



Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley

May 2021 – Vol. 80, Issue 5

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Journeying Together

Dr. Rev. Michelle Collins

Theme for May: Story

“Once upon a time...” Our theme this month is one of my favorites: story. We are a people of story and a people of stories. And we are literally awash in stories for most of our waking hours. How much are we awash in them, you might wonder... not only is more written fiction sold every year than all categories of non-fiction combined, but storytelling has infused so many more things, including news and non-fiction, sporting events, song lyrics, and of course films and television. And who doesn't like a good story!

Not only are we partakers of stories, but we as humans also are makers of stories. In the distant past as well as the not-so-distant past, the master storytellers held a special place in the community. If you'd like to see some really great storytellers online, search for storytelling festivals for some folk storytelling, or even TED talks for some seriously well-crafted storytelling as well. We each are constantly making stories too, of the daydream and fantasy variety. Some scientists have worked on quantifying how much, and (this is both delightful and surprising, by the way), with some rather clever studies and techniques involving pagers and journals and such, they found that the average daydream is about 14 seconds long and that we have perhaps 2,000 of them a day. Yes,

two thousand! That adds up to about half of our waking hours that we spend spinning and enjoying fantasies! And then there's our dreams too. We are storytelling and storymaking creatures indeed!

Not only do we tell them and make them, but we are part of stories too, some shorter and some with longer trajectories. This past year has probably reminded us of this fact in more ways than we want to count, with the pandemic, the political scene in our state in our country, environmental and climate change observations that keep occurring, and, quite notably, the state of racial oppression and xenophobia in our country. And there's also the stories of UUCB, our own stories and timelines as well as how we've fit into the larger scale stories and happenings. But these aren't just passive things. Remember, we are the storymakers as well as the storytellers. As we move towards the end of this church year and towards something resembling a post-pandemic society, let us pause to consider what our place in each of these stories is and the ways that we can take part in moving it and making it into what we hope to see. Oh, reading fiction is also a great thing – take some time this next month to revisit a favorite, or to discover a new one. You'll thank yourself for it.

Worship Services in May

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

Theme for May: Story

May 2 – Music Sunday: Storied Music. Bryan Baker with Worship Associate Karen Elliott. We will look at the music that tells us stories, the stories behind certain songs and pieces, the stories that have become interwoven with the music.

May 9 – Chaos & Joy. Rev. Michelle Collins, preaching. Bill Brown, Worship Associate. Parenting is a spiritual adventure as well as many other kinds of adventures. In honor of Mother's Day this Sunday, we'll pause to appreciate some of the hard-learned lessons as well as surprising joys of parenthood.

May 16 – Doctors of Durability. Rev. Michelle Collins, preaching. Bob Adams, Worship Associate. This week in worship we honor the wisdom of our elders and the resilience that comes from long, full lives.

May 23 – Core Stories. Rev. Catherine Boyle, preaching. Sarah Ward, Worship Associate. Humans and human experience are made up of stories, both our own stories as well as the gems that speak truth and wisdom to us that we carry in our hearts. Today, we'll explore what some of these stories may be for us and for our communities.

Reminder: UUCB's spring congregational meeting will take place on zoom following this service.

May 30 – Touchstones. Rev. Michelle Collins, preaching. Cynthia Asprodites, Worship Associate. As we navigate the often turbulent waters of our lives, we often reach within

ourselves for reminders and directions that we need. We might touch stories or songs or poems or other types of grounding that we need. We'll explore some of these virtual (or actual) touchstones today.

June 6 – Save the Date: Outdoor In-Person Flower Communion Service

Mark your calendars for a special in-person outdoor worship service, Sunday June 6 at 11am in our main parking lot. Worship will also be streamed on our YouTube and Facebook pages at the same time. **Please note that this is a special one-time service.**

Send In the Flowers

We want to share our flowers! Please send in a photo or drawing of a special flower or flowers to uucbflowers@gmail.com by 5/23 for a virtual flower communion that we can share.

