

October 2024

Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Vol. 83 #10

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

From the Minister

Autumn is here, and with it a new worship theme for October and November. This season we'll be exploring *The Webs We Weave*, and reflecting on what it means to tend to places where they fray and break. The poet David Whyte often refers to the "conversational nature of reality," that reality is a conversation emerging at the boundary of what you think is you and what you think is not you. Interrelatedness is one of the most fundamental, and in its depths, mysterious, dimensions of existence. It's our interdependence that leads humans to shape systems of justice and governance, that enables profound efforts of cooperation and that leads to the inevitable moments of hurting and being hurt by one another.

We have a rich theological heritage for understanding these dynamics in terms of covenant. But what happens when the covenant gets broken? How do we "promise-making, promise-breaking" creatures (as theologian Martin Buber named us) repair a web that has become so deeply damaged? In Unitarian Universalism we do not have shared rituals of atonement and forgiveness, like T'Shuvah in Judaism, or Confession in Catholicism. With our rejection of traditional theological understandings of sin and repentance, have we also lost practices that enable us to make amends and repair? As we live through a monumental political moment in a society in desperate need of deep repairs, let's imagine what it might take to reorganize our lives and our culture in service of a restorative vision of justice.

With you in the weaving,

Rev. Marcus Liefert



October Services

Sundays 11 am

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

October 6

What Spiders Know

October 13

Diyos sa Gugma (God of Love): Building Bridges with the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines (UUCP)

October 20

Spirals, Rips and Anchor Points

October 27

Every Strand Must End

Religious Education

Every Sunday during service

Coffee Hour

Sundays at Noon

In person in the Social Hall

Sunday Programming

Personal Theology

Sundays at 9:30 am In Person and on Zoom

October 6 – Rev. Sheri Prud'homme: Update on the UU Second Principle.

October 27 – Anne Greenwood and Stephanie Ann Blythe: Report on recent travels to our Sister Church in Transylvania.

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!

Religious Education

Sundays at 11:15 am (during service)

We will explore our theme for the month: PLURALISM, which means more than one way. We celebrate that we have many sources that inspire us; and that we make room for different cultures, experiences, and beliefs. Please email Kathryn Jay, Director of Family Ministry for more info: kathryn@uucb.org.

Humanist Connections

Sundays at 1 pm on Zoom

October 6 – Topic Selection for June and Short Topic Discussion. Ray Westergard.

October 13 – Ray Westergard and Dennis Monthei will talk about “Are you a cat/dog/other animal person?”

October 20 (In Person) – Rev. Marcus presenting.

October 27 – Maggie Robinson and Don Anderson will talk about “The epidemic of loneliness”

Special Events

October 5

10 am: GRIP Harmony Walk
4 pm: Get Out The Vote Party

October 6

2 pm: Memorial for Helene Knox
4 pm: Get Out The Vote Party

October 12

4 pm: Tea for Two: Piano and Organ Duet Concert

October 13

10 am: Blessing Bags Assembly
4 pm: Get Out The Vote Party

October 19

9:30 am: Work Party
4:30 pm: Parents' Night Out
6:30 pm: Youth Group Gathering

October 20

12:30 pm: Newcomer Q&A
4 pm: Get Out The Vote Party

Good Neighbor in October

Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP)

Website: gripcares.org

Mission: GRIP is a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic coalition of congregations from varied faiths working together dedicated to helping those of our community in need to transition to self-sufficiency.

Mission statement: “Responding to the Call to Service, GRIP transforms the lives of homeless, hungry and disenfranchised people.”

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 & 3rd Sunday)

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

Monday

11 am Textile & Art (2nd Monday)

5 pm Climate Justice Committee (4th Monday)

Tuesday

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

11:15 to 12:45 serve lunch at GRIP (4th Tuesday)

7 pm World Peace Committee (3rd 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)

2 pm Death Café (quarterly)

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

October 12 @ 4 pm



October 12, Saturday, 4:00 pm

pianist Bryan Baker & organist Katya Kolesnikova

Bach, Schumann, Chopin, and Piazzolla

with special guest Rustam Baibikov, flute

Reception to follow

Tickets \$20 and 15

Please see www.uucb.org for information and tickets.

UUCB 1 Lawson Rd Kensington
no one turned away for lack of funds.

Livestream available. Tickets available online and at the door.

Family Ministry

In our first few weeks of RE, children played a cooperative game that involved balancing rubber ducks on their heads, built and knocked over a wide variety of domino runs, helped make lunch for the congregation, and learned a little about the UU value of interdependence.

