with finding right-sized answers to your kids' big questions about the country right now? Join Reverends Kristin and Christian for a conversation on how to talk with children about the aftermath of this year's election. This conversation is scheduled at the same time as our monthly "Parents Night Out," so childcare will be provided. We will order out for dinner once people arrive so there's no need to RSVP, but please pack dinner for any children you bring. In this time of national anxiety and unrest, it will be good to be together.

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](#). If you don't have an [InFellowship](#) account, please sign up.

President's Column

Deborah Schmidt, President, Board of Trustees

I know that many of you were as stunned, bruised and heartsick in the aftermath of the election as I was. The potential impact of this administration on the two inextricably linked causes of social and environmental justice is especially frightening. This will be a test of the checks and balances of our system. It will be a test of our resolve and of our engagement in the democratic process.

Part of our challenge is learning to listen, avoiding the temptation to demonize the other half. I hope we can come to understand the fear, frustration and alienation that pushed people who are really not so much unlike us to this vote. I highly recommend watching Van Jones' *Messy Truth*, three short videos of frank and respectful conversations with Trump supporters.

I am finding comfort in the resilient spirits and moving words of so many amazing people, including our remarkable new ministers. I am proud of California, proud of all the unstoppable progressive voices – and more proud than ever to be a part of this church. Attendance is up as many brave souls turn to us for comfort, community and positive direction. On November 13th we collected 5,547 pounds of food and close to 5000 dollars for the Richmond Emergency Food Pantry. The same day, we contributed \$1000 to the Standing Rock legal defense fund and sent fired-up, flyer-armed “yellow t-shirt people” to join the protesters linking hands around Lake Merritt.

This simply can't keep us from continuing to become the best people we can possibly be, continuing to add all the weight of our love to that long moral arc as it bends toward justice. This world needs us now more than ever. To quote Clarissa Pinkola Estes' inspiring and poetic [post-election piece](#), “We were made for these times!”

Workshop: A Personal Path to the Heart

through Sacred Ecstatic Music

Following Rabbi Tsvi's (pronounced SVEE) wonderful Personal Theology talk at UUCB, many participants asked that the Rabbi conduct a longer workshop focused on the sacred experiences he guided participants through at Personal Theology.

That workshop is scheduled for **Saturday, December 10, from 2:30 to 5 pm** in the Fireside Room at UUCB. Donation to Rabbi Tsvi and UUCB is \$35. Wear loose fitting and relaxing clothing!

REGISTER by email to Wisdom@uucb.org or call Lonnie Moseley (510-655-1444).

This workshop is for you, if you...

- Want to connect to the deepest part of your own heart.
- Want to connect deeply to the other, the Beloved in Sufi language. Chasidim call this ecstatic state dveikut—cleaving to the Beloved.
- Want to connect to the world, to all of creation. Connect to that which IS every quark in the cosmos, and paradoxically is beyond the cosmos; surrounding the universe like a mother hugging her child to her breast, in the ultimate expression of love.

Rabbi Tsvi says that there are many paths to connection/dveikut. One of the more direct paths is through sacred ecstatic music—to which he is personally called through his own mother's Vizhnitzer Chassidic lineage.

In this workshop you will learn:

- Breathing exercises, because singing and drumming require much breath.
- To chant melodies, both wordless and with words. The words are taken

from the spiritual traditions of the three sister Semitic languages—Hebrew, Arabic and Aramaic—and English.

- Rhythms—drummed on a drum and on the body.
- Just enough head learning, so as to understand the spiritual and mystical back story to the chanting, drumming and movement.

For the last several years, Rabbi Tsvi Bar-David has been producing and performing in sacred ecstatic concerts and workshops, around the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. This, after many years of studying and teaching Jewish spiritual and mystical texts from the original Hebrew and Aramaic. Having grown dissatisfied with reading ABOUT other people's direct ecstatic experience of the divine, Reb Tsvi resolved to find an accessible path to the ecstatic heart for his students and himself. And that path was as close as his mother's Vizhnitzer Chassidic heritage: niggun, chant, drumming and movement. Email: tsvi.bardavid@gmail.com.

NOTE: A \$10 discount on the workshop is available to those who come at 1 pm and help hang our wreath or other holiday decorations.

Sing-Along Messiah, Dec. 18, 6 pm

Bryan Baker, Music Director

Hello Music Lovers,

UUCB has been hosting a sing-along of Handel's glorious *Messiah* for decades. Indeed, it seems likely that the Bay Area tradition of singers throughout the community joining in this great masterpiece started at UUCB. For more than 50 years, people have been coming to enjoy singing great music in a festive atmosphere.

We have a professional orchestra and soloists and the entire audience joins in singing Handel's fantastic choruses. There are usually 200 to 300 people who join in the joy of this music. Many are excellent singers and some just like

to hum along. Everyone is welcome to come and sing, whether they think of themselves as a singer or not. You do not need to know how to read music, you do not need to know the score perfectly. (There are many practice resources available if you would like to tune up before the sing-along.) And we will have scores for loan at the event.

