
March 2024

Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Vol. 83 #3

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

From the Minister

Dear Ones,

The Christian liturgical season that began with Ash Wednesday and culminates with Easter is fraught with personal and cultural baggage. But at its heart, the story asks us profound questions about the nature of human embodiment. We've inherited a disorienting cultural trauma known as the mind-body split, but we are practicing celebrating ourselves in our wholeness once more. How do you unlock the wisdom of your body? As some of us heal from religious traditions that have so often demonized the body, and all of us grapple with modernity's alienation of our animal nature, how do we make room for our whole selves to show up and dance? These are the questions we're playing with in our current worship series, *Courageously Corporeal: Celebrating Our Holy Embodiment*.

The beginning of March also marks the kickoff of our annual Stewardship campaign. This year's theme, *Wake Now Our Vision*, invites us to wake hopes and dreams for our future that may have lain dormant during years of ministerial transition and coping with the pandemic. In light of our exploration of embodiment, I wonder what we might discover if we thought of visioning not as a solely mental exercise, but as a process beginning in the body. The song that will be our stewardship theme song begins, "Wake, now, my senses," and roots our relationship to stewardship in our bodily relationship with the earth. What does your body know about your hopes and dreams? What do your physical senses tell you about your yearnings for the future, for the role of our congregation in meeting the needs of our times?

Let it be a dance we do!
-Rev. Marcus Liefert



March Services

Sundays 11 am

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

March 3

Wake Now Our Vision
(Stewardship Kickoff)

March 10

Guest Preacher. Topic TBA.

March 17

The Physicality of Grace

March 24

Willing to Be Touched

March 31

Yes, Flesh! (Easter Sunday)

Religious Education

Classes: March 3 & 10

Celebration Chapel: March 17

Children's Yoga and Youth

Group: March 24

Coffee Hour

Sundays at Noon

In person in the Social Hall

Sunday Programming

Personal Theology

In Person and Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/99027634430>

March 17 @ 9:30 am – “Some Thoughts on Empathy” with Josh Kornbluth. Josh has been performing autobiographical monologues for over 30 years. He has written and starred in two feature films, *Haiku Tunnel* and *Love & Taxes*, both directed by his brother Jacob Kornbluth. His book *Red Diaper Baby* collects three of his solo shows; he has also recorded two audiobooks, *Red Diaper Baby: Three Comic Monologues* and *Ben Franklin: Unplugged ... and Other Comic Monologues*. He hosted an interview program on KQED-TV, titled *The Josh Kornbluth Show*. He was a visiting artist, and later a volunteer, at the Zen Hospice Project. He was a fellow at the Global Brain Health Institute, based at UCSF—an experience that led to his latest solo show, “Citizen Brain,” and a series of videos connecting brain science and social justice, also titled “Citizen Brain.”

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.

Good Neighbor in March

Pogo Park: <https://pogopark.org/>

Mission: Magical Playspaces for children everywhere. Transforming lives by transforming public space. Pogo Park transforms broken and little used city parks in one of America’s toughest inner-city neighborhoods—Richmond, California’s “Iron Triangle”—into safe, green, beautiful public spaces for children to play.

Special Events

March 3
Stewardship Kickoff!

March 10
Blessing Bag Assembly

March 16
Death Café

March 17 @ 7 pm
Mist Tree Moon Circle Spring Equinox

March 24
Celebration Sunday

March 31 @ 10 am
Easter Egg Hunt

Weekly Events

For up-to-date details: uucb.org/weekahead.

