

March 2023  
Theme: Vulnerability

## Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist  
Church of Berkeley Vol. 82 #3

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

### Our 2023-2024 Stewardship Campaign Has Begun!

Wondering how you can make your pledge this year? Do you need help deciding which way makes the most sense for you? Consistent with our theme of “Building a New Way,” we want to let you know that there are multiple ways that you can fulfill your promise of financial support. We want to make it EASY for you.

Below is a list of the various ways you can pledge. We will have this information posted on UUCB paper pledge forms which will be mailed to you and which will also be available at church during March.

You can also email [stewardship@uucb.org](mailto:stewardship@uucb.org) to request a pledge form: Enter “Send me a pledge form” in the subject line.

All of this information is on our website, [www.uucb.org](http://www.uucb.org). Click the tab for “GIVE” button at the top menu on the home page. Scroll down to “Stewardship and Pledging,” and click “Make my Pledge Promise.”

#### Ways to make your pledge payments:

It’s really a **Breeze** – Login at [www.uucb.org/breeze](http://www.uucb.org/breeze). It’s a secure online payment system through our database system. You can set up monthly payments directly through your bank account (no fee to UUCB) or through PayPal.

**ACH** - Give us your bank routing number and checking account (it’s right there on the bottom of your check) and the amount will be debited just the same as if you sent us a check. You can set up direct monthly payments.

**Zelle** – [www.zelle.com](http://www.zelle.com)

**PayPal** – [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com)

**Check** – The old familiar standby

**Cash** – Cash is king or queen but please no pennies!

**Credit Card** – Give us your CC account number and authority to charge

**Stock Transfer** – Contact Tess O’Riva, Executive Director, for more information about this option.



### March Services

Sundays 11 am

In Person, [Facebook Live](#) and  
[YouTube](#)

#### March 5

We Are Seekers and We Are Stakeholders

#### March 12

What We Find Here (multi-voice service on Stewardship)

#### March 19

The Art of Failing

#### March 26

TBD

### Religious Education

March 5, 12, 26

### Coffee Hour

Sundays at Noon

In person in the Social Hall

## Sunday Programming

### Personal Theology

Sundays @ 9:15 am in Person and Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/99027634430>

**March 5 – “We Are Building a New Way” panel discussion.** Join Floyd Sam, Smiley Nelson, and Jason Russell in a discussion on finding new ways to support UUCB and our programs by learning how to do Required Minimum Distributions straight to the church to fulfill pledges and other contributions and the tax benefit therein.

**March 12– “Overland Journey in a VW van from Europe to Asia 1965-1967: Focus on Religion and Cultures” with UUCB member Tricia Sullivan.** Tricia taught for 20 years at UC Santa Cruz, and combined teaching with working abroad in China, Vietnam, and Turkey. After retiring from UCSC, she was hired by the US State Department to work with teachers of English, and was based in Kyiv, Ukraine (2001-2005). This presentation takes you on a journey from her memoir “Overland Before the Hippie Trail: Kathmandu and Beyond with a Van a Man and No Plan,” published in July 2022.

### March 26 – “Thriving in Adversity” with Hana Matt

This talk will be a summary of the 3 recent, large groundbreaking studies that examined doctors, nurses, social workers and chaplains in hospitals during the 3 years of the Covid pandemic. Which people succumbed to burnout, or depression, anxiety, or addictive behavior, and which ones did well? One of the tools was how important it was for them to be connected to a church, synagogue, or spiritual community, and have social and spiritual support. We also can learn so much from these many tools to enhance and strengthen our own lives.

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### Youth and Children’s Choir Rehearsal

Sundays at 10 am Meditation Room (below the Sanctuary)

The Choir is open to all children and youth, ages 5 ½ and up. 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!