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

Vespers in May

Wednesdays 6 pm Social Time, 6:20 pm Start Time

Zoom

Join us for our mid-week online vespers services. The 30-minute Wednesday evening service will provide a time for us to gather together to experience moments of reflection, prayer and song, grounded in our UU faith. **The May 19 vespers service will be offered by Worship Associates Andrea Brown and Melissa Rosales.**

Click [this link](#) to join us
Meeting ID: 830 5378 2422
Passcode: chalice

Special Events and Announcements

- **Good Neighbor for May:** [The Berkeley Food Pantry](#). The mission of the Berkeley Food Pantry is to provide families, especially those with children, with adequate sustenance and nutrition at times when bills for food, rent, health care and other items overwhelm them.

- **May 16 – RE Outdoor Education Class Pilot Sunday**
Sunday afternoon of May 16, UUCB FM will be hosting an outdoor education class in the field from 3-5 pm for all children and youth K-HS. The class will be masked, socially distant, and following the church's COVID protocols. Registration is limited and required. [Register here](#).
 - **May 23 at 12:15 pm – the May Congregational Meeting** will be immediately following the worship service. **The agenda will be sent via email by May 13.**
 - The Board is pleased to recommend the following members to the congregation for appointment to UUCB's Nominating Committee, to be voted upon at the May 23, 2021 Congregational Meeting: **Lynne Cahoon, Sandy Portillo-Robins and Terry Stokes.**
 - **The Board of Trustees is pleased to announce an extension on Rev. Michelle's interim ministry!** Instead of up to two years, Rev. Michelle will now be with us for three years – until June 2023. This extension is in recognition of COVID upending a typical first year interim period and Rev. Michelle's excellence in ministry. It also gives the church a little more time during this transition for COVID adaptation and being ready for our future ministerial search. Thank you Rev. Michelle!
 - **Ariel Smith-Iyer is May's Listening Presence.** She may be reached by phone or text 415/722-7581 or email arielwest@yahoo.com.
 - [Collaborising](#) in Richmond was our **February Good Neighbor**, and Director Lea Murray, let us know that thanks to the generous donations from UUCB members, Collaborising was able to assist Ann and Fuddy to receive a new (to them) car. [Click here](#) to read the full update or visit <https://uucb.org/justice/social-justice-news/>.
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Opening Task Force

Where is UUCB on Reopening?

As vaccinations, testing and positivity rates are improving, the Governor in consultation with state Department of Public Health has moved Bay Area counties from the red to the orange phase. UUCB reopening phases and protocols mirror the state's phases with the caveat that the church needs to be ready for safely reopening for more activity on the campus and to respect the advice of the UUA and wishes of our members reflected in the congregational poll for a conservative approach to our reopening.

In anticipation of more positive developments likely moving Bay Area counties to the yellow phase, the Opening Task Force (OTF) on April 17 held a Town Hall with leaders of

small church groups and committees. Protocols for our Phase 3 and the opportunity for outdoor meetings of small groups were reviewed.

The agenda discussed staff responsibilities in preparing church outdoor and indoor spaces for safe member use and the responsibilities of small group leaders in advance calendaring of meetings in appropriate, i.e. safely distanced outdoor spaces, and supporting group member compliance with advanced meeting registration and continuing CDC masking and distancing protocols.

A recording of the April 17 small group leader Town Hall is on the YouTube church channel. Handouts for the meeting are available in the OTF section on the UUCB website homepage.

As small groups use outdoor church spaces, their valuable experience will inform best next steps for small group indoor meetings and eventually, a return to usual Sunday programming. A May 1 Congregation Town Hall will explore similar information and offer the OTF the opportunity for dialog and input from members on our next reopening steps.

Currently there is one congregational outdoor worship service scheduled for June 6, Flower Communion Sunday. Important logistics are being developed for this one time summer event to be sure all goes well and all feel safe and respected. Not all members may be vaccinated by this time and some may have medical reasons they may not be vaccinated. Consistent with our Covenant of Right Relations, we want to “listen appreciatively, speak with care, express gratitude, honor our differences, and assume good intentions.”

