

Social Action



...and Service

Bring Your Weight in Food

by Rev. Barbara Hamilton-Holway

In 2002 UUCB held an Oxfam Hunger Banquet with Lee Lawrence as organizer. Bill and I also invited people to join us in fasting one meal a week, with the money we would have spent on a meal going to the Good Neighbor organization, which in November was the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano.

In 2003 in our November newsletter column, Bill and I invited members to bring a bag full of groceries to the altar during the all-ages Thanksgiving Service. The gifts stocked a food bank. Jim Acock may have delivered the groceries in his truck, and others in their cars.

Then I think in the newsletters Bill and I received from UU and other congregations, some newsletter had a notice of a Bring Your Weight in Food Drive. We thought it sounded like a good idea. We began the Bring Your Weight in Food Drive in November 2004.

The first year again it was Lee Lawrence who set up a scale and I think Jim Acock again brought his truck. And I think again cars were loaded too.

For weeks before we asked people to guess how many total pounds of food we would give. The best guess won a turkey and the worst guess a rubber chicken. During the month a rubber chicken was on display at a table where you made your weight guess. During the social hour the day of the drive, John Cahoon, who was Board President, made the announcements and awarded the prizes.

We have had a Bring Your Weight In Food Drive every year since.

In 2004 the Richmond Food Pantry said we contributed more food than they had ever before received. They had an appreciation luncheon where they thanked us and awarded a certificate to UUCB. Those appreciation luncheons have happened each year with different representatives from the church attending and receiving the pantry's gratitude.

We began to have people give so much food that we needed to rent a truck. Then Minister of Religious Education Chris Holton Jablonski, of course, got totally into the drive and loved driving the truck and helping load and unload the food. He made it a real Religious Education (RE) event. RE used money from the RE budget to rent the truck. Josh Clark picked up, drove the truck, and returned it last year.

November has been the big drive because it helps provide food during the winter and for the holidays. Of course, food is needed year round and the youth group led a food drive for the pantry in the spring of 2011. Food drives stock shelves and bring the need into everyone's awareness. I recall the pantry staff told us how quickly the food went off the shelves last year. Hearing that the need became even more clear.

The need is great now, so I hope we can give as much or more as last year in food and in funds. It's a gift to be able to give and to see all that food fill up the truck!

Environmental Justice

by Amy Petré Hill

UUCB has a long tradition of reverence for the natural world and had put that respect for the web of life into action by taking action on climate change and clean water. In 2009 and again in 2011, UUCB members have written letters in support of the "Human Right to Water Bill" sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of California (UULMCA). The bill makes it California policy to ensure access to clean water to every Californian for daily use and was passed through the legislature in 2009, but was vetoed by the Governor. This year, UUCB members have again written letters in support of the bill as it makes it way through the California legislature.

In November 2010, UUCB members joined David Lingenfelter, Martha Kimmich, Larry Nagel and Amy Petré Hill in protecting our environment by working with community groups and UULMCA to defeat Proposition 23. This ballot initiative would have repealed California's innovative Global Warming Solutions Act. David and others hosted an information session on Proposition 23 at the church and hosted a phone bank at UUCB.

Frontline

Frontline is a group of people who got together in the wake of a particularly bad spell of gun violence that wound up actually closing the North Richmond clinic (where UUCB member Kim Duir worked) for several days because the shots were so close to the clinic. The people that initially got together were people who worked in the clinic, people who worked in social work, people who worked in public health, people who either lived in or worked in Richmond in the

areas that were impacted by the violence. They started meeting and talking together about what they could do to help one another. Since then a number of initiatives have come out of it. One that most members of UUCB are familiar with and in which members regularly participate is wreath laying, which is a form of witness to the lives that are lost to gun violence. Participants lay wreaths at the site of gun violence, every week if necessary. The Hamilton-Holways and numerous members of the church have been, according to Kim Dair, “incredibly generous and dedicated participants.” Kim brought this program to the attention of UUCB and works off an email list serve, sending out a weekly email when there as been gun violence in Richmond. Kim explains what brought her into this type of service: “Quite literally seeing patients in the clinic day after day who had lost family members to gun violence; trying to discover what things could be done to try to address the problems that derive from living with that kind of vulnerability and loss.”

