

September 2024

Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley
Vol. 83 # 9

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

From the Minister

Holy Habitats, Holy Inhabitants

Welcoming the stranger is an ancient call, an imperative for care across history and cultures. In the busyness and stress of modern lives, practicing this kind of radical hospitality can feel like one more to do that we never quite have the bandwidth to get to. And yet it's this very welcome that draws so many of us to church—we are here to find home in others, to make space for others to find home in us. How do we nurture a congregational ecosystem where we all can participate in this holy give and take? What would it mean to understand welcome, hospitality and pastoral care not as just the work of a few committees, but as essential elements of what it means to belong in our congregation? What do natural systems reveal about the dynamics of care and belonging? Our first worship series invites us to fully inhabit our holy habitat through practices that develop both our inward and outward capacities for welcome.

With this conversation of welcome is the question of the role of religion in society. To successfully pass the torch to future generations, spiritual communities will adapt and evolve in ways we cannot predict. But we can predict that this will inspire both excitement and grief.

In June I preached about the changes proposed to our Unitarian Universalist Association's Article II, which contains the seven principles many of us learned as a primary lens for understanding our tradition. Our General Assembly, composed of delegates from over 700 congregations, passed a sweeping revision to this section of our bylaws. While most of the language of the seven principles remains present in some form, the overall structure and tone has been updated to speak to who we are now, and hopefully, where we're headed. [Read here](#) all the details about the process and the new covenant of our association's common values.

I'm excited to see how we use this new articulation of our values to share our tradition and pass the torch to the next generation of beloved community builders.

Rev. Marcus Liefert



September Services

Sundays 11 am

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

September 1

Making the Most of Muck

September 8

Care in the Roots

September 15

Tending to the Treeline

September 22

When Species Invade

September 29

Becoming Earthlings
Climate Justice Revival Worship
Service & Advocacy Hour

Religious Education

September 8, 15, 22

Coffee Hour

Sundays at Noon

In person in the Social Hall

Sunday Programming

Personal Theology

Sundays at 9:30 am In Person and Zoom

Sept. 15 (Zoom Only) – Rev. Dr. Rosemary Bray McNatt. Rev. Dr. McNatt is the current president of Starr King School for the Ministry.

Sept. 29 – “The Pandemic as a Rite of Initiation and Our Missing Third Step,” Win Williams, PhD.

Youth and Children’s Choir Rehearsal

Sundays at 10 am

Open to all children and youth, ages 5½ 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

Sept. 1 – Topic selection with Ray Westergard

Sept. 8 – The battle between Harris and Trump

Sept. 15 – Why I am not a theist with Don Anderson

Sept. 22 – Can A.I. reason? With Dennis Monthei

Sept. 29 – Who controls your attention? With Paul Ulbrich

More information on topics in The Week Ahead.

Good Neighbor in September

Read-Aloud Volunteer Program

Website: <https://read-aloud.org/>

Mission: Read-Aloud Volunteer Program is a relationship-based program that fosters in children the joy and love of learning through reading and story-telling. Our goal is to build a structure of volunteers to support and improve reading outcomes for children in under-resourced communities in Richmond, CA and surrounding areas.

Special Events

Sept. 8

Religious Education classes begin

Sept. 8 @ 3 pm

12 Pieces for Organ recital

Sept. 15 during service

Blessing of the Backpacks

Sept. 15 @ 12:30 pm

Pathway to Connection, Part 1

A membership class

Sept. 15 @ sunset

Mist Tree Moon Circle

Sept. 20 @ 7:30 pm

Roy Zimmerman: Sing. Laugh. Defend Democracy.

Sept. 21

9 am Work Party
2 pm Death Café
4 pm Parents’ Night Out

Sept. 22 @ 12:30 pm

Pathway to Connection, Part 2
A membership class

Sept. 22 @ 2 pm

Mozart Coronation Mass concert

Sept. 28 @ 1 – 5 pm

Climate Justice Revival Workshop

Sept. 29

Climate Justice Revival Worship Service & Advocacy Hour

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

9:30 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

10:15 to 11 am make sandwiches at GRIP (4th Tuesday)

11:15 to 12:45 serve lunch 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)

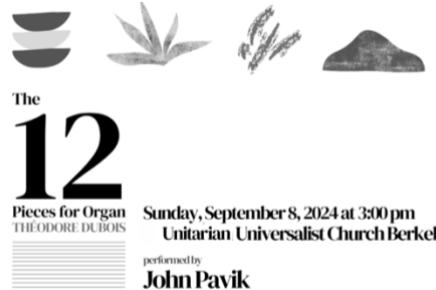
1 pm POCC People of Color Caucus (3rd Saturday)