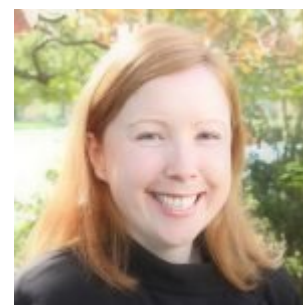
As with many UU churches, we still cannot anticipate a return to normal Sunday programming. In the meantime virtual services will continue, along with efforts to develop the capacity for combined in person and virtual attendance, referred to as a multi-platform experience.

We all want to be together again. And we all want that experience to be a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone. Member understanding and support are very much appreciated.

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

Family Ministry

Rev. Catherine Boyle,
Director of Family Ministry



May Means Keep Wearing A Mask

May starts with flowers as we share flowers with mothers and maternal figures in our lives a token of our gratitude, as spring

reaches its heights and the earth is covered in color and then continues with fireworks and barbecues as we remember those whose lives were lost in service of this country and ends with the call of summer to come; of beaches and play and fun and a brand new day. In this time of continued pandemic as we continue to adjust to our new reality, some of these usual seasonal milestones feel a lifetime away isolated in our own homes, and with rising vaccination rates, many are eager to return to life as it was in 2019. I hope as your family enjoy the joys of this month that you stay mindful with COVID safety protocols. The virus is not yet defeated. As UUCB reopens for small groups and RE programming outdoors, remember the Beloved Community of this church and look out for each other by wearing masks and keeping six feet apart. We live the First Principle of treating everyone with dignity and respect.

Blessed be.

Happy May!
Rev. Catherine

RE Outdoor Education Class Pilot Sunday - May 16

Sunday afternoon of May 16, UUCB FM will be hosting an outdoor education class in the field from 3-5 pm for all children and youth K-HS. The class will be masked, socially distant, and following the church's COVID protocols. Registration is limited and required. [Register here.](#)

Write Your Own Story with UUCB Myth and Magic Chalice Camp This August

UUCB Family Ministry is proud to offer summer camp this August for children and youth. This week long camp is immersive in UU religious education, games, and fun! The camp will be outdoor, socially distanced, and masked at UUCB. Registration is limited.

Monday August 2 - Friday August 6, 2021
9 AM - 4 PM
Campers must bring a bag lunch everyday

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Questions? family.ministry@uucb.org

Social Justice Council

In May, **Social Justice Council Members and anyone who attends a meeting**, will be offering their Sponsored Projects for 2021, either extending and supplementing what was done in 2020 or presenting new projects for 2021. If you have a project that you would like to submit and have at least 2 other people to work with you, please contact the SJC for an application. Applications are due on April 30.

UUCB's Good Neighbor program under the auspices of the SJC, is an integral part of our congregation's culture of giving. We hope to collect at least \$1000 for our Good Neighbor organization each month. On the first Sunday of the month, we invite a representative from that month's Good Neighbor organization to tell us about their organization. **May's Good Neighbor is the [Berkeley Food Pantry](#).**

The Literature, Film & Drama Contingent –Camille Parker

We enjoyed a robust and at times intense discussion of *It's Time To Talk (and Listen): How to have constructive conversations about race, class, sexuality, ability & gender in a polarized world*, by Anastasia S. Kim and Alicia del Prado. On May 2, we will discuss *Minor Feelings: An Asian American's Reckoning*, by Rutgers University Professor Cathy Park Hong.

WOWS - Whites Opposed To White Supremacy will meet on Sunday, 5/16, 12:30-2 pm. Please contact Julia Rogers, jlundyr@gmail.com for info.

Environmental Justice –Sheila Tarbet

Join UU Ministry for Earth and the UUCB team for the UU Drawdown Ecochallenge. Have fun, learn about proven solutions, create climate justice and take collective action with UUs everywhere. We're making a difference! Contact Sheila Tarbet at starbet99@gmail.com for more information.

Local Events:

[The Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour](#)

Sundays May 2, 16, and 23, 10 am–3 pm. Free. The virtual garden tour allows you to visit twenty-five native plant gardens in the East Bay. [Register here](#).

[Green Home Tour](#)

Sundays June 6 and 13, 10 am–2 pm. Free. [Register here](#).