Good Neighbor Donations

Lee Lawrence chairs the Good Neighbor committee, which determines UUCB’s monthly Good Neighbor. Each month the non-pledge offering is shared with a different local, charitable organization. This is a serious increase over the former efforts at collection for good causes.

Note: The following figures are from the UUCB 2008–09 Annual Report.) Good Neighbor donations go to local nonprofits in our community, particularly those serving those in economic need. It is the policy of UUCB to share our offering plate with community organizations. UUCB was especially generous this last year. Good Neighbor recipients have been Contra Costa Interfaith Housing (\$1,191.53), Brighter Beginnings (\$873.08), Frontline Richmond (\$688.98), Richmond Read-Aloud (\$487.65), the Pacific Center serving LGBTs (\$487.65), Berkeley Food & Housing (\$1,751.03), GRIIP (\$2,426.94—two collections), GRIP’s Souper Center (\$436.28), Berkeley Emergency Food Pantry (\$8,334.74), Richmond Emergency Food Pantry (\$9,700.33), Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano (\$1,886.78), Community Food Bank of Alameda County (\$1,886.78), the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County’s Winter Shelter (1,440.10), Stand Against Domestic Violence (\$1,426.44), and the East Bay Community Law Center (\$1,659.60). Two non-local crisis recipients were the UU Church of Knoxville (\$688.98), and the United Nations World Food Program (\$1,457.66). Our total for all these Good Neighbor recipients is \$36,951.57!

Brief History of UUCB/GRIP/Souper Center Involvement

by Ray Westergard



The Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) started in 1966 to help promote justice, wholeness, compassion, and equal opportunity for all members of society, including people who are homeless, unemployed, and often don't know where their next meal will come from. An important part of GRIP, the Souper Center, located at 165 22nd Street in Richmond, serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner to almost 300 people every day of the year. The most popular of these three meals is lunch, which serves at least 200 people daily, some of whom are residents of the GRIP Family Housing Program and Shelter, but most of whom are hungry and/or homeless families and individuals coming in off the street. Although UUCB has helped GRIP and the Souper Center in a variety of ways, such as serving dinner once a month through the leadership of GRIP Board Member Dorothy Herzberg and making frequent donations of clothing, food, and money, our most consistent and long-term involvement with GRIP (for about 20 years now) has been in buying, preparing, and serving lunch at the Souper Center on the fourth Tuesday of every month.

The success of this UUCB program has been due to the financial generosity of our church, despite our own financial struggles, and also the commitment of our many volunteers, especially Jane Luckham, who was a GRIP Board member and very active with the Souper Center until her death in 2004. Our church members and friends who have volunteered to help with the fourth Tuesday lunch program during the past year or two have been Judy Abel, Jim Acock, Marion Anderson, Horst Bansner, Darcy Baxter, Maria Carlson, Norie Clarke, Barbara Daniell, Natalie and Nathan DaSilva, Herb deGrasse, Gabriel Escobar and his son Daniel; Anne, Ashley and Rob Feraru; Peter Franklin, Jerry Gavzy, Mark Graham, Jeanne Griffith, Mike Hagerty, Barbara and Bill Hamilton-Holway, Dorothy Herzberg, Wendy James, Susan Lankford, Dan Lee, Jean Lipton, David McFarlane, Dwight and Gloria Merrill, Barbara Miles, Lucile and Raymond Miles, Lynn Miller, Ren Monson, Bob Moore, Maria Norall, Leslie O'Hara, Joanne Orengo, Barbara Parsons, Chris Planellas, Katherine Reed, Monica Riley, Sara Roberts, Lois Schneider, Carol Sheridan, Ariel Smith, Michael Sohigian, Delia Taylor, Beth Turner, Ray Westergard, and Eldon Wolf. Thank you to everyone, and apologies to anyone omitted.

