
August 2022

Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Vol. 81 #8

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

Executive Director Notes

Tess Snook O'Riva

I am officially announcing that UUCB will be the temporary location of Kensington Fire Station 65 for the next 18-24 months. This means our lower parking lot (off Craft Ave.) will no longer be available for parking. Construction crews will be working hard to get the site ready for fire fighters to move in by October. They will trim up the trees, remove the two diagonal speed bumps at the entrance, and install a security fence around the perimeter.

We understand that parking is a concern, and we're working on overflow parking options. Trackers Earth will end their summer camps this month, so we won't have as many buses taking up space. And our resident preschool, The Good Earth School, is supportive and excited about this project. The kids get to see firetrucks every day! We also hope to host a pancake breakfast with the fire station very soon and invite all our neighbors!

We are also gearing up for Fall in other ways, and we'd love your help. Our new Director of Family Ministry & Lifelong Learning, Heaven Walker, is looking for Religious Education teachers for the church year. No experience necessary, training provided, and curriculum options are being reviewed. Do you want to support the development of our youth? Contact Heaven at family.ministry@uucb.org.

And after a long search, Cordell Sloan has volunteered to be the Convener of the Fundraising Team. This group will help unite and simplify efforts to raise money for the church, partnership organizations, and other causes. Do you like to run parties? Garage sales? Music events? Have other ideas? Email Cordell at fundraising@uucb.org to join the exploratory conversation and share ideas.

And don't forget to join us for the fun stuff! Food and music will be abundant at the upcoming work party on August 27th. Gardening, painting, scanning, whatever you like to do we like, too! All ages and abilities welcome. Questions? Tess – ed@uucb.org



August Services

Sundays 11 am

In Person and Online

August 7

Rev. Michelle Collins preaching

August 14

Rev. Joy Atkinson preaching,
Worship Associate Andrea Brown

August 21

Rev. John Buehrens preaching,
Worship Associate Don Klose

August 28

Rev. Michelle Collins preaching,
Worship Associate Dayana Claghorn

Coffee Hour

Sundays at Noon

In person on the Terrace

Sunday Programming

Summer Forum

Sundays at 9:30 am, in person & on Zoom

August 7 – Voter Suppression, voting rights. Sponsored by Karen Elliott. Meg Holmberg has been working with Common Ground, a national nonpartisan organization, phone banking. Sheldon Jones will present an overview.

August 14 – Ujima, a resident program working with mothers struggling with addiction. Some of the participants will join Director **Rita Shank.**

August 21 – No Program.

August 28 – Youth Spirit Artworks (YSA). Jim Acock and Sally Hindeman. YSA is expanding the tiny village they created in Oakland and will provide a description of their plans and volunteers needed.

Committee: Dorothy Herzberg, Beth Jerde, Karen Elliott, Sheila Tarbet, Jim Acock, Roberta Shaw.

Humanist Connections

Sundays at 12:30 OR 1 pm. See below for details. Contact Marcia Bates, mjbates@ucla.edu, for info or check The Week Ahead for Zoom link.

August 7, 1 pm – Topic: Hell, presented by Paul Ulbrich.

August 14, 1 pm – Topic Selection for September and Short Topic Discussion. Ray Westergard.

August 21, 1 pm – 2024 Election, presented by Hope Carroll.

August 28, 1 pm – How to Enjoy Life Now, presented by Rosalind Gordon.

Special Events

August 6 and 20 @ 11:30 am
Freestone Retreat Open Houses
Info: Dave Wemmer,
david.wemmer12@gmail.com

August 7 @ 1 pm
Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism, by Safia Umoja Noble. All are welcome to join. Email Camille for Zoom link: camilleparker@comcast.net

August 12 @ 5 pm
Teen Camp In! Fun, Back to School and Religious Education Kickoff Event for 12- to 17-year-olds. Until Noon on August 13.

August 13 @ 1 pm
Kevin Campbell Celebration of Life

August 19-21
Our Whole Lives (O.W.L.) Facilitator Training

August 27 @ 9 am
Buildings & Grounds Work Party

August Good Neighbor

No More Tears (NMT) is a violence and crime prevention program founded in 2002 by men incarcerated at San Quentin and concerned citizens both seeking to remedy the rise of violent crime in their communities and reduce the recidivism rate of returning citizens. They recognize the unique perspective of former perpetrators and value their ability to bring solutions to the communities where they once contributed to the problem.

<https://www.nomoretearssq.com>

Announcements

Board Listening Presence

Helen Tinsley-Jones: htinsleyjones@yahoo.com or 510-334-1633

Inner and Outer Imagery During the Pandemic

Colored pencil drawings by UUCB member Diane Rusnak. Kensington Library 61 Arlington Avenue (mile north of the stores, east side). **July and August 2022.**
Hours: Tues 12-8pm; Weds/Thurs 10am-6pm. Fri/Sat 9am-5pm.