4 pm Parents' Night Out (3rd Saturday)

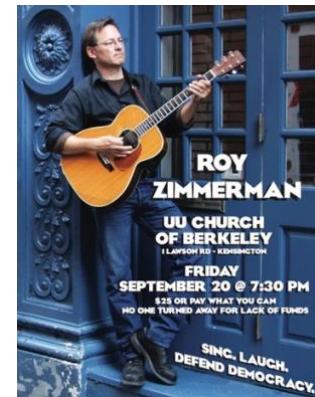
6:30 pm Youth Social Event

Announcements

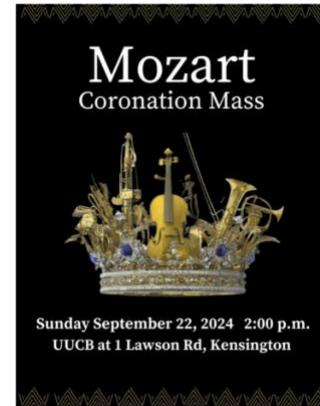
Sept. 8: 12 Pieces for Organ



Sept. 20: Roy Zimmerman



Sept. 22: Mozart Coronation Mass



Sept. 28: Climate Justice Revival 1- 5 pm



Family Ministry

Kathryn Jay, Director of Family Ministry

Hello UUCB families! I'm Kathryn Jay, the new Director of Family Ministry, and I'm so excited to start a new year with y'all. If you have ideas and suggestions for enhancing our program, I would be delighted to hear from you. I hope UUCB will be a warm and lovely space for families and children to grow spiritually and feel part of an intergenerational community.

EXCITING NEWS!! We will celebrate the start of school with a Blessing of the Backpacks ceremony on **September 15th** during worship. No one is too young—or too old—to have their bag blessed, so bring your backpack, your briefcase, your messenger bag, lunchbox, purse, tote bag, diaper bag, or fanny pack to the service and we will fill it up with love. Rev. Marcus will offer a blessing and everyone will get a special UUCB tag to attach to their bag.

Religious Education ("RE") for children: For children, September kicks off with an all-ages Celebration Chapel in the Fireside Room on Sept. 1. During chapel, we will light our chalice, sing, dance, share our joys and sorrows, and learn from each other as we explore our theme for the month: **INTERDEPENDENCE**, a big word that means we are all connected to each other and the world around us. Parents and friends are welcome to join us during Children's Chapel.

We'll continue to explore the theme of interdependence for the rest of the month in RE classes. Classes begin after the congregation sings the children out of worship (usually about 11:15) and run until about 12:15. Special for September: All ages will go on a campus-wide nature walk

during RE on Sept. 15, and grades 4 and up will help to cook lunch during RE on September 22!

Ongoing events for September:

Youth & Children's Choir (YCC) meets Sundays, 10 am. YCC is open to all children and youth, ages 5½ and up. Prior musical experience is not required; this is an opportunity to learn to sing in a sweet, low-pressure environment. Email Teacher Katie for questions: ktlipka@gmail.com. Come sing with us!

Parents' Night Out returns on September 21 at 4pm. Hurray! Parents and children should join us in the Fireside Room, where childcare staff will pick the children up for fun and pizza. Starting at 4:15, we will offer a 30-40 minute gathering for parents to connect and enjoy spiritual reflection together before heading out for a little free time. Childcare ends promptly at 8pm and parents can pick up their children at the Good Earth Preschool.

Family Ministry is also proud to offer a monthly **Parent/Grandparent Discussion Group**. Discussions begin on September 15 at 9:30am in the Safir Room and then meet every first and third Sunday of the month. We welcome parents and grandparents at all stages of the parenting journey for lively conversation and community support.

Our **Youth Group** (middle & high schoolers) meets on the third Saturday of the month to have fun and build community! Youth group starts on September 21 at 5pm and meets in the Safir Room. Bring a friend! There will be food and games and good conversation.

Climate Justice Revival Workshop

Sept. 28, 1-5pm, Fireside Room

Full Congregational Event



The entire UU ecosystem is organizing for climate justice action! There's power in numbers, and thousands of UUs around the world from 300 congregations are joining hands for a denominational Climate Justice Revival. Sponsored by the UUA, UUMFE, UUSC and other UU organizations, this Revival will incorporate creative learning, music, embodied practices, and facilitated dialogues. It will help us strengthen our sense of shared community, commitment, engagement, and care for ongoing comprehensive climate justice work. The Revival will put us directly on the path for UUCB to become a Green Sanctuary-recognized congregation, since input from our workshop will form the basis of our Green Sanctuary assessment and action planning.

