
May 2022

Theme: Nurturing Beauty

Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist
Church of Berkeley Vol. 81 #5

The mission of this church is to create loving
community; inspire spiritual growth; and encourage
lives of integrity joy, and service

Journeying Together

Dr. Rev. Michelle Collins

This month's theme is Nurturing Beauty, nurturing the beauty around us in the world, our perception of beauty, our own beautiful selves (because we ALL are beautiful). But rather than my just talking about beauty, here are some practices about beauty this month:

Practice One: Noticing Beauty

Maybe you're the kind of person who readily notices beauty around you on a regular basis, or maybe it might take a little more focusing of attention. During this month, make a point to notice and appreciate something beautiful daily. One practice is to commit to taking a picture of something beautiful daily. Just the intention and act of doing that shifts our focus and lets you notice beautiful things around you.

Practice Two: Sharing about Beauty

A great way to explore our monthly themes is to bring them into daily conversations. Or in other words, our themes offer the chance to deepen and enliven conversations and relationships. So here are some conversation starters rooted in the call to Nurture Beauty. Take them into a conversation with someone close to you or engage them with a small circle of family or friends.

Remember: part of this exercise is about the insights that arise from meaningful conversation, but another part is to notice the beauty that arises when our conversations go beyond the weather and chit chat.

Conversation Starters about Nurturing Beauty:

- What is the most beautiful thing you've ever seen or experienced? How did it leave its mark on you?
- When did you first feel beautiful?
- Have you ever been healed by beauty?
- What do you wish your 16-year-old self knew about beauty?
- Do you think beauty can save or heal the world?
- How often do you notice beautiful things around you?
- Have you ever experienced a "beautiful hello" or a "beautiful goodbye"?



May Services

Sundays 11 am

In Person and Online

May 1

Flower Communion

May 8

Are You My Mentor?
(Mother's Day)

May 15

Doctors of Durability

May 22

Can Beauty Save the World?

May 29

Topic TBD

Coffee Hour

Sundays at Noon

In person Atrium & Terrace

Zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/332046821>

Meeting ID: 332 046 821

Password: 810131

Sunday Programming

Personal Theology

Sundays at 9:15 am on Zoom

May 1 – Susan T. Mashiyama presents “Celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.” Susan tells us about her harp and multicultural heritage.

May 22 – Dwight Merrill presents “Capitalism or Socialism? A Hybrid System Is Better for Humanity.”

Youth and Children’s Choir Rehearsal

Sundays at 10 am

The Choir is open to all children and youth, ages 5 ½ and up. Prior musical experience is not required. We rehearse in the Meditation Room (below the Sanctuary) or on Zoom. We help lead the Sunday worship service once or twice per month. Occasionally we participate in other music events. We’d love to have you join us!

Humanist Connections

Sundays at 1 pm on Zoom

May 1 – What News Do We Believe and Why? Marcia Bates

May 8 – Topic Selection for June and Short Topic Discussion. Ray Westergard

May 15 – What to Expect from the Webb Telescope? Harold Ogren

May 22 – What Is Most Important Thing in Your Life Now? Paul Ulbrich

May 29 – What is Emergence? Don Anderson

Good Neighbor in May

<https://bfhp.org/> Berkeley Food and Housing Project – “Our mission is to ease and end the crisis of homelessness in our communities.” They live out their mission by providing emergency food and shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing with support services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Special Events

May 1 @ 1 pm

LFMDC will honor Asian Pacific American History Month with a discussion of Julie Otsuka's books: *When The Emperor Was Divine*; *The Buddha In The Attic* and, her latest, *The Swimmers*.

May 1 @ 3 pm

Kensington Symphony Orchestra/
Luminescence Choir **Concert**

May 6 @ 6 pm

Inaugural **Dance Party** in the Social Hall

May 7 @ 9 am - 12 pm

Spring Work Party. Young and old are invited to revitalize our grounds! Dig up thistles and weeds, remove eucalyptus suckers, put protective cages around baby oaks, and plant sunflowers to honor Ukraine. Bring gloves and a drink, safe snacks will be provided.

May 14 @ 7 pm

Young Adult **Game Night**

May 20 – 22 @ 10 – 2

Memorial for Lynn Sullivan

May 21 @ 1 pm

Freestone History Wall Timeline Exercise

May 22 @ 12:15 pm

Celebration & Planning Congregational Meeting. Award presentations, all things financial, state-of-the-church report, and more!

