

February 2025

# Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Vol. 84 #2

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

## From the Minister

Two enormous metal boxes packed full with lots of little plastic boxes rolled on wheels to the curb of our new home. And from the boxes marched a parade of things, each needing to find a place. Big things marched into empty rooms, rooms ready and waiting for them: a bedroom for the bed, a dining room for dining tables and chairs, a living room for the couch. From some boxes tumbled clothes, warm clothes and light clothes, fancy clothes and simple clothes, each finding a place in a closet or dresser. From smaller boxes came books of every size, each finding the place where it belonged—cookbooks to the kitchen and studious books to the study, while piles of paperback fiction linger still in the corner, waiting to be given a place. Dishes and glasses and cookware, paintings and wall hangings and carpets and the felt piece of a whirling dervish that came from Turkey, vacuum and laundry baskets, an iron without an ironing board—in moving into a new home, nothing is more clear than this: everything longs for a place where it belongs, and every place has something it can hold.

We call the place where we gather a sanctuary because it was made to hold us in our despairs and our hopes, our tears and our laughter. Whatever we are holding, our sanctuary holds us, offering a place where the soul wholly belongs. Sometimes we are the homemakers, giving a place for each thing in the houses that have been built. And sometimes we are the ones tumbling wide-eyed from the boxes, hoping that others have prepared a place for us. As my family and I tumble through our move, I am grateful to be held in the stability of our work together, preparing ourselves to hold a sanctuary open for all in need. Whoever you are this month—homemaker or the seeker longing for home—may each of us find peace here, now, and may all beings find a place of peace.

With you in the tumbling and the belonging,  
Rev. Marcus



## February Services

Sundays 11 am

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

### February 2

A Blessing For Tomorrow

### February 9

Nurturing Our Spirit, Renewing Our Dream: Black History Month Service led by POCC

### February 16

Ordination of Kathryn Jay

### February 23

The Enduring and the Emerging

## Coffee & Community

Starts at 9:30 am in the Atrium

## Light Lunch

After the service in the Social Hall

## Sunday Programming

### Personal Theology

Sundays at 9:30 am In Person and on Zoom

**February 9 – “Why Saul/Paul?....I Mean Really, Why?”:** Toward a conversation with the messianic Jewish tentmaker of the 1st Century who became the Apostle of the Christ to the Gentiles, Brent Duckor, PhD. Brent Duckor is a professor in the Department of Teacher Education at San Jose State University. Brent has taught philosophy, history, government and economics in Hungary and NYC early in his career before joining the faculty at San Jose State.

### 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: EQUITY, a big word that means we work for a peaceful and fair world. Equity means we all get to have it. Please email Kathryn Jay, Director of Family Ministry, for more information: [kathryn@uucb.org](mailto:kathryn@uucb.org).

### Humanist Connections

Sundays at 1 pm on Zoom (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday is in person, no zoom)

**February 2** – Topic Selection for next month and Short Topic Discussion. Ray Westergard.

**February 9** – Paul Ulbrich will discuss “What is wrong with health care in the U.S.?”

**February 16 (In Person)** – Paul Ulbrich will discuss “Delusional politics and lies”

**February 23** – Dennis Monthei will discuss “Scams”

## Special Events

### February 2 @ 12:30 pm

Pathway to Connection, Part 1  
A membership class

### February 8 @ 7 pm

Love Songs and Chocolate  
[Buy Tickets](#)

### February 9 @ 12:30 pm

Pathway to Connection, Part 2  
A membership class

### February 10

Part-Time Interim Executive Director, Sharon Dolan's first day

### February 16 during service

Ordination of Kathryn Jay

### February 23 @ 1 pm

Congregational Meeting

### February 28 @ 7 pm

Dirty Cello Concert

## Good Neighbor in February

### Through the Looking Glass

Website: [www.lookingglass.org](http://www.lookingglass.org)

**Mission:** To provide and encourage respectful and empowering services—guided by personal disability experience and disability culture—for families that have children, parents, or grandparents with disability or medical issues.