This is a unique collaborative effort to boost UU's social justice and climate work! All 300 participating congregations are drawing on visionary materials, and all our congregational facilitators have been trained in a workshop process putting love at the center. When the Revival is over, we'll all be part of the national climate and social justice conversation. It's exciting, and the Saturday workshop and Sunday service will be full of inspiration, hope, and fun. Here's a video message from UUA President, Rev. [Sofía Betancourt Invites You to Join the 2024 Climate Justice Revival](#). Please bring your love and caring for our community and join us. [Click here to sign up for the innovative, interactive Saturday workshop!](#)

Climate Justice Revival Worship Service & Advocacy Hour Sept. 29

Worship Service at 11am, Followed by Advocacy Hour for All.

Social Justice

Social Justice Council Meeting

Please mark your calendars for our in-person SJC potluck on Sunday, September 8 at 5:30 pm. We will have a joyous time actively engaging in Voting Justice projects—writing, decorating, sorting, and stamping postcards to voters (no handwriting necessary for many tasks!). We will create short messages about why we vote to share on our website. And importantly, we will celebrate Ray Westergard and Dorothy Herzberg, two amazing champions of social justice, as they retire from GRIP (Ray) and Summer Forum (Dorothy). Come join us!

Voting Justice

We are delighted with recent offers of "back office help" from congregants as the three of us "elves" continue to send out hundreds(!) of postcards for congregants to write each week. And our deepest gratitude for the steadfast participation of our many congregational postcard writers! Some of you have taken on 100 postcards at a time to share with friends and neighbors, who also feel anxious to be a part of this "inflection moment" in our nation's history. Some of you have begun assisting voters to get IDs in order to vote. We hope to send a delegate of UUCBers to Arizona in October to knock on doors and engage voters. Contact Norie Clarke for more information. We deeply believe that getting out the vote for the election of 2024 is the moral work we are called to do, and we are so proud that UUCB is working so hard on this worthy effort! Cynthia Greenleaf, socialjustice@uucb.org.

Equity in Berkeley Schools

Starting this month, Lonnie Moseley, Cordell Sloan and Helen Toy will be reinvigorating our campaign

in support of Berkeley students. And here are some facts that will surprise most of us:

As of 2023: The US Census estimated Contra Costa County's poverty rate at 8.7%

And in 2022: The city of Richmond had a poverty rate of 16.2%—but

The city of Berkeley had a poverty rate of 19%.

As you know, poverty and school achievement rise and fall in sync. In Berkeley, the achievement gap between wealthier white students and those of color was the second worst of 5000 districts in the US, according to a longitudinal study run by Stanford professors and released last summer.

We can offer our support for BUSD students in many ways! Do stop by the EQUITY IN BERKELEY SCHOOLS table in the Atrium to learn more.

Helen Toy, socialjustice@uucb.org

WOWS – Working to Oppose White Supremacy

In the Sunday, September 22, meeting of WOWS (Working to Overcome White Supremacy), Cordell Sloan will lead a discussion of *The Stolen Wealth of Slavery: A Case for Reparations*, by David Montero. Pick up a copy from the library or bookstore and give it a read! Or just come to the meeting and hear about the book! 1 to 3 pm on Zoom. The link for the meeting is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89407932840>—or dial 669-900-9128 to call in and enter 894 0793 2840 when asked for the Meeting ID.

Julia Rogers, socialjustice@uucb.org

Blessing Bags

We thought the Blessings Bags project was done at the end of last fiscal year..... but it has been re-ignited for its second cycle!

Carlson Clay was an unhoused person in Oakland who died last spring. His executor gave us a gift of \$100.00 to be used for the Blessings Bags. That same day, a UUCB member gave us \$20.00: She had intended to go buy some socks but didn't get to it. Hmmmmmmmm..... The youth of UUCB

have been very engaged in assembling the bags, readying them to go out to those in need. We have also partnered with SOS (Safe Organized Spaces - they visit encampments and provide mobile showers); they have requested bags from us. And we've also given some to Albany Thrives.