Come, join the fun, ring in the holidays with great music – Hallelujah!

Tickets are \$20 to \$10, sliding scale, no one turned away for lack of funds.

Holiday Staff Appreciation Donations for 2016

Lonnie Moseley

Since 2010, a Staff Appreciation financial gift has been generously provided by you at holiday time. Each year the gift you have given to our staff has been more generous than the previous year. We have 24 staff members. I like to think of them as our team members. Your donation will be shared equally with all staff—facilities, child care, administration, music, family ministry/religious education and ministerial.

In 2015, we were able to provide \$100 to each of our UUCB team members. It's 2016 and once again I will have the Staff Appreciation "cookie jar" in the Atrium each Sunday outside the Sanctuary doors. Please donate whatever works for your budget. As you've heard me say before, staff appreciation doesn't always have to be financial. An acknowledgement, thank you, and just tender appreciation for how this incredible group of people take care of our church family, can be a gift.

Coordinating Team Notes

Lisa Maynard, Coordinating Team Convener

As we move closer to the end of 2016, the CT gets involved in preparations for

the next budget planning process, for fiscal year 2017-18 (July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018). If you are a member of a group that uses church resources for your programming, you have a role in budget planning too—now is a great time to develop some ideas for next year's programs, so you are ready to respond to the Treasurer's call for budget input.

We wish you all warmth and comfort during this holiday season!

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.

Program Council

Ann Harlow, Program Council Convener

The Program Council has been successfully fostering communication and collaboration between different program areas. For example, the Family Ministry Youth-Adult Team and the Social justice Council worked together on the November food drive. Pastoral Care, Membership, Stewardship and Communications have been putting their heads together on how to make sure the church is aware of and acknowledging major happenings in congregants' lives. We are developing a new process for the approval of newly formed (or reconstituted) groups and recently approved a new World Peace Committee. We are encouraging people who propose a new event to line up a sponsoring group and make a case for the value and priority of the event vis-à-vis the resources it will require. We are compiling a record of event attendance, income and expenses that should be helpful for future planning. A revised guide or handbook for lay leaders and other active members explaining "how things work at UUCB" is also in the works.

Report from the UUCB Facilities Committee

Larry Nagel

It's been a while since we reported on the care of our magnificent campus, but there is a lot of work underway. Hiring a tree maintenance company to remove the dead or dying Monterey pines on the campus is a project that has stalled for several months but is now beginning anew. A few months ago, mold was discovered in the Safir Room and work is underway to have a professional mold remediation company address this problem. We have uncovered severe dry rot in the roof beams, and we are talking with contractors about how to remedy this problem. A recent fire inspection uncovered problems with the sprinkler system in the Chrysalis Room and Conference Room, and we are having a fire system specialist repair the sprinkler system. Richie Dawkins is working with a consultant to determine what needs to be done to the kitchen to make it compliant with applicable health codes. Finally, we will be hiring a paving company to reseal and re-stripe the parking lot, including painting of curbs in No Parking zones as required by the Kensington Fire Department.

If any of these projects fits your interests and your skills, we would love to have you on our team. Please contact Larry Nagel at (510) 558-0842 or lwn@att.net. Or, just drop in at the Facilities Committee meeting, which is on fourth Mondays at 4 pm in the Fireside Room.

Social Justice News

Coming in January: [“Cracking the Codes” workshop](#) – Sat., Jan. 7, 1–5 pm. The entire congregation is invited to attend this Confronting Racism conference spearheaded by the LFDC with thanks to UUCB's World Peace Committee for financial support. UUCB members and friends attending will engage in talking about the system of racial inequity and implicit bias,

prompted by stories in the “Cracking the Codes” 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. In preparation for this event, you can download the Conversation Guide for **Cracking the Codes: The System of Racial Inequity** at www.world-trust.org. \$10 donation suggested. (No one turned away). Questions? Call 510-356-3496.

Social Justice Council (SJC) – In an effort to welcome additional people interested in attending Council meetings, we will be alternating days of the week: next dates will be **Sun. Dec. 11** and **Wed. Jan. 11**. Then we’ll review this schedule. The potluck dinner is at 6 pm; meeting usually starts at 6:35 pm, Fireside Room. All are welcomed!

UUCB Donating to Support Standing Rock! Asked to match the \$500 first donated by the Social Justice Council, the ministers and the UUCB World Peace Committee, the congregation more than matched the first \$500 (exact amount to be shared soon!). Donations will continue to be collected in December at the Social Justice Table.

Winter Warmth Clothing Drive is in December. Please go through your closets, or buy new items, to help clothe GRIP Family Shelter residents for the cold and wet winter months. Bring your items to church during the first three Sundays in December. A “mitten tree” and a basket to collect your items will be at the Social Justice Table in the Social Hall. Questions or comments? Contact [Ray Westergard](#).