Announcements

Board Listening Presence

Pier Sun Ho: call or text 734-649-8240 or send an email at ms_sunho@hotmail.com

Freestone

As we continue conversation and exploration for determining the future of UUCB's Freestone retreat property, we will have a number of opportunities for engagement coming up. You can find the entire timeline and documents on our website's home page. Upcoming events to go ahead and put on your calendar are:

- History Dialogue: Sat. May 21 (1 pm)
 - Freestone Dialogue Day: June date TBD
-

Concert May 1 at 3 pm

The Kensington Symphony Orchestra and UUCB's Luminescence Choir will be in concert together for the first time in three years! Tickets available online on our website or in person on the day of the event.

Memorial for Lynn Sullivan

There will be a memorial service officiated by Rev. Michelle in celebration on Lynn Sullivan's life, Saturday May 21, 10 am to noon. An exhibit of Lynn's fiber art will be shown in the Safir Room May 20 – 22, 10 am to 2 pm.



Executive Director Notes

Tess Snook O'Riva

Now in our third month of "new normal," we continue to refine worship logistics. Whether you volunteer in the kitchen, attend Sunday services, participate in a Chalice Circle, are active in Social Justice project – all are a form of worship and a way to serve our community, connect with each other, and grow as people.

We have all gone through extraordinary challenges, including UUCB. Some changes are not so comfortable. That's why I was proud that our entire onsite UUCB staff participated in Rev. Michelle's Conflict Resolution Workshop last month. They're all new to in-person worship, and therefore new to you. As we all adjust to the new, we have better tools to communicate.

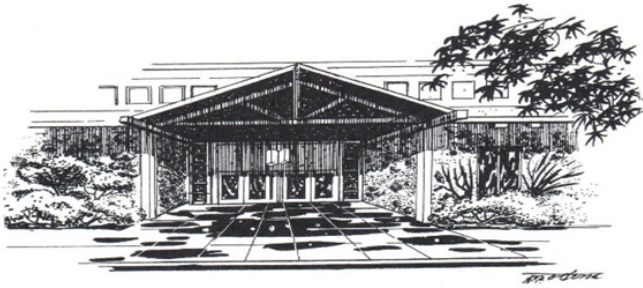
Some changes that may need explanation are the new ventilation systems. We have fresh, energy efficient airflow in the Sanctuary and Social Hall that is well above CDC guidelines. You may not hear the fans all the time, but we have set the controls to be as conservative as technologically possible, especially for singing. We are looking at all the remaining rooms to make systems automatic, but for now we still must manually turn on the fans in the Fireside and Safir Rooms.

I would also like to welcome Liam Barker, our new Facilities Assistant. As a Kensington local, Liam has a varied background from handyman to tech support and is looking forward to helping out wherever he can. He will be working on Sundays, so feel free to say, "Hello!" We also hope to introduce our new Rentals Coordinator soon.

And don't forget the Baby Pool! Caitlyn is due in August, and there are still plenty of dates/times to choose from. This will be our first UUCB baby in quite a while! (Continued next page.)

Thank you for your patience in understanding that we have 170 people (Easter attendance number) who are dealing with our changes and their own. We shall work together in covenant to support each other. – Tess, ed@uucb.org.

Stewardship Campaign Update



Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley

Heartfelt thanks for all who have submitted their pledge for the next fiscal year. In this financially and morally challenging time, your generosity is much appreciated and valued in helping the church have a responsible budget next year to support programs, our staff, and maintain our facilities.

If you have not yet submitted your pledge, you can still offer your support. It is easy online at [Stewardship and Pledging - Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley \(uucb.org\)](https://www.uucb.org/stewardship). You can also get a pledge form at church or ask staff to send you a form. Financial support to the best of your ability is valued by the church.

Lastly, we are blessed that Don Klose and Selene Fabiano have volunteered to co-chair next year's Stewardship campaign. Please let them know how much you appreciate their significant volunteer contribution and, if you can, offer to help them next year.

Your Stewardship Committee: Patrick Cullinane (Chair), Lynne Cahoon, Selene Fabiano, Ariel Smithlyer, David Roberts (Board Liaison), Rev. Michelle Collins, Tess Snook O'Riva (Executive Director).

Opening Task Force (OTF) Update

We are all pleased to gather in-person once again for Sunday service. On April 17, we safely reintroduced coffee service in a well-ventilated area. The OTF continues to monitor COVID trends to assess when other protocols can be safely relaxed. As the BA2 variant now impacts the northeast where there is a high degree of vaccination compliance, COVID cases are increasing and without so far a significant increase in hospitalizations and deaths. The unvaccinated and immune compromised continue to carry the greatest risk of negative consequences with each new variant.

Congregational assistance and compliance with safety protocols is much appreciated. As a most effective protection, masking in the church building remains in place as does the use of our colored lanyards to signal and respect physical distance preferences.