## Weekly Events

For up-to-date details: [uucb.org/weekahead](http://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 (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday)

1 pm WOVS Working to Overcome White Supremacy (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday)

### Monday

11 am Textile & Art (2<sup>nd</sup> Monday)

5 pm Climate Justice Committee (4<sup>th</sup> Monday)

### Tuesday

10:15 to 11 am make sandwiches at GRIP (4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday)

11:15 to 12:45 serve lunch at GRIP (4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday)

7 pm World Peace Committee (3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday)

### Wednesday

7:15 pm Board of Trustees (1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday)

7 pm Social Justice Council (2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday)

7 pm Program Council (3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday)

### Friday

11 am Textile & Art (4<sup>th</sup> Friday)

### Saturday

9 am Work Party (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday)

1 pm POCC People of Color Caucus (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday)

2 pm Death Café (quarterly)

4 pm Parents' Night Out (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday)

6:30 pm Youth Social Event

## Announcements

### Board Listening Presence

Michael Armstrong: (510) 219-3847

[michaelarmstrong2494@comcast.net](mailto:michaelarmstrong2494@comcast.net)

### Love Songs and Chocolate Feb. 8 at 7 pm



### Ordination of Kathryn Jay Feb. 16



Our congregation is honored to have been asked by Kathryn Jay, UUCB's Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry, to ordain her as a UU minister. UUCB has been Kathryn's spiritual home for over a decade, well before she attended seminary.

## Stewardship Campaign

The pledge drive for next church year is starting to take shape!

What's the pledge drive, you ask? It's the time of year, typically in March, when we ask members to consider what this congregation means to them and make a written commitment of their financial gift for the year ahead. We take those pledges and share them with the board of trustees, who then use that to set the budget. Everything we want to do next year is dependent on our collected financial gifts. AND, we do so much more than just give financially! Many, many members and friends share countless hours helping UUCB be the special place that is. We're excited to share this year's stewardship theme:

### Cultivating our Expressions of Love.

This theme was inspired by the first part of UUCB's mission, "to create loving community," and the popular concept of "love languages." We want to learn about and explore the different ways in which each of us expresses and receives love within and for our church community. For five Sundays from ***Kickoff Sunday on March 6th*** through ***Celebration Sunday on April 9th*** we will take time to explore one particular "love language" category:

**Words of Affirmation**

**Physical Touch**

**Receiving (and giving) Gifts**

**Quality Time**

**Acts of service**

We hope you take some time to consider the ways in which you both share your love and receive the love of others through this, our shared spiritual community.

Your 2025 Stewardship team,  
Greg Lemieux & Ariel Smith-Iyer, co-chairs  
with Selene Fabiano and Paul Hudson

## Church Leadership News

**We hope you will welcome our part-time Interim Executive Director, Sharon Dolan, when she starts on February 10.** Sharon will work with our excellent staff in managing operations and also advise us about our future administrative structure. **She will be introduced to members at our February 23 Congregational Meeting.** Please read our [news announcement](#) for more information.

Staffing Task Force ([StaffingTF@uucb.org](mailto:StaffingTF@uucb.org)): Suzette Anderson-Duggan, Carolyn James, Beth Pollard, Marta Tobey, Tom Tripp, and Rev. Marcus

## From the Board of Trustees

For a recording of previous Board meetings, please contact [secretary@uucb.org](mailto:secretary@uucb.org) for a link.

Can Board of Trustees service inspire spiritual growth?

Yes, there's meetings, governance protocols, business responsibilities, and paying closer attention to what's happening. Yet I found these past six years on the Board that spiritual growth finds ways to sneak in, such as through:

**Community:** Common purpose, shared experiences, and camaraderie created with other Board members deepens a sense of belonging in this UUCB community.

**Prioritizing values:** Should we require vaccinations? What do we do about Freestone? How do we search for our next minister? These types of real Board questions call on us to consider competing values and make choices that define who we are in our individual votes that affect the larger community.

**More heads are better than one:** Sometimes it's tempting to go it alone, doing things our own way. But Board service teaches how drawing out & tossing around perspectives can create mosaic solutions that are more beautiful, long-lasting, and stronger. There's so much to learn from UUCB-ers!

**Contributing to the good of the whole:** Where would we be without members willing to do the church's business/governance work, which admittedly can have a somewhat nerdy whiff to it? It nourishes the spirit to be able to support such church fundamentals.

**Being part of making a difference:** Building on the work of others, in my tenure my spirit has relished enhanced Board-congregation communication through meeting agenda information, Beacon Board action summaries, virtual Board meetings accessible to all congregants without leaving home, and more.

And that's the abridged list! I encourage UUCB members who have not yet served on the Board to give it a go and likewise learn, enjoy and grow.

