



Elizabeth Jerde

I have been a member of UUCB since 2010. I bring to the UUCB Board my creative spirit, joy, a desire to learn and experience things in life, as well as an intense sense of curiosity.

Though I have been told more than once that I ask too many questions, I like to understand how things function/operate. Especially when entering a new "culture."

I have been very engaged with the Social Justice Council here at UUCB since its re-vivification in 2015: I have managed the Good Neighbor Program and have been SJC chair. I have also organized various events such as viewing the film **Ghost Town to Havana**, presenting Coach Roscoe, the film's director Gene Corr and Oakland A reps, to discuss the disparity of parental/societal engagement in youth sports here in Oakland and Richmond. We also hosted the *Dine and Dialogue with our Muslim Neighbors* dinner so that we could get a taste of Islam 101 thanks to Ameena Jandali from ING (Islamic Network Group); participate in prayers led by Imam Wali Muhammad; learn what goes on in the kitchen with Fayza Ayyad by working side-by-side; listen to music from a Near Eastern trio; and experience calligraphic artistry. Most recently, we launched the Sponsored Project **Blessings Bags**: Bags containing personal toiletries, warm sox, edibles and a drink, to be distributed to unhoused people.

I have a firm grasp of the Social Justice Council culture and its endeavors.

Now, I am graduating to the UUCB Board to learn how it operates, to understand its culture. It's my intention to learn more about the multiplicitous other cultures alive within UUCB and how we function/operate together. I will have many questions.



Helen Toy

Why run for the Board?

It's the **people** at UUCB! That's why I'm running to join the Board. But that wasn't why I came here.

My arrival here was actually a mistake. A friend that told me that a church up in the Berkeley hills was a good one. Turns out he meant some other church! But I wound my way up to UUCB and have

never looked back.

At first it was the non-theology that sold me. In 2011, 2012, after I moved to Berkeley, I visited six other churches in town. All were far more conservative than the Episcopal church in Pasadena where I'd been a long-time member. Yet as soon as I drove up that steep hill in Kensington and saw the signs welcoming seekers and searchers, I gained hope. And the welcome I received from the Hamilton-Holways, as well as Aileen Hohmann, certainly raised that hope. The sermons settled it for me at the beginning.

But then it was social justice. When Craig Scott started a drive to support youngsters in Richmond in becoming Dreamers, I was all in. Soon afterwards, he and others launched the Social Justice Council, which has done such exciting, important work in our local community. It has also done very special work here at UUCB. I joined the first meeting of LFDMC and the first gathering of WOWS and have been members of both ever since. My particular connection has been with the SJC itself, where I've been involved in a long string of activities --- and where I've been fortunate to make many good friends.

And the longer I've been here, the more it **is** the **people** who bind me to this place: Rev Marcus now, of course, but so many others. And it's our congregation, our principles and our programs at UUCB that make me want to offer whatever I can in support of this church. Even in the past year, since spending five months with so many extraordinary folks as we planned Social Justice Sunday, I felt such a love and respect for who they are --- who **we** are as a community --- all of which underscores that being of service here ranks high among my values. Feeling so fortunate to have wandered into this church, I truly am honored at being asked to run. I would be especially honored to be chosen as a member of the Board.



Michael Dewitt

My Spiritual Journey:

In 1977, at a Christian summer camp, I became "born again".

Raised in a protestant Covenant church, I participated in this faith until about age 20. I found such faith too simplistic and thirsted to search for deeper truth and meaning. I loved the questions more than the answers, while most resisted such. While I found more comfort in a Presbyterian church for a while, I stopped attending church at about age 25 when I moved to San Francisco.

In about 2004, I first attended my first UU service here at UUCB where Rev. Barbara introduced me to the words "liberal theology". The humanist and universalist themes throughout the service spoke to me. Over the years, I have grown to appreciate many other UUCB core values including social justice, "living as a loving community", and our "covenant of right relations".

My potential contributions to the board:

- * I appreciate and share the mission of our church and look forward to an opportunity to take a more active role in church governance.
- * Broad familiarity with most members of our congregation having attended for nearly 20 years, participated in several chalice circles, choir and the Freestone committee.
- * Good communication and interpersonal skills. I believe I get along well with most and play in the sandbox nicely.
- * Current Sanctuary AV lead volunteer. I'm familiar with much of the present church electronics in each venue as I used to assist as volunteer in setup for many events. I can potentially serve as a liaison to the board with new technology implementations.
- * Past experience in leadership of youth ministry and scouting could serve to advance our church's R.E. activities.

I believe there is much to be excited in at UUCB right now. Having a great new minister in Rev. Marcus, continued talents of Bryan Baker in music and exciting leadership by Heaven Walker in R.E., I think we have an exciting opportunity to let

UUCB shine. Through many scheduled activities and good marketing, I really think we have great growth opportunity on the horizon. I'm ready to help in many ways.