Mondays

9 am Write For Your Life

9:30 am Women's Meditation Group

Tuesdays

10 am Improving Your Balance through Tai Chi

12:15 pm Applied UU Buddhist Sangha

Wednesdays

10 am Walk & Talk Group

10:30 am Aging with Grace

Thursdays

5 pm Javanese Gamelan

7 pm Choir Rehearsal

Fridays

10 am Improving Your Balance through Tai Chi

Monthly Events & Meetings

Sunday

9:30 am Parents' Discussion Group (1st Sunday)

11 am Religious Education (1st & 2nd Sunday)

11:30 am Celebration Chapel (3rd Sunday)

1 pm WOWS Working to Overcome White Supremacy (3rd Sunday)

Monday

11 am Textile & Art (2nd Monday)

Tuesday

10:30 am Volunteer Lunch Program at GRIP (4th Tuesday)

Wednesday

7:15 pm Board of Trustees (1st Wednesday)

7 pm Social Justice Council (2nd Wednesday)

7 pm Program Council (3rd Wednesday)

Friday

11 am Textile & Art (4th Friday)

Saturday

9 am Work Party (3rd Saturday)

1 pm POCC People of Color Caucus (3rd Saturday)

4 pm Parents' Night Out (3rd Saturday)

6:30 pm Youth Social Event (3rd Saturday)

Announcements

Board Listening Presence

Michael Armstrong: (510) 219-3847

michaelarmstrong2494@comcast.net

Easter, March 31



Rev. Marcus' Installation Celebration

April 21 @ 2:30 pm

A graphic for the Rev. Marcus Liefert Installation Ceremony and Reception. It features a rainbow arching over two clouds, with colorful Easter eggs below. The text reads: "REVEREND MARCUS LIEFERT INSTALLATION CEREMONY and RECEPTION Sunday, April 21, 2024 2:30 - 6:00 pm". Below the text is a wooden crate filled with colorful items, with the word "COMPOST" written on the front. To the right of the graphic, there is text and a list of activities.

Join UUCB in celebrating our commitment to shared ministry with Rev. Marcus as we co-create a future full of possibility.

There are many ways to contribute to this special occasion.

- Dessert potluck
- Writing hopes & dreams on biodegradable paper to be planted in our garden
- Bring cloth, buttons or trim from an item that has significance to create a congregational textile artwork

Stewardship Campaign

Wake Now Our Vision



March is Stewardship Month! We will officially begin our Stewardship campaign on Kickoff Sunday, March 3. We ask for pledges of financial support in March so that we will be able to plan a realistic budget and

approve it at our May congregational meeting.

What else does March bring? As I write, rainfall seems likely—and I hope there will be sunshine too! One of the blessings of our temperate climate is the amazing plant growth even before the official beginning of spring. May the green growth, and buds and blossoms, encourage an awakening of our senses and our vision.

This month's events:

March 3 - Stewardship Kickoff - Wake up! - an inspiring service, fun and treats after

March 10 - Children/youth assemble Blessings Bags

March 16 - Prepare UUCB for Spring! - join the work party, 9am-noon

March 17 - Special presentation by children/youth during Time for All Ages

March 19 - Spring Equinox (Spring begins!)

March 24 - Celebration Sunday - celebrate our pledges; raffle after service

Throughout March, the Stewardship Team will staff a table in the Atrium, where you can:

- pick up a printed pledge letter and pledge form, if you wish (we do encourage online pledging!);
- turn in your pledge of financial support for 2024-25;
- ask questions about Stewardship;
- check the progress towards our pledge goal in our visual display.

Completing your pledge by 11 am on March 24 will automatically enter you in our raffle! To encourage early pledging, each person who turns in a pledge by March 10 will receive two raffle chances; pledges received March 11-24 will receive one raffle chance.