As we conclude our summer traveling and hoteling, please contribute the toiletries you've collected to the Blessings Bags: Shampoo, rinse, lotion, soap, toothpaste, brushes, and floss. There is a box marked BLESSINGS BAGS in the atrium.

Our first ASSEMBLE will be in October. See you then! THANK YOU!

Beth Jerde, socialjustice@uucb.org

The Literature, Film, Drama and Music Contingent of the Social Justice Council

The LFDMC wants to highlight this event coming to UUCB, Saturday night Oct. 12th, as part of the Litquake Festival (Oct 10–26), which happens all over the Bay Area.

Litquake presents An Evening with 2023 Booker Prize Winner Paul Lynch, 7:00–8:30 pm. The brand new paperback edition of *Prophet Song* will be for sale—FREE, with a \$10-15 suggested donation. RSVPs needed. See litquake.org for a dedicated url for responding to this event.

Lynch's almost hypnotic prose recounts in exacting, all-too-plausible detail the inexorable descent of Ireland's liberal democracy into authoritarian rule. Booker Prize chair Esi Edugyan called the novel "soul-shattering and true," and noted that readers "will not soon forget its warnings." He will be in conversation with Irish writer Ethel Rohan, author most recently of the novel *Sing, I.*

Transylvanian Partner Church Committee

By the time you read this article, we will be deep in the heart of Transylvania. We arrive in Kolozsvár on August 30 where Rev. Atilla will pick us up and take us to Homoródújfalu. While in the village we will attend

Sunday services, either in the community hall or the church. We hope to distribute funds from UUCB's Village Education Fund and your gifts to the students just before they return to school. They have a committee at their church which will determine how much each student receives. We expect to be staying with a host family while in the village. It's these home stays that build our ongoing connections with the people of Homoródújfalu.

We will return to Kolozsvár for the Fourth Convocation of the International Convocation of Unitarian Universalist Women. It runs from September 5 through September 8. There will be plenty of speakers, workshops, even Chalice Circles with Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist women from around the globe. Writing in advance, "I can't wait!"

We'll have plenty to share with all of you when we return. Our time in the village as well as at the convocation will bring up lots of things to consider. There's building our communications between our respective congregations and boards of trustees. We've called ourselves the Transylvanian Partner Church Committee for over twenty years. What if we simply became the Partner Church Committee? Can we broaden our horizons beyond Transylvania? All food for thought. Let us know what your thoughts are, whether at church or to Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or to Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net

Buildings and Grounds Committee

The UUCB Buildings and Grounds Committee plays a vital role in recommending maintenance and capital improvements of all of the buildings on the UUCB campus at 1 Lawson Road as well as the almost 10 acres of grounds. The committee works very closely with UUCB staff members charged with facilities management and performs a lot of the research into necessary maintenance and improvements that staff members may not have time for. There are several subcommittees, including the Landscaping Committee, the Aesthetics Committee, and the Kitchen Committee. If you like fixing things, making things work better, and improving our beautiful campus, we can always use additional members! We are hoping to add some members come fall. Our

chairperson is Jane Lundin and you can contact her at jmlundin@toast.net or (510) 507-0700.

If you have any questions, you also can e-mail us at uucb-buildings-and-grounds@googlegroups.com.

"The Atrium Shuffle"

The Atrium Task Force along with the Aesthetics Committee continues to experiment with the Sundays Atrium layout. We want to present an open, welcoming feel to all who enter UUCB, providing an arrangement of tables and seating that stimulates conversation and curiosity in our community.

The process for establishing the Sunday layout and reserving tables is being developed. Some of the tables have been relocated to allow for better flow and ease of movement. The layout does have permanent placement of tables for Welcome, Family Ministry, Social Justice Council, and Super Cards. There will be a calendaring session in September to begin the process for requesting additional available table space. Information about the session will be announced in The Week Ahead and through the Program Council, whose members represent our committees. This session only addresses space in the Atrium. In the coming months, we will discuss how to better utilize the Social Hall as a venue for activities and information.

The consensus is to continue the "café" in the Atrium on Sunday mornings. We appreciate every comment, suggestion and critique. We are trying to take every need and request into consideration, all are important.

Any questions or concerns, please contact Karen Tripp or Cynthia Asprodites. Thank you for your patience and support.