In October, we'll explore the value of pluralism, starting with a Celebration Chapel on the first Sunday of the month where we'll enjoy apples and honey to symbolize the sweetness of the Jewish New Year. On Oct. 13, children will take charge of making Blessing Bags for our unhoused neighbors and Oct. 20, they will take an all-campus hike in nature. The fourth Sunday is an all-ages service!

Don't forget Parents' Night Out and Youth Group will both take place on Saturday, Oct. 19. It will be so good to be together.

Social Justice Council (SJC)

The Social Justice Council had a wonderful and upbeat return to our in-person potluck meetings on Sunday, September 8th where we honored Dorothy Herzberg and Ray Westergard for their service to our justice projects and voted on clarifications to the Good Neighbor criteria.

The Social Justice Council will hold its **monthly meeting on October 9 from 7:00 - 8:30 pm on Zoom**. The agenda and zoom link will be sent out prior to the meeting. We welcome all UUCB members and friends to join us.

Cynthia Greenleaf, socialjustice@uucb.org

GRIP Harmony Walk

Fall is just around the corner  Doesn't it feel like a perfect time for a picnic in the park with our interfaith community?

Come out for GRIP's Harmony Walk in the Park! Enjoy food trucks, live music, a raffle (bike! Disneyland tickets!) guest speakers, vendors from local businesses, and more: Nicholl Park in Richmond, October 5th from 10 am to 1 pm

Sign up at <https://gripcares.org>

A few things are different about the Harmony Walk this year:

- More affordable! When you register for \$38, you can add as many registrants as you want for only \$12. They get all the goodies – T-shirt, raffle tickets, pass to the [Columbia employee store](#), etc. Bring your family, friends, and neighbors!
- No more 5K, just an optional 1K over to GRIP at 10 am. The main program starts at 11 am.
- No need to get sponsors, just register and come enjoy the day at the park. Bring a picnic or visit the booths and food trucks ([Pirate BBQ](#) and [Curbside Kitchen!](#)).

GRIP, or the Greater Richmond Interfaith Program, is a longtime good neighbor partner of UUCB. The Harmony Walk is the main annual fundraiser and community event. gripcares.org

Ladie Malek, socialjustice@uucb.org

Voting Justice

We will continue our September 8th joyful warrior work to Get Out The Vote with gatherings at UUCB in October to decorate, sort, stamp, and write postcards. All welcome! Bring your friends!

Saturday, Oct. 5, 4-5:30, Fireside Room, UUCB. Check with Cyndy Greenleaf for details.

Sunday, Oct. 13, 4-5:30, Fireside Room, UUCB.

Sunday, Oct. 20, 4-5:30, Fireside Room, UUCB

Cyndy Greenleaf, socialjustice@uucb.org



WOWS

In September, WOWS (Working to Overcome White Supremacy) focused on the book *The Stolen Wealth of Slavery: A Case for Reparations*, by David Montero. Cordell Sloan led a lively discussion.

We welcome all to join us at the next WOWS meeting, Sunday, October 27th at 1 pm. Look for the Zoom link in The Week Ahead.

Julia Rogers, socialjustice@uucb.org

Climate Justice

First, the Climate Justice Committee wants to thank everyone for supporting and participating in UUCB's version of the UUA-led Climate Justice Revival on September 28 and 29. We'll be following up on that weekend in a couple ways. We're forwarding quite a bit of information to the UUA from the September 28 workshop. We'll also be reviewing all the input from our

UUCB community generated at the workshop and integrating it into the Green Sanctuary campaigns we need to address to gain the UUA's Green Sanctuary recognition.

We're also continuing to support UUCB's very important voting justice work. It's so important that all of us who care about climate and environmental justice vote --- and that we encourage other like-minded people to do so. Our participation in every aspect of our democracy helps to move us toward a sustainable future.

Sheila Tarbet, socialjustice@uucb.org

Equity in Berkeley Schools



Education benefits every one of us, regardless of how far removed we may be from our school days. Please stop by the colorful Berkeley Schools Volunteers table at church and learn how you can help, even on a one-time basis, as a "School Support Volunteer."

The Berkeley Schools Volunteers program has been short-handed this fall and was not able to submit its list of in-class volunteer opportunities in September. Keep an eye out in October: new listings for "Classroom Volunteers" will be available soon.

Helen Toy, socialjustice@uucb.org

LFDMC

The SJC's Literature, Film, Drama and Music Contingent (LFDMC) will meet on November 17, when the members of the Honoring Indigenous Peoples group will again be providing our program. We'll send an email if there are readings you can do beforehand, and we'll look forward to being together on Zoom.