UUCB's Diverse Books for Richmond Schools will continue with our anti-racist work by focusing this month on books for Latinx students. With Cinco de Mayo celebrated next month, we are being asked to donate for the purchase of books that center primarily on the Latinx experience. Great work so far with books supporting mainly African American students. Let's keep it up for a fourth school and maybe a fifth. For more information go to <https://groups.google.com/g/uucb-social-justice>.

A UUCB Social Justice Project led by Jim Acock, and Jane Eisenstark, recruited our congregants and UUCB Chalice circles to contribute to the building, finishing, and interiors of 22 **Tiny Houses**. Along with other religious and community organizations, and under the direction of Youth Spirit Artworks, a non-profit serving homeless youth with educational programs, a former drab lot is now a neighborhood of colorful houses, yurts,

and garden boxes.



Honoring Indigenous Peoples

TAKING RESTORATIVE ACTIONS:

UUCB'S COMMITMENT TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

UUCB's Honoring Indigenous Peoples Group (HIP) has been working on learning more about Ohlone history and connecting with and supporting the important activities of the East Bay Ohlone community. As you know, UUCB is situated on the land known as Huchiun, the unceded territory of the Chochenyo-speaking Ohlone people. We recognize that we continue to benefit from the use of the land. We acknowledge the genocide and land theft perpetrated by settler colonialism and recognize that those harms are ongoing.



HIP is honored to have connected with the **Sogorea Te' Land Trust**. Based in Oakland, it is an Indigenous women-led and inter-tribal land trust which facilitates the return of Indigenous land to Indigenous people for community, ceremonial and planting purposes.

To support the Land Trust, UUCB, through HIP, has taken three actions. First, we are in preliminary discussions regarding their planting a traditional Indigenous herb garden on UUCB property. Secondly, the Land Trust is a Good Neighbor recipient for November, 2021. Thirdly, paying Shuumi Tax is now a proposed line item on UUCB's 2021-22 budget.

Shuumi means "gift" in Chochenyo, and

"is a voluntary annual contribution that non-Indigenous people living on traditional Lisjan Ohlone territory make to support the critical work of the Land Trust, which involves establishing a cemetery to reinter stolen Ohlone ancestral remains and building urban gardens, community centers, and ceremonial spaces so current and future generations of Indigenous people can thrive in the Bay Area."

On May 2 at 9: 30 am, Corrina Gould, Co-founder and Director of the Land Trust, will speak at Personal Theology. This is a great opportunity to learn more. Also, please check out the link to the Land Trust—

<https://sogoreate-landtrust.org>

And this excellent article—

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/dec/31/native-american-land-taxes-reparations>

Individuals can also pay Shuumi. UUCB member Lynne Henderson has done so and writes

“Because we live on their stolen land we can make some reparations by donating to their efforts. I have done it several times....You can calculate your Shuumi Land Tax easily by selecting Pay Shuumi on their website [see link above]. Pay Shuumi takes you to a page where you can calculate your Shuumi Land Tax...Then you can make whatever payment you wish.”

While no amount of money can erase the harm done to Indigenous communities, paying Shuumi is one step in the restorative process and is consistent with UUCB's mission “to encourage lives of integrity, joy and service.”

In Beloved Community,

Helen Tinsley-Jones,

on behalf of the Honoring Indigenous Peoples Group

From the Board of Trustees

Elaine Miller

Dear UUCB congregation,

I've been thinking about change, but first I want to tell you what I've been up to on the board. I am enjoying the newly energized board with our three new members, Ariel Smith-lyer, Bill Brown, and Randall Hudson, and new leadership team of Beth Pollard and Helen Tinsley-Jones, as we bond as a team during extra board meetings, retreats, and training sessions. I'm a member of the Widening the Circle of Concern task force (which is a board committee), am planning to attend the Opening Task Force Zoom Town Hall meeting to discuss church re-opening plans, and I just attended the third meeting of UUCB's Anti-Racism Assessment, facilitated by Rev. Michelle. During this final session we discussed change, how we feel about change generally, and how we think the congregation deals with change. Our discussion has me thinking about all the changes I've seen at UUCB, and how I feel about those changes, and change in general. I have