For more information please visit

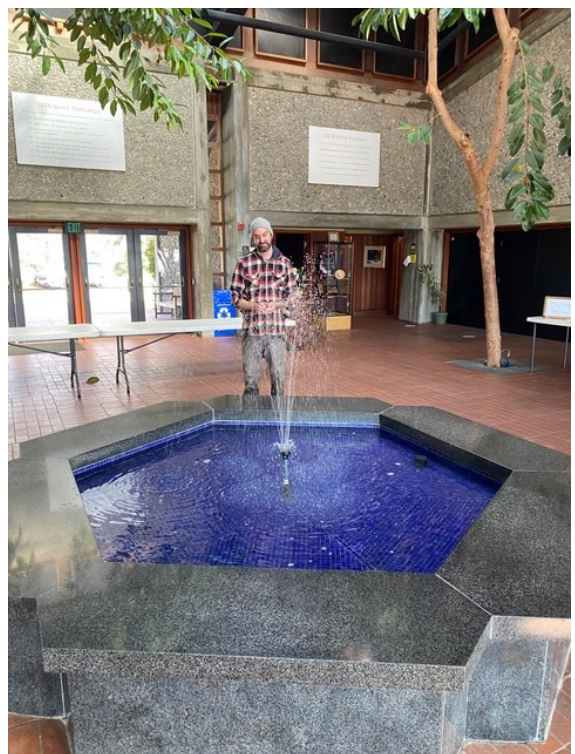
<https://uucb.org/about-us/give/stewardship/>.

Buildings and Grounds

Peter Fixed the Fountain!

Our dedicated Facilities Manager, Peter Barnholdt, fixed the fountain in the Atrium! Since the pump was from decades ago, and it had been discontinued, he skillfully fashioned a new one to fit the structure, and installed it by cutting and soldering new pipes. Now it works better than ever!

Take a look:



Partner Church

The meeting between UUCB's Board of Trustees and the board of our Partner Church in Transylvania on January 20 went quite well. A report on the meeting can be found in the Social Justice section elsewhere in the Beacon. The Zoom meeting was recorded and can be viewed on YouTube at:

<https://youtu.be/qphGocRHdWc>

Meanwhile, our children assembled the Christmas card puzzle created by the children of the congregation in Homoródújfalú, Romania. In addition to the puzzle, they also sent personal greetings which you've seen arranged around the tree.

The Transylvanian Partner Church Committee has outlined the following objectives for this church year, and beyond:

- Village Education Fund: supporting youth and young adults in furthering their education
- Connecting our respective Boards/Councils through Zoom meetings
- Restoring our Transylvanian Szekely Gate on church grounds
- Aiding in restoration projects in the village: Community House basement, Parish house and Church restoration
- Travel to the International Women's Convocation (IWC) congress in September 2024 in Koloszvár

You are also invited to connect with the IWC twice a month via Zoom meetings at 7 am Tuesdays. More information is available

at: <https://www.intlwomensconvo.org>

Got questions? Stephanie Ann Blythe and Anne Greenwood have answers

at steph62850@yahoo.com or annegt1@sbcglobal.net



Freestone Oversight Committee

The Freestone Oversight Committee (FOC) is comprised of Beth Pollard (Board Rep and Co-chair), Tom Tripp (Co-chair), David Wemmer (Freestone Committee Rep), Alan Davis (Freestone Committee Rep), Susan Lankford, and Larry Nagel. The FOC actions for February 2024 include:

- FOC members Beth Pollard and Tom Tripp gave a presentation on the status of the Freestone Project at the UUCB Congregational Meeting on February 11, 2024. Anyone who missed the presentation but is interested in reviewing the slides can find the slide deck at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/mbbjy9u4>
- The Freestone Committee is proposing to open Freestone for daytime use on a limited basis for small groups of UUCB members, and the Freestone Oversight Committee will be reviewing the proposal. The FOC has asked the Freestone Committee to identify how safety concerns will be sufficiently addressed to allow for daytime use. All usage would be chaperoned by a qualified person. The proposal will have to be approved by the Freestone Oversight Committee and the Board of Trustees.

If you have any questions, please email us at FOC@UUCB.org.

From the Board of Trustees

Board of Trustees February 2024 Actions

1. **Governance Manual:** Adopted an updated Board of Trustees Governance Manual (<https://uucb.org/about-us/governance/>), which includes Board policies, where and how Board authority is delegated to others, and protocols on how the Board functions.
2. **New UUCB Members:** Every 6 months, the Board will invite new members to a Board Meeting, where they will be introduced and welcomed by the Board.