Literature, Film & Drama Contingent (LFDC) of the Confronting Racism Project – Review of the LFDC Meeting on November 6, 2016: In *Whistling Past the Graveyard*, the precocious nine-year-old narrator, Starla, took us on a journey that got many of us thinking about how racism, bias and bigotry is established in the psyche, and how exposure, contact and involvement to and with the “other” is the best remedy. Our discussion of Susan Crandall’s book was intimate, moving and meaningful. We also

reviewed the powerful and painful movie *The Birth of A Nation* and the play *It Can't Happen Here*. On Dec. 4th we will listen to a recording of *Margaret Mead and James Baldwin: A Rap on Race*. All are welcome to attend (contact [Camille Parker](#) for more information).

“Bring Your Weight in Food” Drive: A number of Social Justice Council members, along with several UUCB youth, helped to create this successful event benefiting the [Richmond Emergency Food Pantry](#).

Good Neighbor donations in December will be shared by the [Alameda County Community Food Bank](#) and the [Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano](#).

Good Neighbors 2017: Twenty-two nonprofits were nominated by congregation members. Social Justice Council members voted and the 2017 Good Neighbors will be: January: Berkeley Food Pantry; February: Alameda County Community Food Bank; March: WriterCoach Connection; April: YEAH!; May: Planting Justice; June: Developing Indigenous Resources (DIR); July: Bay Area Community Land Trust (BALT) and CCISCO; August: UU Justice Ministry of CA; September: Read-Aloud; October: GRIP; November: Richmond Emergency Food Pantry; December: Berkeley Food and Housing Project.

Social Justice Sponsored Project Applications

Each year the UUCB Social Justice Council presents proposals for “Sponsored” social justice projects to the congregation for its approval at the May annual congregational meeting. A sponsored project is one that may receive congregational support in the form of resources, such as worship time, funding, etc. Congregants are always free to pursue “affiliated projects” that are publicized by the church but lack official sponsorship. 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, formed discussion groups, etc.

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. Applications are available from SJC Council Co-Chair [Norie Clarke](#). The completed application must be submitted by March 1, 2017.

More Opportunities to DO Social Justice

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](#).

Ceasefire Walks: Friday nights in Richmond at 7 – contact [Jane Eisenstark](#) to carpool.

Vigil for Incarcerated Immigrants: First Saturdays, 11 – 12 pm. Advocate and stand in solidarity with those at the West County Detention Facility in Richmond at 5555 Giant Highway.

Interested in being on the Social Justice email list? Contact [Jane Eisenstark](#).

Yoga Class Moves to New Time

The Yoga class now meets on Wednesdays in the Fireside Room from 5:30 to 7 pm. The new hours are to allow those who work days to come. Yoga has been a way for people to stay healthy for many centuries. In this workshop we stretch, relax and use muscles that are neglected. We do this to soft music and at the end of each session the body feels rejuvenated. This Hatha Yoga is a basic yoga from which almost anybody can profit. Men and women are both welcome. If you would like more information, call Phyllis Whiteman at 647-8537.

Tree of Life

Dorothy Herzberg

Kathleen Lingo (Mac's daughter) is the producer and curator of the New York Times "Op-Docs" online film series...**Jessie Acock-Carlisle** (Carol and Jim's daughter) is engaged to Daniel Chen, a computer engineer. Jessie is doing graduate work in counseling at SF State...**Helene Knox** won prizes for two poems from the prestigious Ina Coolbrith Circle. Ina Coolbrith was the first poet laureate of California.

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](#).

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. See "The Week Ahead" for the menus.

Reservations: Email suppers@uucb.org or sign the sheet outside the office. Deadline is 10 pm Tuesday.

Adults: \$15 (includes wine, light snacks, dessert and coffee). Family (two adults + two children, ages 12-18): \$35; children under 12 eat for free.

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

Community Ministry

Rev. Cat Cox, UUCB Affiliated Community Minister

This fall, I took up the presidency of the Unitarian Universalist Society for Community Ministries. UUSCM is a national UUA affiliate which describes its mission in these words: “UUSCM is a Unitarian Universalist movement of lay ministers and ordained clergy committed to promoting a broad spectrum of healing and social justice ministries. We believe that only through many diverse forms of ministry can we heal the broken, create justice, and live in harmony with the spirit of life. We hold a vision of a larger ministry that sees the world as its parish.”

Rev. Cathleen Cox,
Community Minister

I invite you to consider the opportunities in the new socio-political reality in which we find ourselves. Can we look for the ways to move forward, committed to our UU Principles and Purposes, towards empowerment and meaningful engagement rather than being driven by fear and alienation? We can and we must.

At the Sustainability Summit held by the UUA in Boston last spring, a key theme was “Unleashing Lay Ministry”—an idea UUSCM has long championed as central to strengthening the shared ministry of our faith in the world.

Would it empower you to view the service you offer in this congregation and beyond as a lay ministry? Would it support you to join with other community ministers, both lay and ordained, who are working in concrete ways towards building the world we want to live in? Whether through your volunteerism or your work, your commitment to service makes a difference. What could it mean to you to claim it as a lay ministry? If this is an idea you’d like to explore, I invite you to contact me: revcat@revcat.net. Let’s talk.

With You on the Path,

Rev. Cat

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 January Beacon is December 15. Submit items to beacon@uucb.org.