



Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley

August 2021 – Vol. 80, Issue 8

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Worship Services in August

Sundays at 11 am on [Facebook Live](#) and [YouTube Live](#)

Aug. 1 – Audette Fulbright preaching. Worship Associate Cynthia Asprodites. This Sunday, discover the world anew... a path into wonder.

Aug. 8 – Guest Preacher. Worship Associate Karen Elliott.

Aug. 15 – Rev. Michelle Collins preaching. Worship Associate Bill Brown.

Aug. 22 – Barbara Meyers preaching. Worship Associate Dayana Claghorn.

Aug. 29 – **What We've Learned from during the Pandemic.** Rev. Michelle Collins preaching. Worship Associate Don Klose.

Virtual Coffee Hour immediately following worship on Sundays

After worship we invite you to switch over to Zoom for a time to connect “face to face.” The link to Virtual Coffee Hour is listed below, but we will also share it in the comments on the Facebook Live feed during worship.

Click [here](#) to join us:

Meeting ID: 332 046 821

Password: 810131

Good Neighbor for August

[Diablo Valley College START](#) program is a Foster Youth Success Initiative (FYSI) support program designed to increase access, retention, and graduation rates for current or former foster youth at DVC. Their goal is to provide a warm and welcoming environment, create a support network, and empower foster youth students to make progress towards self-sufficiency, professional success, and community leadership.

Special Events and Announcements

- **August 1, 12:30 pm** – Join the Social Justice Council's Literature, Film & Drama Contingent on August 1 at 12:30, to discuss the UUA's Common Read for 2021-22: *Breathe: A Letter To My Sons*, by Imani Perry. Folks who have reared Black boys (and girls) will be invited to share their stories.
 - **August 22, 12:30 pm** – Whites Opposing White Supremacy (WOWS) meeting. For more information, contact Julia Rogers (jlundyr@gmail.com).
 - **August 22, 1 pm** – People of Color Caucus meeting.
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Opening Task Force – Update

Are we ready for our first in person gathering? Our ministers, staff and the task force are working to be sure we are.

As we prepare for gathering in person on September 14th, the following actions are underway to ensure we gather well and safely:

- A Master Planning session is being planned with all key personnel, i.e., Ministers, staff, key volunteers, e.g., ushers and greeters, and Sunday program volunteers, e.g., Personal Theology
- Training session(s) with ushers and greeters is being planned for August
- Our Executive Director, Tess Snook O'Riva, is preparing the facility. [Her column](#) in this issue of the Beacon highlights the multiple areas being prepared for us
- A special communication will be prepared for the congregation to help us know what to expect on September 14th and the safety protocols we will have in place

A training session for small group leaders on how to conduct a multi-platform meeting, in person and virtual at the same time, was completed. A guidance manual for such meetings has been drafted and is under review. Another training session is projected for mid to late August.

Please continue to follow UUCB protocols and share any questions or observations with the OTF (Opening Task Force) at planning@uucb.org.

OTF (Opening Task Force) Members: Patrick Cullinane (Chair), Sheldon Jones, Greg Lemieux, Lisa Maynard, Rev. Catherine Boyle, Tess Snook O'Riva, ED, and Rev. Michelle Collins.

Family Ministry

Rev. Catherine Boyle,
Director of Family Ministry



Upcoming Changes to RE to Expect in the Fall

It is almost here, the school supplies are appearing in the aisles and folks are hosting the last summer BBQs: it is almost back to school and that means BACK TO RE!

Religious Education during COVID was akin to Alice falling down the rabbit hole with its unique challenges and limitations. With the lessons learned from this past year, we are ready and excited to offer RE back in person and online to offer the safety and flexibility to our youngest members.

Some things to expect as Religious Education is back on the third Sunday of September:

- Parents will be able to choose from in-person or online to be streamed into the classroom.
- Masks and social distancing are mandatory on campus.
- Activities and lessons are redesigned for our new reality.
- Childcare will be available for Sunday services once again.
- We are also looking for RE teachers for the fall. See below.

We hope you had a happy and safe summer. We can't wait to see you in person or online in the Fall.

Blessings,

Rev. Catherine

Volunteer for RE This Year

Connect, create and crack a smile with our children and youth as an RE teacher, advisor or sub. No experience in childcare or education needed. Background check must be passed. Email family.ministry@uucb.org to volunteer.

Social Justice Council

Co-Chair's Message

Recently, the Social Justice Council's leadership team has asked the question: "How do we involve the whole congregation in social justice?" No one has come up with a magic potion; at least not yet. But it is a good question and relevant to all of us, whether we are active in Council programs or not.