GRIP: Housing the Homeless

by Dorothy Herzberg

When GRIP started the family shelter in 1993, it rotated between congregations. The two weeks it was at UUCB, there would be about 30 people sleeping on mattresses in the Social Hall. At the time, Rev. Boeke asked me if there was something he could help with. I knew that they all had to be taken down the hill to the Souper Center at 5:00 a.m. as some had work, some kids went to school, etc. I was teaching then, so was not available to do it.

Rev. Boeke and Lucille Parker showed up EVERY morning and took them—it sometimes required more than one trip! He was always supportive of GRIP. The family shelter has now morphed into a \$2.6 million building with 75 beds...still feeding almost 300 lunch every day!



The Gunplow Monument

Our church is located a couple of miles from sections of Richmond that have some of the highest murder rates in the nation. In 1993 we buried 21 disabled guns in concrete on the hill above the parking lot. “Putting up a monument isn’t likely to have any direct effect on the violence in surrounding cities,” Dr. Boeke conceded, “but it could help counter the attitude toward firearms often seen in movies and television. We’ve got to stop glorifying people’s blowing each other’s brains out.” A memorial statue was created. The dedication service in November 1994 included a dozen mothers from Richmond whose children had been killed by guns. The guns came from the San Francisco Police Department and from church members. In the atrium there was a rack of empty shoes that had belonged to the victims. Objectives of the service:

- To memorialize those murdered in the Bay Area, concentrating on guns in Richmond,

To dedicate the statue that symbolizes the rejection of guns and violence,

- To demonstrate to survivors of violence, their families and loved ones, that there are many in the community who care and wish to help reduce violence,
- To offer an opportunity for all to rededicate themselves to the reduction of violence in their lives and communities

The bronze monument, over 4½ feet high, was designed by Norma Lewis, a Carmel artist, has the buried guns in its base. It is a modern response to the biblical exhortation to beat swords into plowshares. It is hoped the Gunplow will provide an antidote to the increasing reports of firearm deaths in the East Bay.

Health Care Reform

by Amy Petré Hill

In 2009 Christy Baker, a Starr King School for the Ministry student, presented the UU Voices for Health Care Curriculum by the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of California (UULMCA) at UUCB. Through this small-group ministry program, members of the congregation learned more about the inequalities in the health care system and heard each others' health care stories. Inspired, a group of UUCB members began working with UULMCA to pass comprehensive federal and state health care legislation. During 2009 and 2010, UUCB members sent more than 250 letters and postcards to California's two Senators asking for their support of the Affordable Care Act, a bill that would make health care more affordable for everyone and provide insurance by 2014 to the 8 million Californians currently without any health care coverage. Members also made legislative visits to Congresswoman Barbara Lee and Senator Dianne Feinstein's office, sharing that as people of faith who uphold the dignity and worth of each person, they believed that affordable, quality health care must be available to everyone. Rev. Bill Hamilton-Holloway and Rev. Chris Holton Jablonski did a sermon on the need for health care reform and several members of the congregation went to rallies in Sacramento and San Francisco to speak up for health care for everyone. The voices of UUCB members and UUs across the state were heard: the Affordable Care Act was signed into law on March 23, 2010.

Members of UUCB continue to advocate for health care reform here in California both through passage of a Single Payer system and through full implementation of the federal health care reform law here in California. Special thanks go to the many UUCB members who participated in this health care reform campaign: Lee Lawrence, Amy Petré Hill, Sara Roberts, Anne Wardell, Lorretta Maddux, Lynn Mahlmann, Sarah Taylor, Marion Anderson, Marion & Roger Thompson, Sandra Portillo-Robins, Norie Clarke, Martha Kimmich, Sarah Armstrong, Rev. Jane Ramsey, Larry Nagel, Susan Lankford and many others who look action to support health care reform in California.