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### Humanist Connections

Sundays at 1 pm on Zoom

The Humanist Connections group meets weekly to discuss topics relating to our humanity, values, ideas. “A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.” (4th principle of Unitarian Universalism.) For more information, contact Marcia Bates: [mjbates@ucla.edu](mailto:mjbates@ucla.edu)

## Special Events

**March 4 @ 7:30**

**Kensington Symphony Orchestra Concert:** Celebration of Women’s Month & Sibelius Violin Concerto

**March 5 - 12**

**E-Waste Recycling Week**

**March 5**

**9:30 am** Parents’ Discussion Group  
**Stewardship Kickoff** — Activities and Lunch

**3 pm Piano-Vocal Concert Fundraiser** featuring Barry Zuckerman

**March 7 & 21 @ 7 pm**

Trust Workshops for Church Leaders

**March 11 @ 10 am**

**Sisters in Solidarity** International Women’s Day event. Off site, Richmond.

**March 14 @ 7 pm**

**Education for Liberation Focus Group** by the Widening the Circle Committee

**March 18**

**8 am** Work Party (Easter Prep)  
**9 am** Coming of Age Retreat  
**4 pm** Parents Night Out

**March 19**

**8: 30 am** Adult OWL  
**7 pm** Moon Circle Equinox Gathering

**March 25**

Youth Event – Noticing Walk, Geocache Hunt

## Good Neighbor for March

**Urban Tilth** inspires, hires, and trains local residents to cultivate agriculture, feed our community, and restore relationships to land to build a more sustainable food system, within a just and healthier community.

<https://urbantilth.org/>

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## Announcements

### Board Listening Presence

**Helen Tinsley-Jones:** call or text 510-334-1633

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### E-Waste Recycling Week March 5-12

Bring your electronics to be reused or recycled! All items received are reused or recycled in California.

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### Trust Workshop for Church Leaders

March 7 & 21 @ 7 pm on Zoom

Continuing the discussions on trust and how it can be nurtured and grown at UUCB, Rev. Michelle will be leading two workshops to delve more deeply into different aspects of trust and come up with specific strategies to implement at UUCB. The sessions will talk about different aspects of trust, so you can come to one or both of them. When you sign up, you will receive the Zoom link and the presentation Rev. Michelle made to the board on UUCB's trust survey with lots of other information on trust that we'll be covering in these workshops.

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## Executive Director Notes

Tess Snook O'Riva

Things are not the same.

It has been a constant struggle to balance all the things for everyone. Many people are expecting everything to be the same as they remember it in 2019. It is not.

I would like to lift up that almost every single administration person was hired either *during* the pandemic or right before. Muey, Childcare Coordinator, and those in the music department are the only people who've been here longer than me, at almost 4 years. We are pretty much all new.

That said, we take very seriously the way things had been. We made improvements and changes that were required of us and those that made sense during the pandemic. Major renovations to the building have happened. Most functionality is online and more self-service. We replaced multiple core computer and IT systems. I am especially proud that the back office is now also a Lactation Area, providing private space for nursing mothers.

To be able to appreciate all this and more, please go to the Member Page of our website to review the Annual Report! Also, there are instructions on how to put things in the UUCB calendar, the New Green Sheet link for room setup, the check request form, and our current budget. Help us help you, and please feel free to provide constructive feedback as we work to improve our processes.

We are also now in Budget Season, and we will be looking closely at the current and previous budgets and upcoming changes with the Finance Committee to come up with a realistic plan. We are having to seriously look at costs, especially with a \$9,000 gas bill last month!! Inflation is real, and everything is more expensive as we also look to continue to support our staff.

Thank you for supporting UUCB and our efforts to serve you better, especially during Stewardship Month! We hope we have demonstrated our commitment to the UUCB mission in everything we do.

## Opening Task Force (OTF) Update

### COVID Protocols at Church – What’s next?

By the time you read this column, we hope most of you will have responded to the snap poll you received in your email about masking at church. The Opening Task Force (OTF) is seeking your input as we review current masking protocol for any possible adjustment.

Although we continue to regularly experience some COVID cases both at the church and elsewhere, COVID risk levels have thankfully fallen to a low level as cases overall, hospitalizations and deaths decrease. Area health experts from UC Berkeley and UCSF, mirroring CDC recommendations, no longer call for mandating mask wearing. These experts do maintain strong recommendations for preventing infections through vaccinations and boosters and effective mask use.

Experts now advise that each individual should assess and determine whether and when to wear a mask based on factors such as personal risk level and perceived personal vulnerability in whatever situation they encounter, such as crowded vs. more open spaces, known vs. unknown people, and area vaccine compliance. Your response to the snap poll will guide the OTF on best next steps at the church. We will share the poll results.