had much continuity in my life: my mother lives in the house I grew up in, my sisters live close by, we loved to visit our grandparents at the beach every summer, I make it to Yosemite at least once a year, and I like to hike the same East Bay trails over and over. I grew up in this church, and have sung in the choir for almost 40 years. I like the phrase “If it works, don’t fix it”. On the other hand, in my twenties I moved an average of every three months for ten years, have had more careers and jobs than fit on a one-page resume, and won’t mention my love life. For me the most significant changes at church are all the people who have come and gone. RE has expanded and contracted, as well as the choir. We used to have a Peace Committee. I’ve always been proud of the social justice bent of our congregation and denomination, and Social Justice at UUCB is particularly thriving right now; anti-racism and anti-oppression activities are prevalent. There is talk of adding an 8th Principle, which affirms and promotes “journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppression in ourselves and our institutions.” We are learning to use language differently: expanding pronouns, taking care about words that cause pain and otherwise “other” others. Technology has played a huge part in church life during the past year and will not disappear as we return to in-person gatherings. It turns out many congregation members prefer virtual gatherings, especially for committee meetings. Change is in the air. How do you feel about change?

Yours,

Elaine Miller, trustee

From the Treasurer

Jessica K. Rider

The takeaway:

UUCB is in pretty good shape financially as of April 2021. The Executive Director and the Board are working to complete the financial review, tighten up our accounting practices with an eye toward a full audit in 2022, and develop a solid budget with contingency plans in the event of surpluses or shortfalls. Our balance sheet at present has a surplus and we have cash on hand to fund our operations.

The details:

The Finance Committee, consisting of Tess O'Riva, Kerry Simpson, Dave Roberts, Linda Laskowski, Anne Greenwood, and myself, is continuing to work on the financial review with Healy and Associates. Their work is in progress and we expect a final report sometime in late Spring. The review has already yielded some information about ways we can improve our accounting practices, which will also help us prepare for a planned audit in 2022. The finance committee is also working on the budget for next fiscal year. As the pledge campaign is still in progress, the finance committee is focusing on preparing for

contingencies depending on the outcome of the campaign.

As of April 2021, overall revenues net of expenses for the year-to-date were \$134,476, a total surplus of \$91,233. This is largely due to a current surplus in revenues: actual year-to-date revenues were \$747,453, a surplus of \$94,583 over budget. Expenses were \$612,977, a small deficit of \$3,360 from the planned budget. Cash in the Church's primary checking and savings accounts totaled \$562,568.22 and the Board Endowment fund currently holds \$926,006.29.

Kudos:

Do Treasurers normally give shout-outs? This one will give a richly deserved "Brava!" to our incomparable Executive Director Tess O'Riva, who not only got us approved for two COVID-19 relief Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans, she also applied for loan forgiveness. In April, we found out the first loan of \$102,370.00 was forgiven and we expect the second PPP loan of approximately \$107,000 to be forgiven as well. This is money in the bank and black on the balance sheet for UUCB. Thank you, Tess!!!

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.)

May 2 – Shall We Keep the Filibuster? Lee Lawrence

May 9 – Topic Selection and Short Topic Discussion. Ray Westergard.

May 16 – Impact of the Pandemic on Children. Denise Ogren.

May 23 – Voter Suppression or Election Security? Lee Lawrence.

May 30 – NFT's, Cryptocurrencies, and the Environment. Marcia Bates.

For additional information and to receive Zoom link at start of meeting contact Marcia Bates, mjbates@ucla.edu. Group managers: Susan Singh, Ray Westergard, Al Kueffner, Lee Lawrence, Kris Homme, Anne Fitzmaurice.

Personal Theology

Sundays 9:20-10:45 am, Zoom

As we wrap up the Personal Theology 2020-21 year with two speakers in May, please feel free to send ideas, questions, or comments about Personal Theology to adult.ed@uucb.org. We appreciate all the support that we received from you as we navigated the difficulties of the past year. Thanks also to all the members and friends of UUCB who participated in our seminars. It has been an enriching experience to get to know many of our own members better.

If you would like to be a part of the Personal Theology Committee when it reconvenes after the summer hiatus, please let Anne Wardell or Lonnie Moseley know ASAP! We need more members if this program is to continue as it is not viable when there are only 2 people planning and implementing these talks.