Service of Remembrance and Hope. People of faith gathered in Oakland, California on October 20, 2009, as thousands of others gathered in their own communities across the country—from Oregon to New Mexico to North Carolina—for services of remembrance, prayer vigils, educational forums, postcard-writing campaigns, legislative visits, and more, pushing for quality coverage within reach for all. Amy Petré Hill, then of UUCB, and members of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, and the Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists organized this moving candlelight vigil for the 45,000 who die each year for lack of health insurance. The event was held at the First Congregational Church of Oakland for religious and community members from Oakland and Berkeley. This even drew about 70 people and a radio interview. The candlelight service included stories and prayers shared by members of Oakland and Berkeley's faith communities, including: the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of

California (UULM-CA); the First Congregational Church of Oakland; the First Unitarian Church of Oakland; Voices for Hope Congregational Church; UUCB; the interfaith social justice organization, Genesis; and the non-profit health clinic, Healthy Oakland. The Rev. Ben Meyers from the Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists and other faith leaders conducted the service. Those present raised their voices in hope for reform that creates a health care future which includes everyone and works well for all of us, and asked for moral leadership from Senator Barbara Boxer, Senator Dianne Feinstein, Representative Barbara Lee and President Obama.

International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF) Congresses: Choir Trips

by Barbara Back

Our 35- to 40-member Chancel Choir travelled abroad to three International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF) conferences at the instigation of Rev. Richard Boeke who, after attending most IARF conferences beginning in the 1960s, found the lack of music needed to get attendees “out of their heads” and into more spirituality. Result: we went to Holland in 1981, Japan in 1984, and Germany in 1990. Our church hosted the 1987 Congress at Stanford University.

Our choir directors were: Phyllis Wells in 1981, Edwin Barlow in 1984 and 1987, and as co-director with Eric Howe in 1990. Barbara Back was piano/organist accompanist for all the trips.

In 1984 we were guests of the very large Buddhist Rissho Kosei Kai church in Tokyo, performing at the huge Opening Ceremony and other events, singing at the small Unitarian Church of Tokyo and at the Konko-Kyo Shinto Temple in Osaka. In Hiroshima we sang at several venues and participated in the annual August 6th Memorial Service to commemorate the nuclear bombing. We held a service at the Children’s Memorial where we placed the many origami crane leis made by our church members. We performed the Waterfall Purification Ritual (Misogi) at the Tsubaki Grand Shrine. Our choir was bowled over by the gifts and generosity, by the sheer magnitude of the welcome at every place we went.

Taking gifts was a big part of every trip and especially on the 1990 tour, which occurred on the heels of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the repressive regimes in Czechoslovakia and Romania. We took gifts of blue jeans, medical supplies, etc., for which the people were very grateful. We sang at many Unitarian churches from Frankfurt down through Eastern Europe to Bucharest and gave a concert at the Vienna Mozart Festival, and had a memorial service at the former Nazi concentration camp in Neuengamme, Germany.

Contacts made on these trips have led to further exchanges and especially the Partner church Program with Romania. Many of their ministers have now come to study at Starr King Theological Seminary and we have been in frequent touch with our partner church at Homorodufalu.

IARF Conferences

by Dorothy Herzberg

I was with the Boekes on the trip in 1990 to an IARF conference in Hamburg and then bus trip through Eastern Europe, visiting our partner church in Romania for the first time since WW II. We walked into the village singing *Dona Nobis Pacem*! I was with them again in 2010 in India, an IARF conference in Cochin, South India. Rev. Boeke convened the leadership of the IARF for special meetings to discuss future plans. It was the best part of the conference for me!