Volunteers Needed on Sundays

Volunteer help with the Sunday registration table to aid contact tracing is still an important need. Please let Lisa Maynard (lbmaynard3@me.com) know if you can help. Also needed: people to set up the Terrace at 10 a.m. and/or help with cleanup after coffee hours and potlucks—contact [Gerry Keenan](mailto:gerrykeenan01@gmail.com), gerrykeenan01@gmail.com.

Learn Javanese music at UUCB!



Enjoy learning to play Javanese gamelan music on Thursday evenings from 5:30-7 pm, starting September 1. All ages and levels of musical skill welcome. This opportunity is perhaps unique to our congregation, as we learn, play, discuss and collaborate while experiencing firsthand the meditative and transcendent beauty of Javanese gamelan. Call or email Daniel 510-334-1334 danielswinslowschmidt@gmail.com; or Tom tripthomas@yahoo.com, 510-495-4879 with any questions.

Opening Task Force (OTF)

Update and Plans

“COVID 19 surging as Bay Area cases rise” “Higher risks for acutely vulnerable.” Recent headlines from the SF Chronicle.

As my cousin who writes The Three Minute Read™ for the Healing American Healthcare Coalition recently said, “With one of the lowest vaccination rates in the developed world, more than 100 million unvaccinated Americans provide petri dishes for the virus to mutate. Enjoy the summer, but continue to be careful, especially in packed indoor settings.”

OTF continues to monitor the ever-changing pandemic with respect to two objectives: 1) To respect members’ desire to be together and 2) To care for each other. Given current pandemic stats from Covid Act Now, which at this writing places Contra Co. and Alameda Co. in the High Risk category, it is too soon for us to relax our safety protocols. The unvaccinated and immune compromised continue to carry the greatest risk, including the latest variant that appears to escape the protection from infection provided by current vaccines.

Safe Small Protocol Adjustments

OTF is taking gradual, baby steps on some church activity that seems responsibly safe within current guidance of masking in church buildings, checking in for all church events to aid contact tracing if needed, and respect for social distance preferences by members. Coffee is now allowed on the Terrace with guidance that when one reenters the building, masking is required. Food consumption outdoors in small pods is being tested. With these relaxations, it is very important that no one come to the church if they have symptoms. If one tests positive for Covid after attendance at a church activity, it is important to notify the church.

Church Group Poll

OTF is aware that many church groups look forward to resuming as normal a schedule as possible in the fall. OTF will be conducting a brief poll of all church group leaders to learn their questions, concerns and needs for planning the fall Covid environment.

Your Valued Help

Masking in the church building remains in place as does the use of our colored lanyards to signal and respect social distance preferences.

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

From the Board of Trustees

Randall Hudson

Welcome to our New Fiscal Year (FY22-23)! This will be a year full of exciting prospects and big decisions.

One of these big decisions is our budget. As many of you will remember from our Congregational Meeting in May, we adopted a Budget for this Fiscal Year (FY) starting July 2022.

Although not quite balanced (thank you Grace Ulp for your courageous stand!), our budget is manageable with available cash 'rollovers' from the prior year and significant reserves to cover any shortfalls.

This FY22-23 Budget is what some have called an 'aspirational' budget. Perhaps, though, might we not call this a 'legacy' budget: a budget rooted in our past and past ways? What does the future hold for our congregation, how do we pivot towards more sustainable revenue streams, and what decisions do we need to make to better guide us forward? To borrow from Hymn #1003 "Where are we going" [and how do we get there]?

Now, before we plunge too far down the rabbit hole of a future of unknown possibilities, let us circle back and take a moment to reflect on all the trials and tribulations we faced over the past year.

Big and small – individually and together – the 'ups' and the 'downs' have been tremendous, with many of us losing loved ones well before their time, and all of us suffering the perdition of an 'endemic pandemic' and the corrosive pollution of dystopian politics. All of this brings us much to grieve. In the words of Jerry Garcia, "what a long, strange trip it has been" [and will be].

Still, let us not forget the beautiful moments – big and small – that inhabit our lives; the small victories of a job well done [remotely or in-person], a walk or chat with a close friend, the wedding of a relative, the birth of a grandchild, the re-opening of UUCB, the re-awakening that we are not alone, and the steely resolve to make things better.

Take pride in all the good we've done and cherish today; for today is all we really have.