### ***Right to Wear a Mask***

Any person at the church has the right to wear a mask and to do so without any harassment. As noted above, some of our members may prefer to wear masks as they assess their personal risk and comfort level. Recently, individuals in public settings have been asked to take their mask off. In part, this may be due to hearing issues that are presumed to be due to the mask. In actuality, the mask has little to do with the sound level. At times, especially in public meetings, individuals are not using the microphone properly, i.e., speaking directly into the microphone. Staff are addressing this concern through signage at podiums to ensure that microphones are used properly. In addition,

assistive listening devices are being reviewed to be sure they work properly to ensure that users have the hearing assistance they need.

### ***Bar Code Scanner for Attendance Implemented***

All church badges now have a bar code on the back to make checking in at church events easier and faster. One only has to pass their bar code on the back of their badge under the scanner and check in is done. Thanks to Tess O’Riva and the other staff for another improvement in our church COVID lives that will minimize our touching common surfaces and maximize infection control.

### ***Reorganized Safety Committee – Volunteers Needed***

The OTF plans to transition from our over three years of bimonthly meetings and activity. The future will rest with a reorganized Safety Committee. Its mission will include further management and development of procedures on contagious disease and participation in church activity as well as child safety in church programs, earthquake preparedness, fire safety, and disruptive campus behavior. There are likely several members with talent in these areas that would be valued assets for this committee. Once the Ministerial Search is completed, Greg Lemieux has agreed to again chair this committee.

If you have interest and talent in one or more of the areas of the current or proposed Safety Policies and would like to promote the safety and well-being of our congregation and/or buildings, please contact our Executive Director, Tess O’Riva, at [ed@uucb.org](mailto:ed@uucb.org).

For any questions or comments, please contact the OTF at [planning@uucb.org](mailto:planning@uucb.org).

### **OTF (Opening Task Force) Members:**

Patrick Cullinane (Chair), Sheldon Jones, Lisa Maynard, Tess Snook O’Riva (ED) and Rev. Michelle Collins.

## Widening the Circle Committee

Your Widening the Circle Committee (WTCC) is ready to implement a recommendation from the 2021 Task Force report and we'd like to hear from you!

The recommendation is [E1, "Create an Education for Liberation Development Team \(ELDT\)."](#) This team is tasked with coordinating education development for UUCB on a variety of anti-oppression topics and may conduct trainings.

*"Because of this ever-present, ever-changing feature of racism, doing the good and hard work of social justice means committing ourselves to ongoing anti-racism, anti-oppression education and training—it means committing to Education for Liberation for the long term."*

*-The UUCB Widening the Circle of Concern Task Force Report*

The Education for Liberation Development Team (ELDT) will be:

- composed of interested UUCB congregants from various UUCB groups.
- supported by and will work in collaboration with WTCC, minister, staff, the Program Council and the Social Justice Council. The Education for Liberation Development Team (ELDT) would be another branch on our "education tree," working in conjunction and consultation with all the programs at UUCB that are already doing great education work: the Literature, Film, Drama & Music Contingent (LFDMC), Working to Overcome White Supremacy (WOWS), People of Color Caucus (POCC), Honoring Indigenous Peoples Group (HIP), and Summer Forum.
- funded sufficiently to bring in paid consultants, facilitators and trainers as needed to ascertain best practices for anti-oppression training.

The Widening the Circle Committee (WTCC) is holding a focus group to hear your ideas about how to best create the Education for Liberation Development Team (ELDT). It is open to anyone in the congregation and no commitment is required. Attending a focus group only means that you are sharing your thoughts and ideas, **not** that you are signing up to be a member of the ELDT. Though we'd LOVE to hear from you if you are interested in joining the team!

It will be held on Zoom March 14, 7-9 pm. Contact [widenthecircle@uucb.org](mailto:widenthecircle@uucb.org) to RSVP and receive the Zoom link.

We hope to see you there!