Marriage Equality



Eleven days after the passage of Proposition 8, members of UUCB were out in force at the many Prop 8 protest rallies at city halls in the Bay Area. Several members of UUCB attended the rally at the Oakland City Hall. UUCB ran a “No on 8” phone banking operation for two months prior to the November election. Our LGBT members were well supported by their straight allies, including Page Tompkins who spearheaded the effort. He was joined by Sarah Armstrong, Aija Simpson, and Lee Lawrence in addition to many others. Aija was doing this not only for herself but also for her two moms, Cynthia Asproditos and Maryann Simpson. One of our ministers, Bill Hamilton-Holway was busy dialing away nearly every Tuesday evening. Here is a brief summary of marriage equality efforts at UUCB in 2009:

- Marriage Equality Phone Bank: Brought people to the church who hadn’t been members and brought more of our members out. Continuing to fight. Sarah Armstrong working with UULM. Page Thomkins helped organize phone banks.
- Lucinda Young and Joyce Jennings leading the UUCB efforts on marriage equality, educating UUCB membership and supporting marriage equality issues. Working with UULM.
- Spring 2009: UUCB Marriage Equality team participates in No on 8 campaign and rallies after Prop 8 upheld by California Supreme court.
- July 28, 2009: UUCB hosts a session of the Marriage Equality USA “Get Engaged” polling and listening tour on July 28. These meetings lead Marriage Equality to support putting marriage back on the ballot in 2012 rather than 2010.

- October 11, 2009: UUCB members Stephanie Ann Blythe, Jean Gleason, Larry Nagel, Lucinda Young & her daughter, and Amy Petré Hill host a Standing on the Side of Love event as part of the Marriage Equality USA walk across the Bay Bridge. For photos, go to <http://www.flickr.com/photos/amypetre/>.
- Vigil for Marriage Equality: At Lakeshore Baptist Church in Oakland, Loretta Maddux, Ama, and Stephanie Ann were there from UUCB. Several members of the Oakland congregation were there too. Participating in the service were Shams Cohen from Starr King and Francey Leifert from FUCO. Shams spoke on Jewish and Islamic traditions while Francey framed the UU tradition as Standing on the Side of Love.

Promise the Children

By Eileen Peck

During the 1960s the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) had a campaign entitled “Promise the Children.” They gave staff support for this program and a committee was established in our church. The staff worker came to California several times and gave us a lot of help. I was chair of the committee for a while and Joel Fort was also interested in these activities. There were beginning to be a lot of teenaged murders going on in Richmond at the time (unfortunately they continue). The committee decided to educate the congregation about the problem. As chair, I contacted the group Mother’s of Murdered Children. This group was asked to come up and meet with us. They were willing but they needed help in getting up the hill (some cars would not make it). We met with them down in Richmond and planned a service for them to come up and speak. The chairman of their group and a few others came to participate in a service. Some of the mothers had to bring up their grandchildren because one of the parents had been killed. One of the symbols at the service was displaying the shoes of some of the dead children. Another part was having the Chairman of the group speak. She brought her grandson (son of her murdered son), whom she was raising. When she came up on the platform to speak she left her grandson in the care of another member of that group. However the 3-year-old wanted to be with Grandmother and he came up on the platform while I was introducing her. So she introduced him and let him stay on the platform. While she talked he decided to go see the ministers who were sitting on the other side of the platform and they ended up taking care of him while she spoke. I think this unplanned part touched the congregation more than any thing else.

Joel’s project was to collect guns to be made into or buried under a monument. The monument was dedicated at another service. The project of members working with schools may have been started in this same period and it should still continue.

That’s about all I can remember and it may not be accurate.

The Read-Aloud Program and UUCB

by Winnie Sayre

In 1993, shortly after I retired from teaching, Dick Boeke, then minister at UUCB, called. He wanted me to come to a meeting to discuss the possibility of our church helping with a school. Minerva Mendoza-Friedman and I were assigned to explore the proper channels for UUCB to adopt a classroom in an elementary school. We would go to the classroom to assist the teacher and raise money to rent a bus to take the children on fieldtrips.