Yours in love and service,
Randall

Board of Trustees July 2022 Actions

1. Ministerial Search: Authorized the Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) to participate in the UUA Settled Minister Search process, in parallel with and not excluding consideration of other ministerial possibilities (i.e. contract, interim, developmental or non-UUA minister). The MSC updated the Board on its training and information-gathering to-date and plans for congregational engagement. It reported the benefits of participating now in the UUA settled minister process – including obtaining UUA support for both settled and contract minister exploration.
2. UUA General Assembly: Received in the agenda packet a summary of the 2022 General Assembly from Melissa Rosales.
3. Board Retreat: Conducted a Board self-evaluation training/teambuilding retreat focused on Board Members' alignment with provisions of the bylaws and Governance Manual. A few ideas related to the Governance Manual emerged, for consideration at a future regular Board meeting.

Family Ministry

Heaven Walker

Director of Family Ministry and Lifelong Learning

Happy Summer everyone! Can you believe that we are already in the Middle of Summer? So far, we have had a youth movie night, a great first-time 4th of July Celebration, and an All-Ages Potluck on July 17. We are looking forward to the Youth "Camp in" on August 12!

I have really enjoyed reaching out to church interest groups and associations, and I am excited to be planning Religious Education Experiences featuring some of these groups. I am busily planning the curriculum for the year and would love to incorporate as many people as possible into Family Ministry and Religious Education at UUCB. If you are interested in teaching in any way, please do let me know. Volunteers are the heart of our community, and I am anxious to collaborate with you all.

Chalice Circles at UUCB

This past church year was glorious for our Chalice Circles! Close to 100 congregants and friends of UUCB joined together to weather the 2021 COVID summer. Together we took the journey of intimacy, bonding, and deepening as we considered different topics for discussion. In order to do this, your facilitators worked overtime to be sure our immediate and extended non-church community had places to go to feel welcomed and warmed as the world churned around us.

This summer facilitators needed time to catch their breath and plan for the upcoming year. Our church home reopened and many of us serve in other ways to keep our community nurtured and smoothly running. But now, we are gearing up to greet new people who are coming to UUCB! And we are meeting up with our old friends after 2 years of church closure!

Fall Chalice Circle Enrollment will begin in September! We expect 4-week, 8-week, and 16-week Sessions. Look for more Chalice Circle news in the September Beacon, and in our weekly UUCB email newsletter!

Stay tuned!

Lenore Ralston (ralston@berkeley.edu)



2021-2022 Chalice Circle Facilitator Celebration

Many thanks to our Chalice Circle Facilitators, Cynthia Asprodites, Dick Sherman, Hilary Lorraine, Joanne Wile, Lenore Ralston, Linda Laskowski, Lisa Maynard, Liz Der, Lonnie Moseley, Lynne Cahoon, Natalie Campbell, Read Heath, Tom Ayres, and Victoria Bowen; to our Board Liaison Beth Pollard and our Pastoral Care Liaison Barbara Cullinane; and to Rev. Michelle Collins.

The Partner Church

Now that we are back from General Assembly in Portland, what are the takeaways that can move our Partner Church activities forward? If the answer is “not many,” that may be due in part to having only about a thousand UUs attending GA in person. I met very few people with whom I have traveled to Transylvania or people active in the Partner Church movement. I could say that it’s not a big disappointment because it’s what I was expecting anyway. I’ve written previously about the mutual and voluntary dissolutions of the UUA’s Partner Church Council and the International Convocation of Unitarians and Universalists. But yes, it is a big disappointment because their absence was noticeable. The total number of exhibitors in this year’s GA was way down, as expected. But that large “international” corner was gone from the Exhibit Hall. Workshops and programs for Partner Church just weren’t there this year.

Well, there was one program tucked away among the on-demand program offerings: #663 - The UUPCC-ICUU Legacy: Stories Light Our Way. Unfortunately, only people who were registered for General Assembly have access to the video. That means we’ll have to schedule a date and time to show this 65-minute video at UUCB. It’s in the form of a worship service with Unitarians and Universalists from around the globe expressing their appreciation of the past and their hopes for the future as a new way emerges.

How will that new way emerge? Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net are going to find that way with you as our partners and with our partners in Homoródújfalú.

Social Justice

New Chair's Message

The Social Justice Council was honored to host and participate in the recognition of the 2022 UUCB high-school graduates during "Congrats to Grads." We hope they know they will always have a family at UUCB. I hope the wisdom and ability to create community that my adult daughter took with her into the world from UUCB will be with these newly-minted honorees.

There will be no SJC meeting in August but stay tuned for an announcement about our upcoming social picnic! The next meeting will be on September 14 via Zoom.

And, don't forget to sign up to help with the SJC's Sunday table! Email Jim Acock (jim.acock@gmail.com) or Sheldon Jones (sejones1950@gmail.com).