Beth Pollard

#### Board of Trustees January 2025 Actions

1. **Approved Scheduling/Agendas** - Congregational Meetings:
  - a. **Special Congregational Meeting:** To vote to approve UUCB ordaining Kathryn Jay, Director of Family Ministry, as a UU minister - immediately upon the conclusion of worship service on Sunday, January 19, 2025
  - b. **Regular Congregational Meeting:** Sunday, February 23, 2025 - after worship service and brief lunch break

for collaborating with local agencies such as the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity and for developing a new Social Justice Council Sponsored Project focused on support for immigrants in our communities. These plans include the possibility of renewing and strengthening the statement of purpose we adopted as a congregation in 2018 in voting to become a Sanctuary Church:

**"As a community of faith, we commit to walk alongside immigrants, mixed-status families, refugees and other targeted communities to uphold the dignity, due process, full acceptance, and participation of all people in our society through advocacy, support, and protection."**

The SJC has been asked to keep the Board of Trustees apprised of these plans and the needs of the SJC as we pursue justice for immigrants. Stay tuned to learn how you can help.

The next SJC meeting will be held by Zoom on February 12 at 7:00 pm.

**Cyndy Greenleaf, co-chair**

#### PEOPLE OF COLOR CAUCUS

The People of Color Caucus (POCC) will sponsor their annual Black History Worship Service on Sunday February 9, 2025, as part of the 11 am Worship Service in collaboration with our Music Director, Bryan Baker, Minister, Rev. Marcus, Youth Choir Director, Katie Lipka, and multiple members of the POCC facilitating the worship service. The theme of this year's Black History service is "Nurturing our Spirit, Renewing our Dream."

**Lonnie Moseley, co-chair**

#### EQUITY IN BERKELEY SCHOOLS

New semester! More teacher needs! More requests for out-of-classroom help in food pantries and gardening!

There are so many ways UUCB can be of service – in a district that was ranked second from last among 5000 US districts in the achievement gap (which also means poverty gap) between white students and those of color.

## Social Justice Council (SJC)

The Social Justice Council potluck on Sunday January 12 was a rousing success. Over 30 people attended. We held an active and engaged discussion of the incoming administration's immigration policies and how our congregation might respond to minimize harm to our immigrant neighbors. With the leadership of several SJC members, including Francey Liefert, plans are afoot

This is Black History Month. Let's consider it Black Future month, as well. ALL our futures depend on the educational health of each member of society.

Do stop by the Equity in Berkeley Schools table in the Social Hall for more information. Or go directly to <http://www.berkeleypublicschoolsfund.org> to get all the info you need. If you do decide to volunteer, *please let Helen Toy or Lonnie Moseley know.*

A number of volunteers have expressed their enthusiasm about helping in the schools. Natalie Campbell writes of her experience in a food pantry: "All in all, it was an extremely well planned and executed volunteer experience. The chance to get to interact with the local families was icing on the cake!" Sue Collins has been happy to support the art teacher at MLK Middle School, Helen Toy is loving the kids she tutors in math at Cragmont Elementary, Francey Liefert reports enjoying library work at Sylvia Mendez Elementary.

Come join us!

Helen Toy, Lonnie Moseley, Cordell Sloan, co-chairs

### **CLIMATE JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

The Climate Justice Committee is busy as we enter the New Year. Our team has been asked to review and test new materials for the UUA's Green Sanctuary program and to report on our efforts to the UUA Green Sanctuary community of congregations. We'll receive some payment for these efforts, and we're planning to support some of our local work with this reimbursement! We were pleasantly surprised at this invitation as we ourselves are working to get our heads and hands around the beautifully comprehensive model of intersectional climate action the UUA has developed.

As we think about taking action on the UUA's Four Essentials of Climate Action, we need to reach out to the congregation to learn what projects you most support and are willing to work on. It will take active participation from many in our UUCB community to develop and carry out the comprehensive effort we need to address

intersectional climate justice in our communities. Our Climate Justice Committee, also working with our wonderful Electrification Committee, will need your help.

Here are the Four Essentials of Climate Action as defined by the Green Sanctuary program:

**Congregational Transformation** is the internal work we need to do to show up for each other, our congregation, and our community.

**Community Resilience** informs the ways we cultivate communities of care to prepare for and respond to climate impacts, injustice, and harm.

**Justice** shapes how we partner with those most impacted by climate change to cultivate thriving communities.

**Mitigation** frames our efforts to reduce emissions from energy usage, transportation, waste, & consumption in our community.