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), Bob Moore (Freestone Committee

Rep), Susan Lankford, and Larry Nagel. The FOC actions for August, 2024 include:

- The Freestone Committee proceeded with drilling the first well on Lot 1 on August 7, 2024. FOC members Dave Wemmer and Larry Nagel were there to cheer on the well drillers. Unfortunately, the well came up dry. The well was drilled to 200', which was 50' beyond the recommendation of the geologist. The drillers hit some promising geology at 160' but it soon faded. Based on this result and a subsequent discussion with the geologist, the committee will probably go back and have a new subsurface survey at a new location(s), in hopes of finding geology with a higher probably of success. All of the current six survey locations came back with a Category A rating (potentially 0-3 gals per minute), and it would be nice to find a Category B (2-6 gal per minute) location for the next hole. The existing permit is good to drill more holes, and the Freestone Committee has the cash on hand to drill another hole. The cost of drilling the well (or wells) is being funded by a donation from an "angel."
- Lots 1 & 2 are still listed for sale, although currently inactive in status pending new information from the well drilling.

If you have any questions, please e-mail us at FOC@UUCB.org.

Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) Volunteers

We are so grateful that ten UUCB community members volunteered on July 23rd for the 4th Tuesday lunch program at GRIP (Greater Richmond Interfaith Program). Over 100 sandwiches were made for distribution and a hearty and healthy lunch was served to the many families and individuals who rely on GRIP for food, transitional housing, and other essential services. Much appreciation is due to Ray Westergard, Bob and Mady Hall, Gerry Keenan, Dan Lee, Sandy Portillo-Robins, Jane Ramsey, Gillian Smith, and Ahna Girshick and Samaya Snibbe for volunteering in July. If you see them, say thanks and ask them how

you can get involved. The sandwich provisions are provided to GRIP at no charge by the UUCB congregation as part of UUCB's Social Justice initiatives. UUCB volunteers serve in groups on the 4th Tuesday of the month. Individual lunch servers are also needed on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Visit gripcares.org for more information or email gillian.smith@yahoo.com to volunteer.

From the Kitchen Team

Artichoke-caper-mozzarella toasted bread recipe: Regularly we serve artichoke and caper "tostinis," formally known as bruschetta, to the congregation. Below is the recipe and a little backstory. We love cooking for all you UUCBers who enjoy our Sunday lunches. However, our all-volunteer cooking team is understaffed, and we need more volunteers to help to make this lunch project sustainable. What we would love is at least two more cooks from 9 to 11 Sunday morning and different groups of four more after the meal is done for an hour or two for the cleanup. Contact Ann Harlow (annharlow77@gmail.com) and tell us what Sundays (1st through 4th) you can work regularly and which crew (prepping or cleanup) you can join. Thank you!!

Tostini backstory: While we refer to our toasted bread with capers and artichoke hearts covered with melted mozzarella as tostinis, they are actually bruschetta, a dish popular in Italy going back to Roman times. The term bruschetta comes from the Romanesco dialect verb bruscare, which is roughly "to roast over coals." It was a peasant dish, to use up stale bread, soaked in oil and garlic. Our dish is also influenced by the medieval tradition of using stale bread as a plate known as a "trencher" through the late Middle Ages. My own interest in using stale bread comes from my salad days of backpacking through Europe, buying big bread loaves for toast in the morning, sandwiches at lunch and tostinis for a fast, tasty dinner. We recommend using Acme herb loaf as the easiest, but any thick-crusted bread will do.

– Alan Davis

Ingredients:

9 by 18" herb loaf

2 TBS capers

1 cup artichoke hearts, chopped

2 TBS minced garlic

1 tsp Herbes de Provence

¼ tsp salt

½ tsp pepper, freshly ground

½ cup olive oil

1 cup mozzarella, shredded

½ cup pecorino cheese, finely grated

Finish second TBS of capers by sprinkling the capers on the cheese on top of each slice.

Return to oven until cheese is melted, about 2 to 5 minutes. If using herb loaf, cut into slices. Serve after about 5 minutes of cooling.



Instructions:

Preheat oven to 400.

Sauté 1 TBS capers, the artichoke hearts, and the garlic in 2 TBS oil for three minutes at medium heat.

Transfer mixture to a blender, add pecorino cheese and blend well. Use a rubber spatula to transfer the mixture to a bowl.

Mix in the blender the remaining oil, pepper, garlic, salt and herbs.

Cut the bread in slices—if standard loaf, about quarter-inch thick, or if flat herb loaf cut in half horizontally.

Use a brush to spread the seasoned oil from the blender on both sides of the bread.

Cook at 400 for about 10 minutes, turning once after 5 minutes.

Slather artichoke-cheese-garlic spread on one side of the slices. Cover artichoke spread with a layer of mozzarella.

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 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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