–Carol Carlisle (carolcarlisle@gmail.com)

Climate and Environmental Justice

Our group is growing, and we're taking action – to reduce our UUCB carbon footprint, to be effective advocates for the climate and Environmental Justice, and to lay groundwork for earning Green Sanctuary status. We're asking everyone in the congregation to help reduce our footprint and comply with California law by sorting your waste at church among recyclables, compost, and landfill. We've labeled bins with instructions to facilitate responsible waste disposal. Note: These may vary from your city's instructions. Advocacy on climate and Environmental Justice is critical to make the changes we need. The Climate Action Now (CAN) app is an easy, informative, effective way to make our voices heard! To get the free app: 1) Go to your app store; 2) Go to climateactionnow.com; or 3) Stop by the Social Justice Council table for more information. Add our UUCB group code (#310) to your account, and we can see how we grow our collective actions. We may even join in friendly competition with other UUs! In the app, go to "Settings," then "Invitation Code," and put in #310. Please contact Sheila Tarbet, starbet99@gmail.com to join these meetings. She can also put you in touch with help on recycling and composting (Lucinda Young) and using the CAN app (Deb Lloyd).

Tiny House Village Update

On July 11, eleven people spoke during the public comment period at the Oakland City Council meeting in support of the request for a \$250,000 contribution from the City to the capital funding of Youth Spirit Artwork's (YSA) Tiny House Village 2. Unfortunately, they tabled the decision until the next Council meeting.

YSA continues raising funds from other sources toward the two-million-dollar goal. They are also awaiting word from the City about being awarded the lease on the one-acre site next door to Tiny House Village #1 as the location of Village #2. Allies of the project are already building components of the Village at various locations. Village #1's parking lot is an alternate site. It will be built, however, providing housing and support services to 22 additional homeless youth.

Good news: This newest project won the 2022 "Oakland Ideas Competition" as the most innovative solution to the challenges of homelessness in Oakland!

–Jim Acock (jim.acock@gmail.com)

Congrats to Grads!

The Social Justice Council held the 2022 acknowledgment of UUCB's high school graduates in the "Congrats to Grads" ceremony on July 13. Six treasured graduates were acknowledged, and the congregation raised over \$2000 to be shared among them.

Each graduate also shared which of the seven Unitarian Universalist Principles resonated with them the most – the one they will carry with them on their next adventure.

–Lonnie Moseley (lonniemoseley@hotmail.com)

Poetry at the LFDMC

Professor Arif Gamal, author of *Morning in Serra Mattu: A Nubian Ode*, delighted those of us who are not so adept with poetry (or knowledgeable about Sudan and Nubia) by telling us background stories about the poems in his book that were read and discussed at the meeting!

On August 7, Cordell Sloan will lead our discussion of *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism*, by Safiya Umoja Noble: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7AHv6vUouU8>,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algorithms_of_Oppression.

All are welcome to join us at 1 pm: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84257017624>

–Camille Parker (camilleparker@comcast.net)

WOWS

For our June meeting, WOWS (Working to Overcome White Supremacy) shared MAUBs (Moments of Awareness of Unconscious Bias, inspired by the LFDMC) and MOIs (Moments of Illumination).

We also explored WOWS' role at UUCB and in Widening the Circle of Concern. Our next meeting will take place on Sunday, August 28, 1-2:30 pm, on Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89407932840>.

–Julia Rogers (jlundyr@gmail.com).

Honoring Indigenous Peoples (HIP)

The Honoring Indigenous Peoples Group (HIP) is continuing to host a Summer Spiritual Journey Book Read discussion of *Braiding Sweetgrass; Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

With over 25 members participating, the Book Read is based on a format of individual and group sharing, as well as deep discussions in break-out rooms. As of this writing we have met four times, with two meetings remaining.

The book is a series of essays, melding science with Indigenous knowledge, inspiring us to take a deep dive into our personal and collective relationship with and responsibility for the stewarding of the land. With Dr. Kimmerer's message that gratitude and reciprocity are foundational, our discussions have led us to both personal growth and a sense of community and companionship in the journey. HIP highly recommends this book.

–Helen Tinsley-Jones (htinsleyjones@yahoo.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 connections@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

Our Board of Trustees Widening the Circle Vision Statement:

We, the trustees of UUCB commit ourselves to championing racial justice, embodying anti-racist practices, and confronting and dismantling white supremacy culture and all forms of oppression (including but not limited to racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, classism, ageism, xenophobia and religious oppression, including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia) in everything we do.

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Rev. Michelle Collins
Alice Lemieux (Family Ministry and Program Council liaison)
Beth Pollard (Board president)

Program Council

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Victoria Bowen (Membership)
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