We did get permission from the administration of the Richmond Unified School District to find a school and work out own arrangements. My neighbor was principal of Downer Elementary School. She came to a meeting at my house where Dick Boeke laid out his ideas. He had heard a broadcast, when in China with group from UUCB, about a judge ordering the Richmond School District, which was on the verge of bankruptcy, not to close the schools. Boeke thought we could make a difference for at least a few students.

A group of enthusiastic individuals at our church bought into the idea and in the fall of 1993 worked with a teacher at Downer and his fifth grade class. We went into his classroom on a weekly basis to help individual students. Also, we started preparing Sunday lunches at the church and, with the profits, rented buses to take the students on field trips. Minerva used some of the funds to help needy students in the Berkeley School District where she was employed. The students in Richmond had never been outside of their neighborhood and enjoyed the three field trips we arranged that first year. I recall one trip to Lawrence Hall of Science where we stopped by the church for simple refreshments on the way home. The students had never run up and down a hillside before.

At the end of the first year Bill Ulp invited the volunteers and the teacher to his home for a potluck meal. We were eager to continue our work the following year, but alas we had to find another teacher as this one was making a career change. We continued for two more years with a different teacher each year. We saw other needs at Downer and a small group, Lucile Miles, Connie Pyle, Marion Thompson, Winnie Sayre, and Dorothy Walker, volunteered to keep the library open an extra day. The district only paid for a librarian one day a week to accommodate roughly 1,200 students.

Near the end of third year, I met Marilyn Nye, a newly retired professor from Hayward State, who wanted to start The Read-Aloud Program, patterned after an existing program in another state. Our volunteers were most welcome to participate in the group she was starting. At one point I recall that we had over 25 volunteers from our church participating in Read-Aloud. When Marilyn Nye died, UUCB member Judy Sam took over as director of Read-Aloud for many years. John Nye, Marilyn's husband, and Kay and Frank Davis helped finance the program for several years. Other individuals are still participating (like me after 18 years) by reading to children once a week with the program. There is no way of counting the children who have benefitted from this outreach by so many UUCB members.

Searchlight Peace Vigil

by Grace Ulp

In March 1970 the large and active World Peace Committee of the church, chaired by Dr. Lucile Green, presented the problem: How can we find a way to peace in Vietnam and in the world? How can we voice our concern over the threat to world peace by the actions in Vietnam?

In the church bulletin and in the newspapers there was an invitation: Come to any part or all of an all-night Searchlight Peace Vigil, Saturday, March 27, 1970 from 8:00 p.m. to Sunday, 8:00 a.m. in the sanctuary of the church.

Purpose: To search for alternatives to war in Vietnam; more effective ways of communicating these alternatives to decision makers, ways to commit ourselves to the most crucial task of our times—securing permanent peace.

Program: Silent meditation broken by interludes for remarks by guest speakers, readings, music, and opportunities to express personal feelings. A number of people, prominent in their fields, who share with us their thoughts and concerns, agreed to speak at some time during the vigil.

The beacon light on the hill shining out over the Bay Area gave us a feeling that we might be heard in our community, and that our society needed to address these issues as well as the issues growing out of HUAC's (House Un-American Activities Committee) loyalty oath, the Civil Rights movement, and the People's Park issues that were addressed by the government with tear gas, shotgun wounds, and the death of a bystander. It was a time of active disagreement with our elected leaders.

Searchlight Peace Vigil

by Margaret Gudmundsson

I remember seeing the searchlight in the parking lot and remember looking for and seeing the light in the night sky. My kids also were young so I don't remember attending the "rally." I believe it was probably in May of 1970 and billed as a "Prayer Vigil" to differentiate this anti-war protest from what was happening on the campus, which was at the height of the protests where they shut down the school and it was "reconstituted." This was during the revelation of the bombing in Cambodia.