The Social Justice Council does have a variety of programs and activities that would touch many people's interests, from our Literature, Film and Drama Contingent to environmental and racial justice. There are activities such as UU the Vote card writing, where personal contact is communicated via the hand-written script; Whites Opposing White Supremacy, and the People of Color Caucus, where sharing sometimes deeply felt experiences can take place.

Our first effort to provide greater social justice opportunities to wider circles of congregants might just be communication. Some of our activities have effectively reached out with our message. Honoring Indigenous Peoples [started and curates a blog](#); Supporting Homeless Youth has advertised fundraising ice cream socials and the collection of household necessities – all available to even the most time-strapped member of UUCB.

So, take a second look at our members' announcements, and give them some consideration! You might find something that reminds you why we have those [Seven Principles](#), and how fulfilling addressing them can be.

~Sheldon Jones

sejones1950@gmail.com

Confronting Racism & Oppression

People of Color Caucus (POCC)

The People of Color Caucus (POCC) of the Social Justice Council provides a safe space for racial and ethnic minority members to name, heal and reconcile past and

current personal and group racial wounds. We work to (1) bring awareness of oppression and the needs of communities of color to our congregation, and (2) join in partnership with the UUCB's Whites Opposing White Supremacy, our wider congregation, and other justice-seeking people in dismantling racism. We meet on the fourth Sunday every other month, at 1 pm. Our next meeting is on August 22; new members are always welcome.

At this time, we mourn the loss of POCC member, Phillip Linzie, who passed on July 8. His wise and thoughtful contributions will be missed.
(htinsleyjones@yahoo.com).

Whites Opposing White Supremacy (WOWS)

WOWS, a space for white-identified people to challenge racism within ourselves and elsewhere, will continue to discuss personal situations that individuals bring to the group, as well as Step 4 of the Kim Constructive Conversations Model, a model for engaging in challenging conversations about race. Next meeting: August 22, 12:30-2 pm, on Zoom. For more information, contact Julia Rogers (jlundyr@gmail.com).

Literature, Film & Drama Contingent

There were no fur-balls, only lots of purring, when the LFDC met to celebrate the Buddha's birthday with a very lively and thought-provoking discussion of *The Dalai Lama's Cat*, by David Michie. Some of UUCB's Buddhist members were present to help the novices understand the dharma. If only all of life's lessons could be learned in such a lovely way, as from this kitty with many names. "As rain falls equally on the just and unjust, do not burden your heart with judgments, but rain your kindness equally on all." ~the Buddha.

On August 1, the tenor of the room will likely be more somber, as we take on the UUA's Common Read for 2021-22: *Breathe: A Letter To My Sons*, by Imani Peri. People who have reared Black sons (and daughters) will be invited to share their personal experiences (camilleparker@comcast.net).

Environmental Justice

The environmental project has continued with the UU Drawdown Ecochallenge 2021, sponsored by the UU Ministry for Earth and Elders Climate Action. In fact, we have TWO new members of our team, and UU Ministry for Earth has extended the DD Ecochallenge to the end of 2021. This will help everyone achieve the goal of completing collectively at least 10,000 actions on behalf of the climate and environmental justice. To those of you on our UUCB team, keep up the great work! To anyone else who might be interested in the Drawdown Ecochallenge, we invite you to join. Many thanks to Lucinda Young for her diligence as our team's co-

captain. To help guide the coming year's environmental project, we sent out a short survey to members of the Social Justice Council. If anyone else wants to respond, please let Sheila Tarbet know (starbet99@gmail.com), and we'll send you a survey.

Finally, we've found two speakers for the Summer Forum series in August. Teron McGrew, a leader of Climate Reality Bay Area and the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project, will speak about her work in climate and environmental justice on August 15. Steve Simon, of Elders Climate Action, leader of the National Policy Committee and a long-time UU, will speak about his work with the US Climate Action Network and Vision for Equitable Climate Action on August 29.

The World Peace Committee

A new "Sponsored Project" has been proposed by the World Peace Committee, which is an affiliated program of the Social Justice Council. Roberta Shaw and Don Klose are co-chairs of the project. They will spear-head an educational campaign within our Congregation to: (1) persuade our elected representatives (via letters, phone calls, etc.) to vote for bills that reduce the proposed huge Pentagon budget, especially about producing new nuclear weaponry, and (2) to use the money saved to increase the budgets allocated to important needs, such as Health, Education, Environment, Housing, etc. (shawroberta@hotmail.com).