If you are drawn to helping envision, plan, and help carry out UUCB's climate actions, both in the short and long term, please let us know. With the devastating fires and weather events we regularly see, let's get started and take constructive action out of love and faith for future generations, for ourselves, and for our wonderfully biodiverse web of life.

Sheila Tarbet, Chair

### **GOOD NEIGHBOR PROGRAM**

Below are the organizations selected to receive our monthly Good Neighbor donations for 2025:

**January** - Albany Thrives Together

**February** - Through the Looking Glass

**March** - Emeryville Citizens Assistance Program

**April** - Gill Tract Community Farm

**May** - Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity

**June** - Groundwork Richmond

**July** - Berkeley Food Pantry

**August** - Berkeley Public Schools Fund

**September** - No More Tears

**October** - Tiny Village Spirit

**November** - Contra Costa Family Justice Center

**December** - NIAD Art Center

## Partner Church

We received Christmas and New Year's greetings from our partners in Homorodújfalu recently. Here is what Rev. Atilla had to say (edited):

*“Another year has passed away and another came promising us new hopes, opportunities and challenges. The holidays were very enjoyable. During Advent, the children discovered a Living Advent Calendar. Birtalan Boróka, a member of our council board arranged that the families could welcome children looking for an Advent calendar every evening. Thus, 23 families took part in this wonderful event. The last location in this event was the church where on December 24th when we celebrated together Christmas Eve. The holidays were spent in a cozy atmosphere. Every day we had Christmas services when we took part together in worship. There was no snow but fortunately it didn't rain either. Then came the New Years Eve when we welcomed the New Year at the church.*

*We thank you for all your support and friendship. We hope that the New Year will bring new possibilities so we can make our partnership more fruitful. We wish all Unitarians in Berkeley a Hopeful, Blessed, Peaceful, Happy New Year.”*

At lunch after a recent Sunday service, some of us talked about fundraising for Partner Church. What sort of event might catch your fancy and encourage an emolument? Let us know your thoughts on this, either to Stephanie Ann Blythe

at [steph62850@yahoo.com](mailto:steph62850@yahoo.com) or Anne Greenwood at [annegt1@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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), Bob Moore (Freestone Committee Rep), Susan Lankford, and Larry Nagel.

The Freestone Committee has secured donated funds to drill one well where, per geologist subterranean surveying, there exists the likelihood of providing sufficient water to support development on Lots 1 and 2 and therefore the sale of those lots to raise the needed \$250,000. In light of this information, the deadline for raising these funds was extended to April 1, 2025, by the Board of Trustees at its December 4, 2024 meeting.

Timing factors, including wet weather, have resulted in a delay in drilling. The driller reports they need about 7–10 days of dry weather before their equipment can access the proposed well site (due to soft soil conditions) and drill. The Freestone Committee is hoping to have the results of the well drilling available by the February 2025 Board of Trustees meeting.

If you have any questions, please e-mail us at [FOC@UUCB.org](mailto:FOC@UUCB.org).

## Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley

### Covenant of Right Relations

*We covenant to build a religious community guided by love and sustained by respectful relationships. Believing that building healthy relationships is a spiritual practice, we aim to listen appreciatively, speak with care, express gratitude, honor our differences, and assume good intentions. We endeavor to communicate directly, honestly, and compassionately, particularly when we are in conflict. When we hurt one another, we will try to forgive, make amends and reconnect in a spirit of love. In celebration of the common purpose that unites us, we will do our best to abide by this covenant.*

**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 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)

## Board of Trustees

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Carisa Orwig (Family Ministry)  
Lenore Ralston (Chalice Circles and Finance)  
Tom Tripp (Buildings & Grounds)  
Helen Tinsley-Jones (Board Liaison)

## Staff (partial list)

Minister: Rev. Marcus Liefert  
[revmarcus@uucb.org](mailto:revmarcus@uucb.org) 510-525-0302 ext. 303  
Director of Family Ministry: Kathryn Jay  
[kathryn@uucb.org](mailto:kathryn@uucb.org) 510-525-0302 ext. 307  
Office Administrator: Janae Heard  
[janae@uucb.org](mailto:janae@uucb.org), 510-525-0302 ext. 306  
Connections Coordinator: Charis Domador  
[connections@uucb.org](mailto:connections@uucb.org), 510-525-0302 ext. 304  
Facilities Manager: Peter Barnholdt  
[peter@uucb.org](mailto:peter@uucb.org), 510-525-0302 ext. 308

#### 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.*