Christina Creveling, socialjustice@uucb.org

Board of Trustees September 2024 Actions

- 1. Lower Parking Lot/Buildings:** The Kensington Fire Protection District is leaving its lease space in the lower parking lot. UUCB may be able to acquire the storage building, and/or take over the lease of the mobile building for church use and/or rental—or return the area to parking. More research and discussion needed.
- 2. New UUCB members:** Individual welcome to new members; all new members were invited to attend the Board meeting for introductions.
- 3. Atrium Task Force:** Rearranging underway in Atrium and Social Hall to address fire and safety concerns and encourage a welcoming feel, along with a new calendaring process for church groups to reserve space for their publicity, information, and related outreach/needs. Thanks to Karen Tripp for the report.
- 4. Ministerial Housing Fund:** Set a congregational meeting for September 15 for a vote on a loan from the Board-designated Endowment Fund to replenish the Ministerial Housing Fund. On Sept. 15, in a unanimous vote, the loan was approved by the congregation.

Nominating Committee

Becoming a Board Member

Fall is upon us and the turning of the season “calls” us. As VP of the UUCB Board, I have the privilege of “calling” together our Nominating Committee (NC) as we prepare to replace those on the Board whose tenure has come to a close.

There are many approaches as to how each previous NC approached this task. In general, the committee gauges the talent of the current Board and tries to complement that from those within the congregation.

Last year when we were outreaching, several potential candidates replied, “That must be a complicated responsibility”, or “I don’t know anything about being on the Board” or “I don’t have any experience with budgets/group negotiation/Roberts Rule of Order”. (Fill in the blanks with 100 other responses.) Many of us on the Board professed to have had those exact same fears! And it turned out to be so untrue.

I remember during my first year on the Board, I just listened. I absorbed information on the line items of the budget, skillfully guided by our Executive Director and Treasurer. I also learned about all the different committee work, while experienced leaders on the Bylaws & Governance Manual guided all of us. I felt supported and valued during this process, which encouraged me to eventually chime in more often.

I write about this to dispel the myth that being a Board member requires extensive experience in all the details of the church. It doesn’t.

Moreover, our current Board is so well stationed ... and now that Reverend Marcus is with us, the circle is complete! We are a supportive, collegial, respectful body—who have the emotional breadth to agree sometimes, disagree others—but always

coming to consensus. The tone of our meetings (in case you haven't attended recently) is loving and respectful, always knowing that our presence is simply to serve the congregation.

So, I encourage each member to harken my words, to consider a position on the Board at some point in your membership. It enriches your love of this blessed community and gives you an opportunity to lend whatever insights and skills you currently possess.

Michael Armstrong, UUCB Board Vice President

Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions: Michaelarmstrong2494@comcast.net, 510-219-3847

Partner Church

Your intrepid travelers have returned from Transylvania, where they visited our partner church village of Homoródújfalu and attended the International Convocation of U*U Women. Anne arrived late in the village, so Stephanie Ann enjoyed a few days by herself in Újfalu. That daunting prospect was easily overcome by the warm welcome she received by the villagers. Our interpreter was Birtalan Bence, a young man about to enter seminary to become a minister in the Hungarian Unitarian Church. He was fabulous, as all of our interpreters have been over the years. Once Anne arrived we held a visit with the two village schoolteachers who said that there was a great need for computer equipment in the school. We

then met with the Education Committee and Rev. Győrő Attila to ask that part of our recent wire transfer for the students be used for purchase of the needed equipment.

We stayed with the Cseke family, Piroska and Josef. They have hosted UUCB visitors many times so they know how to treat us well. When they weren't feeding us, we were treated to wonderful dinners at some rustic restaurants in the Homorod Valley. Stephanie Ann attended a Sunday church service and spoke briefly to the congregation after the benediction.

The International Women's Convocation was held in Kolozsvár, Transylvania's biggest city. Women from sixteen countries attended, including participants from Kenya and the Khasi Hills of India. Many friendships were made or rekindled, especially for Anne with the many Balázs Scholars who were in attendance. One highlight was a performance by a women's choir composed of refugees from Ukraine.

Our space doesn't allow for more details about our pilgrimage. We are planning to make a presentation in Personal Theology on October 27. Check The Week Ahead or Beacon for more information; we might have a guest from Transylvania. Or for more personal observations, feel free to ask Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net for the real scoop.

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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