May 2 – Sogorea Te' Land Trust with Corrina Gould. “Rematriate the Land/Shuumi Tax. As our church begins the process of honoring the indigenous ancestors of our church site, we are pleased to host Corrina Gould. Corrina Gould (Lisjan Ohlone) is the chair and spokesperson for the Confederated Villages of Lisjan. Corrina is the Co-Founder and Lead Organizer for Indian People Organizing for Change, a small Native run organization that works on Indigenous people issues. Her life’s work has led to the creation of Sogorea Te' Land Trust, a women-led organization, within the urban setting of her ancestral territory of the Bay Area. Sogorea Te' Land Trust works to return Indigenous land to Indigenous people.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/9137136420>

May 23 – Mac Lingo “Looking at Moses Through Contemporary Eyes.” Our final talk will be by Mac Lingo, a member of UUCB for over 30 years. Mac has served on various church committees over the years and has been President of the Board of Trustees. He has also been a volunteer chaplain at Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and at San Quentin.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/9137136420>

Stewardship Committee

Campaign Report

20% or \$67,000! That is the current percentage and dollar value we achieved greater than our Stewardship Campaign goal. We hoped to have pledge commitments for \$345,000. During the pandemic, at this writing, we have commitments of financial support in excess of \$412,000. Take a bow, UUCB members.

147 pledge units (persons or households) have made this statement of generosity and value for UUCB possible. With the challenges the church has faced with the pandemic, this financial generosity will enable the Board of Trustees to be more secure and positive

in their financial planning for next year. The support will greatly increase the financial feasibility of continuing valued programs and the maintenance of critical staff resources.

There are still some 50 pledge units we have not yet heard from. Pledges can be submitted at any time, but now is when they can most directly impact financial planning for next year. Specifically, these outstanding pledges may help the church finance the new windows for the sanctuary and the air exchange systems needed to make the church spaces safe for all, without sacrificing other program or staffing objectives. To submit your pledge, go to the UUCB home page (uucb.org) and scroll down to the 2021-2022 Pledge Campaign to pledge online or to get a pledge form or call the church office (510-525-0302) and have a pledge form mailed to you.

To all who have currently pledged, thank you very much for your financial commitment. And lastly, sincere appreciation for Rev. Michelle and our Executive Director Tess O'Riva for their support and guidance and our Stewardship team for their successful five month effort for our spiritual community: Lynne Cahoon, Don Klose, Lenore Ralston, Deborah Schmidt, Helen Toy, Grace Ulp, and David Roberts, Board Liaison.

Patrick Cullinane and Michael Armstrong, Stewardship Campaign Co-Chairs

Partner Church Committee

Stephanie Ann Blythe

The past year has been tough on all of us. We won't travel to Transylvania until next year at the earliest. So has this hiatus given you a hankering for some of the Partner Church Committee's goulash, which is "gulyas" in Hungarian, and pronounced "goo-yawsh"? Here's the recipe from Saveur.com which we have been using:



Hungarian Goulash Recipe

Yield: serves 6

Time: 1 hour, 45 minutes

Ingredients

4 Tbsp. sunflower or canola oil

2 yellow onions, chopped

1½ lb. beef chuck, trimmed and cut into ½-inch cubes

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

¼ cup sweet paprika

2 tsp. dried marjoram

2 tsp. caraway seeds

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

2 medium carrots, cut into ½-inch cubes

2 medium parsnips, cut into ½-inch cubes
1½ lb. medium new potatoes, peeled and cut into ½-inch cubes
1 tomato, cored and chopped
1 Italian frying pepper, chopped
Rye bread, for serving (optional)

Instructions

Heat the oil in a 5-quart Dutch oven over medium. Add the onions, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft and translucent, about 10 minutes. Increase the heat to high. Add the beef, and season with salt and pepper. Cook, uncovered, stirring only once or twice, until the meat is lightly browned, about 6 minutes. Stir in the paprika, marjoram, caraway, and garlic, and cook until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the carrots, parsnips, and 5 cups water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium and simmer, covered, until the beef is nearly tender, about 40–50 minutes.