Volunteer help with the Sunday registration table to aid contact tracing is still an important need. Please let Lisa Maynard know if you can help us on Sunday.

Lastly, remember to wear your badge and to leave it on the peg board as you leave the church.

If any questions or comments, contact the OTF at planning@uucb.org.

OTF (Opening Task Force)

Members: Patrick Cullinane (Chair), Sheldon Jones, Lisa Maynard, Tess Snook O'Riva (Executive Director), and Rev. Michelle Collins.

From the Board of Trustees

So much happening in real time to shape our UUCB future! To name a few...

Selecting UUCB members to forge our path for our next ministry: Please vote by **Tuesday, May 3** for seven candidates to serve on the Ministerial Search Committee (MSC). Vote by the e-mail link or in-person before or after the May 1 worship service.

The MSC will first explore with the congregation what type of ministry to seek, as is typical in a MSC process. The Board is asking this MSC to also consider whether a shorter-term contract minister, a settled minister called by the congregation, or some other format, will best serve the congregation's needs. After the Board hears the MSC recommendations and decides on which ministry type to seek, the MSC will move into finding the best minister for UUCB to start in Summer 2023.

Deciding the destiny of our Freestone retreat property. The Freestone Committee has worked very hard to gather information about the property and options for its future. Now it's the turn of all members of the congregation to learn and engage about the background, challenges, and opportunities of this UUCB property. Thanks to Rev. Michelle for designing a discernment and decision-making process and timeline that the Board adopted. Please attend the various activities – including these in the near future:

- History Wall Timeline: Sat. May 21, beginning @ 10 am
- Freestone Dialogue Day: TBD in June
- Visits to Freestone – stay tuned

Crafting new ways to connect, inspire, and serve - in-person and virtually: With deep gratitude to our Opening Task Force for guiding us into safe in-person gathering, and our Tech folks who make

livestream, coffee hour zooming, and all things virtual happen, we can reach anyone anywhere with Sunday service. We also realize this means re-imagining what and how we do church – especially for families, who are so critical to our vitality. And also, especially as we seek to widen our circle into broader welcoming and inclusiveness. Let's have fun with trying different things – as people and as a church!

Lastly, don't forget to mark on your calendars:

Sunday, May 22: After worship service, for our annual Celebration & Planning Congregational Meeting. Award presentations, all things financial, state-of-the-church report, and more!

Beth Pollard
Board President

Board of Trustees April 2022 Actions

1. **Endowment:** Accepted Endowment Committee report on recommended 4% annual disbursements from endowment investments.
2. **Priorities:** Discussed priorities and areas of emphasis for 2022-23. There was support for priorities adopted last year: Renewing and Nourishing; Fighting for Justice; Stewardship & Sustainability; Engaging with Change; and Partnering & Connections with the Larger Community. Emphasis areas will change to reflect new initiatives and accomplishments this past year.
3. **Preliminary Budget:** Reviewed Executive Director Tess' draft budget, discussing ways to bridge the gap with fundraising, rentals, more pledge support, and cuts if/as needed. Final draft budget to Board on May 3.
4. **Revenue:** Looking for folks who like to raise money for a good cause! And please fill out your pledge!
5. **Next ministry:** Confirmed process for establishing the Ministerial Search Committee, involving congregational outreach.

Ministerial Search Committee

Voting to Elect Members of UUCB's Ministerial Search Committee Starts April 26 & Closes May 3 @ 5 pm

Thank you for your participation in last month's poll to nominate potential candidates for the Ministerial Search Committee (MSC)!

Based on those nominations, the Board is compiling a final list of candidates willing to serve whose names will appear on the ballot. UUCB members will be asked to vote for 7 candidates. The MSC will be composed of 7 members.

Beginning 4/26, the electronic election ballot will be sent out to all members via email, the Discuss List, and text blast. In-person voting will be available before and after service on 5/1. All voting concludes on Tuesday, 5/3 @ 5 pm.

Stay tuned! Information about the candidates is forthcoming.

Please note: Board members and/or their spouses are not eligible to sit on the committee. Therefore, while some were nominated by congregants, their names will not be on this final ballot.

Questions/comments? Please contact Pier Sun Ho ms_sunho@hotmail.com, Dave Roberts davidbobs1@gmail.com, or Beth Pollard beth.poll@sbcglobal.net.

Honoring Indigenous Peoples Group (HIP)

You are invited to a special spiritual journey book read of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teaching of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

4 Zoom meetings on Tuesday evenings, 7-8:30 pm
6/7, 6/21, 7/5, 7/19

1 meeting onsite @ UUCB, Sunday, 7/31

You need not come to all sessions to participate.