Community Service

Good Neighbor Program

In June, our Good Neighbor collected \$1,975 for Ya-NEEMA, a nonprofit whose mission is to provide comfort and strength to families impacted by gun violence in Richmond and the surrounding area. In July, we welcomed the Lavender Seniors of the East Bay –a group which seeks to improve the lives of older LGBTQ residents of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. This month, we will hear from the Diablo Valley College START program for foster youth, which helps empower foster youth as they enter community college. Generous donations from communities like UUCB help keep these nonprofit programs alive. Please help in any way you can. Thank you! (nataliecampbell@yahoo.com)

Youth Spirit Artworks

Youth Spirit Artworks (YSA) is reaching out to participating congregations to see if there is interest in having some YSA youth make presentations about ongoing projects.

If you would like to be trained as a youth mentor, YSA is working on developing a mentorship program for the youth, including Tiny House Empowerment Village residents. The program is also seeking financial support to help fund a project to fill in some of the outdoor spaces in the Village with outdoor furniture.

All are welcome to an “unveiling of the murals” party on Saturday, August 7, at Noon. The location is 633 Hegenberger Road, Oakland. This is an opportunity to see the many beautiful murals that adorn the buildings, fences, and grounds of the Village.

As a next step in their “100 Homes for 100 Homeless Youth” campaign, YSA is applying for grants to create three pilot mini-villages on vacant lots in Oakland. If you know of or have a small vacant lot, under 4000 ft., that might be available, the City of Oakland is offering a property tax waiver as an incentive! Please contact me if you have ideas or questions about any of these projects: (jim.acock@gmail.com).

2021 "Congrats to Grads" Donation Drive

This year’s donation drive honoring graduating seniors was a roaring success! The congregation contributed \$2600 to seven proud graduates; each received \$300 during the Social Justice Council’s meeting on July 14. The custom has been that graduates donate a portion of their money to the previous year’s honorees, which means that the five 2020 graduates will each receive \$100. Thank you to all who donated so generously! For more information about this program, contact Lonnie Moseley: (lonniemoseley@hotmail.com).

Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP)

GRIP has resumed offering free Souper Center lunches for hungry, homeless, and other disadvantaged people in and around Richmond. UUCB will continue to participate in this worthwhile and enjoyable activity with our fourth Tuesday lunches, when we make and serve sandwiches. If you are willing to participate occasionally in either or both activities, contact Ray Westergard (raywest2@sbcglobal.net or 510-904-4145).

From the Board of Trustees

Ariel Smith-Iyer

Sometime ago I opened a fresh page on my computer, beginning to gather my thoughts on this inevitable post to the Beacon as part of my duties on the Board of Trustees. The first thing I put into my hypothetical post was the quote: “We belong to each other. The experience of belonging changes the way we show up, stimulating loyalty, compassion, and joy, and diminishing anxiety, loneliness, and fear.” Maybe you already receive those blessings from your experience as part of this community. If you don’t currently, I’m here to tell you it’s possible and there’s a place for your time and talents.

Last summer I had no idea I would find myself on the Board in 2021. Chalk it up to one of the many things I couldn't have guessed about the year ahead, but it also had another aspect: I couldn't have guessed how very rewarding and fulfilling the work of a Board member would feel to me. Maybe it's the dedication of the group or the amazing leadership. I'm pretty sure it has a lot to do with a line from my wedding vows, a promise "to return, and return, and return again". I knew that promise would serve me well in marriage but I hadn't considered until recently how well it would serve me in other aspects of my life, notably in respect to my connection to you all. Serving on the Board is like returning again, a realization of my promise to you all as a member of UUCB.

As we get ready to again meet in person this fall, I'm anticipating we'll all have a feeling of "returning". I so look forward to being together with you! And in the meantime, I'm off to examine what "return again" means as the responsible parent of a budding adolescent. See you soon!

Humanist Connections

Sundays, 1 pm, Zoom

A discussion group to explore our humanity, values, ideas. *"A free and responsible search for truth and meaning."* (Fourth principle of Unitarian Universalism.)

August 1 – J.S. Mill's Essay on Liberty, by Don Anderson.

August 8 – Short topics discussion and regular topic selection for the month of September.

August 15 – Knowing What We are Talking About, by Charles Carey.

August 22 – Interpersonal Ethical Behavior, by Rosalind Gordon.

August 29 – Preparing for Climate Change, by Stan Klein.