Add the potatoes and cook, uncovered, until tender, about 25 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes and peppers; cook for 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Serve with rye bread if desired.

If you think a ¼ cup of paprika seems like a lot, most Hungarians would think it needs more. Even John Tucker once told me that I was “circumspect” with the paprika. And for Isten’s sake, it had better be paprika from Szeged. That Spanish paprika on your shelf won’t do. Did you know that our own Walter Gorski makes a wonderful chicken paprikash? And one time we got Michèle Voillequé to make the crepes for palacintas. If we’re making your mouth water, good! Anybody got a bottle of palinka hidden in the cupboard? It sure will be nice when we can all break bread over a Hungarian potluck sometime in the future. In the meantime...

Don’t forget that our Village Education Fund is alive and well, but it needs replenishment. Next time you’re mailing a check to UUCB or making a contribution via PayPal, consider a donation to the fund! You can always contact Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net.

Chalice Circles

Cynthia Asprodites

In a recent Chalice Circle meeting, I suggested as an upcoming topic “Lessons from the year of the pandemic.” I thought it would be interesting to reflect on lessons learned and perspectives gained now we’re just about on the other side of COVID. I scanned the Zoom screen for thumbs up. There were none! Apparently, no one was interested in the topic. It was as if everyone was fatigued, weary not only of COVID itself but of talking about its impact on our lives – again. Understood.

Yet COVID is the context in which our Chalice Circles have been taking place: this pandemic has been the backdrop of our time together on Zoom.

Early on in the pandemic, our Chalice Circle program “pivoted” to respond to the needs of our church community. Our desire for connection was intensified by the separation and isolation forced upon us. The Chalice Circle leadership team came together quickly and decided we would offer more circles to keep our community in touch with one another and to offer a welcoming presence for others not a part of our community. The flexibility of Zoom allowed more people to participate. Since March 2020, when sheltering-in-place began in California and our church building closed, our Chalice Circle program has served almost 100 individuals.

Many of us have expressed surprise that Zoom provides the level of intimacy that it does: we “see” each other in our little boxes on the screen, and we share and listen deeply to one another’s stories. Ironically, confinement has brought us closer together. This past year has been so difficult for so many of us – not only because of the impact of the pandemic but also because of raging wildfires, right-wing insurgencies, and bearing witness to the atrocities of racism. We’ve needed each other through these times. Leaning into our Chalice Circles, thereby hearing our own voices and each other’s stories, has been a source of sustenance and comfort. Chalice Circles hold us as part of “beloved community.”

We anticipate the eventual return to in-person gatherings at UUCB. We don’t yet know the precise timeline for safely re-opening our church campus. As protocols are developed and we move into a post-COVID world, our Chalice Circle program will continue to adapt to our needs. We hope to be able to offer in-person groups as well as continue with our virtual groups.

If you are interested in joining a Chalice Circle this summer or upcoming fall, we encourage you to contact Natalie Campbell by email at chalicecircle@uucb.org. Whether we are meeting in person or on our computer screens, the embrace of our community is there to provide loving connection and support.

Cynthia Asprodites,

Chalice Circle Facilitator

From the Executive Director

Tess Snook O’Riva, Executive Director

As most of you know, I lost my dad to bladder cancer last month. He had lived in Hawaii (the Big Island) for the last two years, and because of Covid, we had not been able to visit him.



Coming to Hawaii has been an interesting process. My family had been here for over 40 years, fixing houses and working in real estate. My grandmother, before she passed, learned everything she could about the local flora and fauna, and all about the language and culture. She would correct you if you mispronounced a word, and don’t you dare take any lava rocks, or face the wrath of the goddess Pele!

One of the cultural norms over here is that Hawaiians don't get together to chat, have coffee, or hang out. No. They "talk story." There may be those other things involved, but when you're invited somewhere, it's to come over and talk story. And boy do they talk story!

There is no casual passing by of "How are you?" "Fine." The shortest interaction I've had with someone here was almost 10 minutes long, and that was a cashier. If they knew my dad, give it up. It's gonna be a while. Every night has been story after story. It's been glorious.