Good News from the Board, Part 1

Congregational meetings, held twice a year in February and May, allow us to take stock of projects integral to the running of the church and to celebrate the extraordinary work of so many members who contribute to the spirited life of this Beloved Community.

This past February, we received reports from the Stewardship Committee, the Endowment Capital Projects Oversight Committee, the Freestone Oversight Committee, and the Committee on Ministry. We:

- were reminded of the essential contributions members make with their pledges and encouraged to make our pledges for the upcoming fiscal year.
- learned about the completion of essential repairs to our main campus (six phases, in all!) as well as future project options.
- heard about the many steps taken toward the Future of Freestone over the past year, as well as actions currently undertaken and those being planned.
- learned that the planning of Rev. Marcus' April 21 Installation is in full swing.
- were encouraged to attend and consider becoming delegates to UUA's Virtual General Assembly this June, which includes a vote on significant changes to Article 2 and provides an opportunity to connect with other congregations and learn more about and contribute to the functioning of UUA.

And there was also a lot of celebrating going on at this Congregational Meeting!

We introduced and honored:

- UUCB's amazing staff
- Flaming Chalice Awardees, Don Klose, Ladie Malek, Melissa Rosales, and Anne Wardell
- Outgoing Board members, Bill Brown, Randall Hudson, Cordell Sloan, and Carolyn James
- Newly elected Board members, Michael DeWitt, Beth Jerde, and Helen Toy

And we heartily thanked members whose generous financial contributions funded large church projects.

And the good news continues....

Good News from the Board, Part 2

Have you noticed something different at Sunday services these last few months? Perhaps that your usual pew and the pews in front of and behind you are all just a bit more crowded? And that they seem to be filled by folks—some pretty young—who are new to you?

Well, if you have, UUCB statistics support your impressions and observations.

Analyzing the counts that ushers took at each service in 2023, we found that approximately 6% more people came to services in the second half of 2023 than did in the first half.

And when we looked at stats compiled by Membership, we found numbers that were quite impressive. Membership's total newcomer statistics include two categories: Supporting Friends to UUCB (people who donate but don't necessarily attend) and Active Attendees (former newcomers who keep coming but haven't joined as members). There were 162 newcomers in all of 2022. In 2023, there were 285.

Statistics, of course, provide data which are estimates only and are subject to margin of error effects. However, it appears that it likely is the case—and we believe it is—that we're seeing a slow and upward progressing trend.

Growth. A wonderful abundance of visitors at services and overall increase in attendance at services appears to be happening.

In line with UUCB's Vision Statement, which states that our church "is a welcoming and vibrant community," the Board is partnering with Rev. Marcus, our Membership team and with Connections Coordinator Charis Domador to take an active role in the welcoming of new members. New members now receive special certificates, prepared by Charis and signed by the Co-Presidents. At designated intervals, the Board will invite new members to and introduce them at Board meetings. In addition, Board members will reach out to each new UUCB member to share information about what the Board does and answer any questions.

This is a congregation of loving connections, of generous sharing of resources, of cooperative efforts and of warm welcoming. Can you feel it? The vibrancy of our community as we grow into our future.

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

Social Justice Council (SJC)

Votes for Justice!

Stamp It, Send It, Get Out the Vote in 2024

Newly formed Votes for Justice (Norie Clarke, Cynthia Greenleaf, and Karen Elliott) and the Climate Justice Committee are organizing a Get Out the Vote (GOTV) Campaign at UUCB. At UU's Side with Love webinar in February, Steve Phillips of Democracy in Color said we must step forward, lift up our voices, and put forward the moral contract of what this country should be. It is an existential election year. There is a critical role for UUs to play.