Your Widening the Circle Committee:  
Cynthia Asproditas, Suzette Anderson-Duggan, Dorothy Herzberg, Lonnie Moseley, Fran Moulton, Melissa Rosales

## Partner Church



The war in Ukraine is now entering its second year, and Zsófia Sztranyiczki, PhD, Executive Director, International Convocation of Unitarian Universalist Women (IWC) asks for continued support for the work that the IWC and the Hungarian Unitarian Church are providing to refugee children now in Transylvania. She writes, "As the war drags on into its second year, IWC is continuing its fundraising effort to help Gondviselés sustain the two innovative programs for Ukrainian refugees: a kindergarten and an elementary class for 44 refugee children in Kolozsvár/Cluj. Gondviselés is filling a critical void not provided by the Romanian government: school-age children are learning to read and write in Ukrainian Cyrillic, in accordance with the national curriculum of Ukraine. Ensuring that Ukrainian children are educated in Ukrainian is vital to their ability to learn, thrive, and heal. It will also help them integrate seamlessly into the Ukrainian school system once the war is over. Please consider supporting the education of Ukrainian refugee children in Kolozsvár/Cluj."

Updates on this vital work and links for your donations can be found at:

<https://intl womensconvo.org/page/education-for-ukrainian-refugees>

What are other ways we can support our friends in Transylvania? Help us explore the ways. Stephanie Ann Blythe at [steph62850@yahoo.com](mailto:steph62850@yahoo.com) or Anne Greenwood at [annegt1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:annegt1@sbcglobal.net) are eager to hear what you would like happen with us and our Transylvanian partners.

## From the Board of Trustees

Message from the Co-Presidents of the UUCB Board of Trustees

“Co-Presidents?”, you might be asking.

Yes, it's true. Pier Sun Ho and Helen Tinsley-Jones are now serving in that position.

After the 2/12/23 Congregational Meeting, the Board briefly convened to nominate and elect officers and ex-officio members (non-voting). Selene Fabiano and Carolyn James were selected as secretary and treasurer, respectively, which are ex-officio positions. Michael Armstrong became Vice President, and Pier Sun Ho and Helen Tinsley-Jones were elected as Co-Presidents of UUCB.

The Board's election of co-presidents rather than the expected and usual one-person presidency came after reflective conversations about current congregational needs and the time and resources of Board members to fulfill their duties and the mission of this vibrant congregation. A co-presidency does not conflict with our Bylaws. The church's current and anticipated activities add richness and complexity to our congregation life and also increase the tasks and responsibilities of the Board, and, in particular, of the role of the presidency.

In the face of this complexity, a co-presidency offers the benefit of the efficient and effective sharing of tasks, based on each of our different and complementary skill sets, as we all the while support each other.

Some may say “two heads are better than one.” We'd say our resources are far bolder than this. Joining together with the magnificence of the congregation, staff and Board, we're connected by trust, open communication, and a common purpose—all working in partnership for our church community and our larger world.

The Board's commitment is to stay in communication with you as we continue to work out the details, and, as a church community, we move forward together. Please stay in touch with us at [president@uucb.org](mailto:president@uucb.org).

There's more to come.

In Beloved Community,  
Pier Sun Ho  
Helen Tinsley-Jones  
Co-Presidents, UUCB Board of Trustees

## Board of Trustees February 2023 Actions

1. Lawrence Lecture Committee: Ratified composition as Katie Lipka, Christina Creveling, David Rosales, Jack Duggan, and Jim Acock, and announced that more members can be added.

2. Membership:

- Agreed with Membership Committee recommendations about Board's role in new member outreach, including Board President welcome letter; new member welcoming time on Board agendas; Board member videos about being on the Board; and twice/year report to Board from the Membership Committee
- Received report that UUCB has 330 certified members, and information on the process for contacting members who have moved or who do not appear to have been recently engaged.

3. Mid-year Budget/Financial Report: Fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, ended with a surplus and fiscal year 2022-23 is projected to be on track.

4. Parsonage: Accepted—with extreme gratitude—a donation from member Jane Lundin of a house in El Cerrito, which will be offered to our next minister for use as a parsonage.

*UUCB is so blessed to receive from member Jane Lundin the donation of a house in El Cerrito that we can offer to our next minister to live in, as a parsonage! This is an amazing incentive in our ministerial search! Even if the minister chooses to live elsewhere, this property will be a tremendous rental asset to UUCB in helping to support our minister and ministry. We are so incredibly blessed by this generous and timely donation.*

- Authorized use of the Cope Ministerial Housing Fund, whose balance is approximately \$400,000, to fund payment of the remaining \$135,000 mortgage, closing costs, and up to \$70,000 in repairs and improvements;
- Asked the Endowment Capital Projects Oversight Committee to provide oversight of the repairs and improvements;
- Approved the recommendation from the Negotiating Team for the Ministerial Agreement for revising the salary offer if the next minister chooses to live in the donated house.