HIP has been enjoying the feast that is reading *Braiding Sweetgrass*, and, finding it powerful and deeply inspiring, we've realized that it calls to be shared with our wider UUCB community and friends in the form of a time-limited book group.

Author Robin Wall Kimmerer is an enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, botanist, distinguished professor, poet, mother, and award-winning writer. This best-selling book lives at the intersections of science and spirituality, of botany and environmentalism, frequently inviting the reader to stop and reflect, awakening our poetic souls and teaching us to be better stewards of the earth.

You can find reviews of the book on [Goodreads](#) and enjoy a free talk by Dr. Kimmerer on 5/15 on [Eventbrite](#).

To sign up for or ask questions about the Book Read, please contact Anne Wardell rxchclt@comcast.net

Know the ways of the ones who take care of you, so that you may take care of them.

[Braiding Sweetgrass](#), p. 183

Partner Church

With the Russian invasion and war in Ukraine dragging on, the need for aid continues. The first Faithify crowdfunding effort raised \$61,000. A new crowdfunding campaign is again being sponsored by the International Women's Convocation in coordination with the Providence Organization of the Hungarian Unitarian Church. As you have seen on the news, the refugees arriving in Kolosvar (Cluj), Transylvania's biggest city, are mostly women and children. A kindergarten has been established in a very familiar place, the Hungarian Unitarian Church headquarters. One Ukrainian refugee traveled from Kolosvar back to Odessa with badly needed medical supplies. Plans are being made to send a second shipment.

Here's the link: <https://www.faithify.org/campaign/67/support-those-fleeing-war-in-ukraine>

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) has its Ukraine Emergency Response campaign in full swing. UUSC is partnering with two groups: the FemFund in Poland and the Helsinki Hungarian Committee, located in Budapest and serving social justice in Hungary. Here is what these organizations are doing:

- Distributing humanitarian aid to women, people of color, and LGBTQI+ individuals who have fled Ukraine — including delivery of food, cooking supplies, batteries, generators, lamps, and other necessities for those arriving in Poland.
- Providing free legal assistance, counseling, and plain-language information to those arriving in Hungary, enabling them to access their rights as asylum seekers.
- Organizing support for grassroots groups who are fighting pushbacks of BIPOC migrants.

Here's the UUSC's link: <https://www.uusc.org/ukraine/>

We don't have the space in this report to go into detail about the humanitarian work happening in Ukraine and Eastern Europe. Please click on the links and learn more how your donations can provide direct assistance to Ukrainian refugees. Then click the DONATE buttons! Our Partner Church is helping out as well.

Contact Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net.

Personal Theology

Sundays at 9:15 am on Zoom

Thanks for your support! We've had many wonderful, talented, and generous speakers with attendance reaching as high as 91. We have also had attendees from across the United States as well as Ecuador, England, and Wales!

May 1 – Susan T. Mashiyama

Celebrating Asian Pacific American Heritage

Month. Susan was raised as a Buddhist in Southern California. Susan has a BA in English literature from Yale and a PhD in biochemistry and molecular biology from UC Berkeley. She is also a Celtic harp player and singer/songwriter. Susan believes in both science and spirituality and thinks that the two can co-exist peacefully

May 22 – Dwight Merrill, "Capitalism or Socialism? A Hybrid System Is Better for

Humanity". Dwight attended Sunday School at The First Unitarian Church of Berkeley in 1956. From UC Berkeley, he served two years in the Peace Corps, and did graduate work in chemistry at Ohio State. Growing up in the 1950s, half the world followed Jesus Christ, and the other half followed Karl Marx. Dwight argues that we need the better parts of capitalism and socialism to move society forward into a fairer and more productive future.

Social Justice

Co-Chair's Message

Spring is here, bringing a feeling of new beginnings and hope for the future! As the fear of COVID diminishes in our community, many of us are stepping out for the first time in two years. It's great to be with friends and family; refreshing to attend church, go to restaurants, and to just be out in the world!

As tempting as it may be to kick up our heels and only engage in light-hearted activities, problems in the world need our attention. Now is the time to come together to rebuild our Social Justice community. UUCB's Social Justice Council is uniquely situated to provide a place for our congregation to meet and work with like-minded folks. As the current Social Justice Co-Chairs, Natalie Campbell and I invite you to join our team! We focus on equity, anti-racism, a clean and healthy environment, equal access to food and housing, and bringing peace to the world.