We are working with [UU the Vote](#) in conjunction with organizations such as [Reclaim Our Vote](#) (ROV) and the [Environmental Voter Project](#) (EVP) to engage young voters, voters of conscience and voters of color. Please visit their websites and view the recorded webinars on their strategies!

Sign up: 1) at the SJC table any Sunday or 2) by contacting us! We are holding letter and postcard writing events and phone banks at the church and offering training and multigenerational events.

Cyndy: 510-525-8141 Norie: 510-409-1551

Blessing Bags

Our second Blessing Bags Assembly is March 10, with our youth putting them together, working with SOS— Safe Organized Spaces, our Good Neighbor partner. We count on donated toiletries from folks who've traveled: shampoo, conditioner, lotion, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, etc. If you have any to spare, please put them in the Blessings box in the atrium. (If you're in a neighborhood group, get the word out!) Warm socks are also greatly appreciated. We tuck snacks in as a treat.

Join us on March 10! Assemble. Take a bag or two to give to someone you encounter who is unhoused.

Questions? Beth Jerde: bjerde55@hotmail.com

Into Our Community

The SJC will be reserving a UUCB table and contributing \$250 to Richmond's Sisters in Solidarity (SIS) celebration. The festive event, free to all, will take

place at DeJean Middle School in Richmond on Saturday, March 16, 10 am-2 pm.

Beth Jerde: bjerde55@hotmail.com

Climate Justice Committee (CJC)

Kudos to CJC! UUCB is Invited to UU "Climate Revival"

As one of the UUA's most active Green Sanctuary 2030 congregations, UUCB has been invited to be an early participant in the national UU Climate Revival. With leadership from the UUA, we will envision together the transition from an extractive age to a new era. The UU Climate Revival promises to facilitate inspiring collective worship, creative learning, new frameworks at the intersection of climate and justice, and the chance to weave together the threads that have always linked our deepest UU commitments. UUs will gather to dig into the connections among social justice, racial justice, and environmental ministry. We will receive training and materials to hold facilitated dialogues, dynamic worship, religious education, and advocacy all designed to transform our congregations through climate justice. We look forward to learning more specifics from the UUA. Questions?

Question for all: How Can UUCB Address the Climate Crisis?

The CJC is working on the "Opportunity Assessment," part of the UUA Green Sanctuary (GS) process, and we'd love to hear your thoughts about ways we can address the climate crisis. The GS process encourages us to lower our emissions, adapt to a changing climate, and to work with our local frontline communities. If you have ideas about how you'd like to see UUCB do those things, please send them to Sheila Tarbet, CJC Chair, at starbet99@gmail.com. Thank you!

Upcoming Earth Day Activities

UUCB will celebrate our Earth Home with Earth Day activities on **April 27 and 28**. We'll show the acclaimed film *The Letter*—featuring Pope Francis and extraordinary earth champions from around the globe—the evening of April 27. We're also planning several other activities, including a creek clean-up, a bird walk, and a native plant walk. Stay tuned for more information.

Please send all questions about CJC initiatives to CJC Chair Sheila Tarbet at 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: 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 website under “News.”

UUCB general discussion list:

http://groups.google.com/group/uucb_discuss/about

Email list for families: <https://groups.google.com/g/uucb-families/about>

UUCB Social Justice email list:

<https://groups.google.com/g/uucb-social-justice/about>

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
Michael DeWitt
Kay Fairwell
Beth Jerde
Beth Pollard
David Rosales
Helen Toy

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Robin Cooper (Family Ministry)
Victoria Bowen (Membership)
Lynne Cahoon (Buildings & Grounds)
Carol Carlisle (Social Justice)
Barbara Cullinane (Pastoral Care)
Marin Fischer, Virginia Frederick and Phyllis Van Kranenburgh (Music/Arts)
Jim Gasperini (Communications)
Ann Harlow (Fundraising and Hospitality)
Lonnie Moseley (Adult Religious Exploration)
Lenore Ralston (Chalice Circles)

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