If you would like to view a video-recording of a previous Board of Trustees meeting, please contact [secretary@uucb.org](mailto:secretary@uucb.org) for a link.

# Ministerial Search Process Update

Deborah Bachels Schmidt

So what kind of minister are we looking for? We UUs are famous for our diverse and strongly held opinions, but in this case the survey and focus groups have indicated strong consensus in several major areas. We, the search team, have taken these very seriously, convinced that, not only do they reflect the desires of the congregation, they create a vision that will carry our shared ministry forward with adaptability, resilience, purpose, integrity, and joy.

Here's a summary of what we heard from you. Because we treasure our UUCB family and believe that one of UUCB's prime functions is to build and foster community, we are looking for a minister who facilitates connections both among us and with the wider community. We are looking for a people person, one who thrives on those connections, one who makes us feel genuinely seen and heard, one who is a collaborative leader and has great conflict management skills, one who is committed to pastoral care and possesses exceptional ability to listen, provide solace, and connect congregants with needed resources. Our ideal minister will create inspiring worship services and wholeheartedly support our commitment to anti-racism and social and environmental activism.

Our three precandidates all share these characteristics. They are truly amazing. They are talented, committed, and experienced ministers with inspired visions for our shared future. Our final choice is going to be very challenging. But this is a good problem to have! And we are confident that we will emerge with a candidate you will be as thrilled about as we are.

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## Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present the 2023-24 Board of Trustees and thanks and honors the Board's outgoing members. Thank you for serving on the Board!

### Newly Elected Members

Kay Fairwell and David Rosales



### Re-elected Member

Helen Tinsley-Jones



### Continuing Members

Beth Pollard



Michael  
Armstrong

Cordell Sloan



Bill Brown

Pier Sun Ho



Randall  
Hudson

### Many thanks to outgoing members for your service on the Board

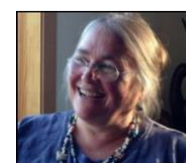
Elaine Miller



David Roberts



Lenore Ralston



## 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](mailto:membership@uucb.org).

**NEWSLETTER ITEM SUBMISSIONS:** Submit announcements and articles by email to [beacon@uucb.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:connections@uucb.org). You can also find both newsletters at the [uucb.org](http://uucb.org) website under “News.”

### **UUCB general discussion list:**

[http://groups.google.com/group/uucb\\_discuss/about](http://groups.google.com/group/uucb_discuss/about)

**Email list for families:** Email [family.ministry@uucb.org](mailto: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.*

## Board of Trustees

Helen Tinsley-Jones, Co-President  
Pier Sun Ho, Co-President  
Michael Armstrong, Vice President  
Selene Fabiano, Secretary  
Carolyn James, Treasurer  
Bill Brown  
Kay Fairwell  
Randall Hudson  
David Rosales  
Cordell Sloan

## Executive Advisory Team

Tess Snook O’Riva (Executive Director and Convener)  
Rev. Michelle Collins  
Alice Lemieux (Family Ministry and Program Council liaison)  
Heaven Walker (Director of Family Ministry & Lifelong Learning)  
Beth Pollard (Board president)

## Program Council

Jean Gleason (Convener)  
Alice Lemieux (Family Ministry)  
Victoria Bowen (Membership)  
Lynne Cahoon (Buildings & Grounds)  
Carol Carlisle (Social Justice)  
Barbara Cullinane (Pastoral Care)  
Marin Fischer (Music/Arts)  
Jim Gasperini (Communications)  
Lonnie Moseley (Adult Religious Exploration)  
Lenore Ralston (Finance)  
Cordell Sloan (Board Liaison)

## Staff (partial list)

Minister: Rev. Dr. Michelle Collins  
[minister@uucb.org](mailto:minister@uucb.org), 301-675-5314 (either call or text)  
Executive Director: Tess Snook O’Riva  
[ed@uucb.org](mailto:ed@uucb.org) 510-525-0302 ext. 305  
Director of Family Ministry and Lifelong Learning: Heaven Walker  
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