Although, I think it's a good thing, it's hard for my Type A personality. I'm being forced to slow down, listen deeply, respond with care...Hey, wait. That sounds familiar somehow. Maybe Hawaiians are inherently UUs. I don't know. I do know that my dad loved it here. He loved to talk story with complete strangers, and he and his friends would sit outdoors all evening just talking stories of their lives, their families' lives, and whatever else came up.

Soon I will go home to my family, talking stories of my own. I have more stories of my dad than ever before. I've connected with new friends and relatives, and I hope we stay in touch. I am committing to calling the people I love more regularly so they always know how important they are to me. Life is feeling more precious by the day.

I greatly appreciate everything that UUCB has done for me during this time, especially not scheduling meetings at 7 am (my time). It hasn't been easy to hold a regular work schedule, and there is so much going on, but my UUCB family has consistently been there to support me and make sure I'm okay. I can't wait to be together again so I can talk story with all of you. Better bring a chair, as it might take a while.

Music Matters

Bryan Baker, Director of Music



Dear Congregation,

A question rolls relentlessly around my mind: when can we sing together again? I've read far more detailed scientific articles than I ever thought I would, and attended numerous humorless conferences online about aerosols and the spread of COVID. While far more is known now than a year ago, there remain "known unknowns" especially about singing in groups. So caution has ruled and we have zoomed, and zoomed and zoomed.

Nine months ago, an infectious disease expert told the choral world that singing in very small groups outdoors was likely safe - assuming it was sunny, and there was a gentle breeze, and the singers maintained 6 feet distance. But singing in doors was much too dangerous.

Much has changed since then. This morning, another infectious disease expert shared her knowledge with the California choral community. Her basic message was 'okay, you're going to sing together again, these are best ways to minimize the risk.' After reminding us that even as people can still become infected after being vaccinated, so they can still transmit the virus. As more and more people are vaccinated that risk diminishes.

In the past couple months many high school and university choirs have been singing together indoors, in very well-ventilated large spaces, wearing masks and keeping a distance. While that came with a certain degree of risk, none of the groups have reported outbreaks.

Singing together comes with very real rewards like reduced stress and anxiety, and improved overall mental and emotional wellbeing. The situation with the virus may change, but right now I feel optimistic that creative strategies to minimize risk will bring us safely together again in the not too distant future.

Yours in harmony, Bryan

Endowment Committee

In January of 2018, the congregation authorized the withdrawal of \$758,000 from the Endowment fund for a specific list of facility improvement projects, with oversight from a committee of church members; the Endowment Project Oversight Committee (EPOC). In October of 2019, the congregation authorized modifications to the original resolution to allow revisions to the scope, as approved by the Board of Trustees.

The Building and Grounds Committee has completed Phase 1 (Safir Room reconstruction, adjacent skylights and school building mold investigation); phase 2 (Cottage upgrades, sanctuary furnace replacement and gas line repair); and Phase 3 (Purlin Tail Repairs). The total actual expenditure for phases 1 through 3 totals \$447,485 which allows for substantial targeted donations by the Dave Roberts family for the cottage and Grace Ulp for the Purlin tail repairs.

The board has authorized the start of Phase 4, which includes three major categories of work: (A) replacement of the 10 original wood sanctuary windows with aluminum windows and insulated glass, including some operating lites for improved ventilation; (B) replacement of the Heating and Ventilating systems for the social hall and music wing, due to numerous failures, and (C) Study of Atrium Bathroom major reconstruction options and minor interim upgrades to improve exhaust ventilation and upgrade interior finishes and plumbing. The estimate for Phase 4, including consulting and permitting is \$230,000, bringing the total estimate for phases 1 through 4 to \$677,485.

The Building & Grounds Committee is proceeding with Phase 4, and considering other critical, high priority, facility improvement projects, which are appropriate for funding from the Endowment fund. The committee recommendations for future projects will be

reviewed by the Endowment Project Oversight Committee, and presented to the board for action.

The Oversight Committee will continue to report to the congregation on use of Endowment funds for building projects.

Randall Hudson(Board), Larry Nagel (B & G), Jason Russell (Endowment Committee)
Lenore Ralston (Congregant), and Tom Tripp (Congregants)



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