Although we are a small community, in the grand global picture we are an experienced, relatively well-resourced group of people. Our Council provides an environment to leverage the issue-focused passion each of us has for making the world a more just, equitable, and healthy place. It lends support and connection to those moving in that direction. Join us at our monthly meetings to energize our efforts with your ideas! We meet on the 2nd Wednesdays from 7-9 pm. Contact: sejones1950@gmail.com

Summer Forum Begins (back on our beautiful UUCB campus!)

June 5: Lifelong peace activist Professor David Hartsough will share his thoughts and activities, particularly over the past 10 years. He will have copies of his book, *Waging Peace: Global Adventures of a Lifelong Activist*, as well.

June 19: Reverend Michelle Collins presents Ecological Foot-printing: How much of the Earth's resources do you use? How much does humanity as a whole use? Ecological foot-printing is a way of thinking about and calculating each of our own impact on the Earth and her resources. With Overshoot Day happening sooner each year (the date where humanity's consumption exceeds the Earth's annual resources and regeneration capacity), it's an important perspective to talk about.

June 26: Tamisha Walker presents the work Safe Return, a dynamic group working with women coming out of the penitentiary. Contact: dorothyherzberg@gmail.com.

Literature, Film, Drama & Music Contingent

In honor of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, on May 1, we will discuss Julie Otsuka's first two wonderful novels: *When the Emperor Was Divine* and *The Buddha in the Attic*, with Beth Jerde facilitating. camilleparker@comcast.net

Youth Spirit Artworks Tiny House Empowerment Village Updates

Volunteer workers are nearing completion of the Strawbale Welcome Center (using traditional strawbale construction methods), as well as Live-Work Tiny Houses 27 (for an activities coordinator) and 28 (for the director of the Street Spirit newspaper).

Students at UC Berkeley and USF are designing a solar powered community center for the Village, as part of an international green building competition. It will include a maker space, music room, and study space. Dave Roberts is working to secure a donated van from a local rental agency, to make it easier for residents and staff to commute between the Village and YSA's South Berkeley studio, often a challenge, especially at night.

YSA is working to secure the soon to be vacated lot next to the Village as the site for their next Hundred Homes for a Hundred Youths project. It would be designed as a cluster of somewhat autonomous mini-villages, which could serve as a model for housing that the City of Oakland is seeking to build for low income and unhoused residents on a number of vacant lots in the city. Discussions also continue, in conjunction with SOS Richmond, toward creating a Tiny House Village in Richmond.

As always, volunteers and donations are welcome! sally@youthspiritartworks.org

New Zoom Workshop Series

Mourning the Change in Climate and the State of the World? UUCB and the UU Society of Santa Barbara, in conjunction with the Good Grief Network, are offering a unique workshop series of drop-in sessions providing social and emotional support to UU church members and friends who feel overwhelmed about the state of the world, and who are looking for a way forward.

With 10 Weekly Drop-in sessions, Wednesdays 10am to 12pm, April 6 – June 8, the Program helps us work through the sense of despair and isolation that is a normal response to the existential threat of climate change and other emerging human disasters. The program builds personal resilience and empowerment as it strengthens community ties. Using group sharing, literature study, journaling, and embodiment exercises, we create a brave grounded space where we can collectively work through our heavy feelings. From this space we can envision new ways forward, access our unique personal gifts, and reorient our lives toward action -- at a time when action is essential.

This program is provided through a generous grant from the Prairie Vista UU fellowship in western Nebraska. Find out more and register here: www.goodgriefnetwork.org/uu. UUCB contact: elau.usher@gmail.com

Healthy Air for All: Time for Action

After local experts and activists presented at our presentation "Healthy Air for All: Time for Action," we're thinking about activities for the remainder of this year, and our upcoming project year. We welcome folks with new ideas about how our community can address environmental justice and the climate crisis. starbet99@gmail.com.

Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Covenant of Right Relations

Love guides this church.

The quest for truth and justice is its common purpose.

*To give thanks, listen deeply, speak with care, honor our differences, and seek and grant forgiveness –
These things we covenant with one another.*

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 an “introduction to membership” session, sign the membership book, and commit to supporting this church through participation and financially. To become a member, please contact membership@uucb.org.

NEWSLETTER ITEM SUBMISSIONS: Submit announcements and articles by email to beacon@uucb.org. Due to limited space, we do not publish announcements for events occurring outside the church community. **The deadline for submissions** is the 15th of the month. **Questions?** Please email beacon@uucb.org. (Beacon is compiled and edited by Charis Domador.)

WEBSITE: <http://uucb.org>

PHONE: 510-525-0302

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS:

To subscribe to the email version of this newsletter or “The Week Ahead at UUCB,” email administrator@uucb.org. You can also find both newsletters 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

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Rev. Michelle Collins
Alice Lemieux (Family Ministry and Program Council liaison)
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