Zoom links are available under the "Calendar" listing on the UUCB website, and are included with each week's email notice about the upcoming discussion. For additional information contact Marcia Bates, mjbates@ucla.edu. *Group managers: Susan Singh, Ray Westergard, Al Kueffner, Lee Lawrence, Kris Homme, Anne Fitzmaurice.*

Summer Forum

Sundays, 9:30 am, Zoom

August 1 – Advocating for our Children's Voices, Dr. Veronica Ufeogbune. Dr. Veronica Ufeogbune is an Early Childhood Education advocate. She was on the Governor's Commission. Dr. Ufeogbune has been a keynote speaker, facilitator. A Professor at Mills College, Board of United Nations Association/Berkeley. Former City Manager and Director of Head Start for the City of Oakland. Executive Director of the Nigerian American Association.

August 8 – Candidates for Sheriff for West Contra Costa County. Candidates for Sheriff for West Contra Costa County. David Livingston and Ben Thierault. Sheriff Livingston has served 20 years, running unopposed, until now.

August 15 – Environmental Justice. Teron McGrew, a leader of Climate Reality Bay Area and the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project, will speak about her work in climate and environmental justice.

August 22 – Parents and Grandparents w/ Disabilities. Dr. Megan Kirshbaum. Founder and Executive Director of Through the Looking Glass (TLG) to develop model services for infants, children and parents with disabilities and their families. The goal was to (1) bring a disability culture perspective to early preventive intervention with families with disability/medical issues in infant/child or parent; and (2) to bring awareness about families and parenthood to the independent living community.

August 29 – Environmental Justice. Steve Simon, of Elders Climate Action, leader of the National Policy Committee and a long-time UU, will speak about his work with the US Climate Action Network and Vision for Equitable Climate Action.

From the Executive Director

Tess Snook O'Riva, Executive Director

Are you excited? Anxious? Exhausted? All of the above?

Things are opening up, whether we are ready for it or not.

The airwaves are full of reports of people suffering from new

types of re-entry anxiety as we grapple with sixteen months of masks, six feet of distance, and just flat not being that social. At the same time, we have concerns of



the Delta variant and other strains that are more virulent, dangerous, and targeting all age brackets. And we still can't vaccinate those under 12!

Okay, so we're not out of the woods yet. We are more prepared to protect ourselves, so we are moving forward as best we can. With that in mind, let me give you a few updates on our beloved UUCB campus.

One of our annual traditions at UUCB has been the beloved (read sarcastically) Calendaring Summit. With everything going on, we replaced the summit with a deep dive of a few brave souls who took all the requests for meetings and tried to identify any conflicts. If there are any, we have to work it out either by negotiating a different time, or by getting creative with the room assignments. So rooms assignments are going to change.

First of all, staff will be assigning rooms. Why?

- Use of the different rooms has changed: Only some rooms are capable of multi-platform meetings.
- Board directives: The Board has stated that UUCB is to be a community resource, so we are allowing free/discounted access to our campus to our Good Neighbors and other mission-aligned organizations.
- Access guidelines: To be more inclusive to people with limited mobility, we will be giving those groups priority access to rooms that are ADA accessible.
- Consistency: To avoid having to move groups for scheduling conflicts, we will leave the most popular rooms for rentals completely empty.
- Staffing levels: Staff often have to arrive early or stay late to open/close the building. Rooms with direct external access/limited access will be reserved for rentals and meetings that tend to happen in the evenings and on weekends.

All meetings will be encouraged to be multi-platform, where appropriate, to be more inclusive to those who cannot make it to campus.

I hope this helps explains our goals, and I am always open to hear your comments and concerns. Please feel free to reach out by phone or email. Stay safe, everyone!

Partner Church Committee

It's awfully hard to write a monthly column when, for this month, you're at your brother's cabin in the Sierra Nevada. Nevertheless, we persist even if this will be a shorter report than usual.



After more than a year, Anne and I did our first Zoom call with Rev. Attila Gyëro at our partner church. He is fine and recovered from an apparently mild case of COVID. On behalf of the students, Attila thanked us for our recent remittance from

the Village Education Fund. He remarked that a student from a Roma (Gypsy) family received a share of the funds. Assimilation into village life by the Roma is not uncommon, but it is rare to have one continuing their education beyond the local level.

By the time you read this report, we expect to have done a second Zoom call with the village. If we can, we hope to Zoom on a regular basis. We'll be working with Tess and Charis to get the Zoom link and other information out to you. For the first call, it was 9:00 am here and 7:00 pm in Homoródújfalú. We'll probably stick with that time frame. Stay tuned!

Last month's column regarding travel to Transylvania next year brought one inquiry. We'd love to have more. You can learn more by contacting Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net.



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