Sponsoring Refugees

by Barbara Back

In recent years the church made it a point to sponsor refugees every two years. A Vietnamese family of 12 had no place to live, so we found housing, paid the rent, and got them a refrigerator. By 1990 they had their own restaurant in Fremont. We also sponsored a family from El Salvador, several Tibetans and Chinese individuals. Lucile Green Isit became “mother” to some of them, providing housing, food, and nurture. There were several of the student activists from the Tiananmen Square incident who stayed several years, working at the church and finishing their college education. These men became very close to the church, regarding it as their family. All of them have gone on to successful lives and careers. Some of us are still in contact with them, following their progress.

Welcoming Congregation Historical Sketch

by Stephanie Ann Blythe

In the late 1980s the Unitarian Universalist Association found many negative attitudes, prejudice, and ignorance about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people among its congregations, and established the Welcoming Congregation program at the 1989 UUA General Assembly to educate its members. UUCB took up the program in the late 1990s. A small group of volunteers taught the Welcoming Congregation curriculum several times. Without clear direction for what came next, the process for becoming a certified Welcoming Congregation became stalled. Susan Bergmans took up the cause and contacted UUA headquarters to finish our process. A congregational vote was required, and Susan got a motion put on the agenda for a congregational meeting. The members of UUCB were ready to affirm our status as a Welcoming Congregation and overwhelmingly passed the motion on June 17, 2001. Having studied the curriculum and voting to be so, UUCB received its certification as a Welcoming Congregation from the UUA on January 10, 2002.

While UUCB’s Welcoming Congregation activities have waned since then, we still have a strong LGBT justice presence. We have sponsored a UU contingent in the San Francisco Pride Parade many times. A banner reading “Civil Marriage is a Civil Right” graced our entrance as a symbol of our leadership in the battle for Marriage Equality. UUCB was a phone banking location in the

2008 fight against Proposition 8. The “Standing on the Side of Love” banner now hanging above our entrance is a continuance of the struggle for full equality for LGBT people, as well as for immigration rights and other oppressed persons. UUCB has also been a chapter member of Interweave Continental, the UUA’s independent LGBT organization.

World Peace Committee

by Ingeborg Nienhold

The World Peace Committee is one of the oldest committees in the church, strong and highly visible especially during the time of the Vietnam War and the crises in South America. The World Peace and Sanctuary Committee, as it was called then, worked to inform the congregation about current events and to stimulate action on critical issues. Flo Reeves valued the three minutes from the pulpit that were allotted during Sunday church service.

As a member of the East Bay Sanctuary Covenant the committee, together with a special UUCB refugee committee and our minister, Rev. Boeke, was instrumental in 1979 in the support of a family of 14 who had fled from China.

There were many delicious luncheons prepared by the committee (Gertrude Hall, Flo Reeves, Ellen Schon, Evelyn and Leeverne Johnson, Dana Kelly, Barbara Rasmussen and others) to benefit these and other good causes. There were many vigils, participation in demonstrations, and letter writing to governmental representatives.

In the 1960s interest centered on the opposition to the war in Vietnam, but since then we have learned that ending one war doesn’t necessarily bring peace—far from it. Other issues—nuclear weapons proliferation, weapons in space, the lack of peace and diversity education—are still with us. The misuse of information tools and migration issues have become especially dominant in recent years.

In 2004 the committee introduced the UN Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs) to the congregation. With the approval of the congregation, we work in support of these eight goals and thus focus increasingly also on prevention of social injustice as a prevention of violent conflicts.

Peace, its growth and development, while desired by the majority of people throughout the world, will not happen automatically. Many people of goodwill and understanding must work together actively and continuously.

(Sources: (1) Florence Reeves: World Peace and Sanctuary Committee, (2) www.un.org/millenniumgoals)

** The Anti-Poverty Millennium Development Goals, established in 2000, target date: 2015*

1. *Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger*
2. *Achieve universal primary education*
3. *Promote gender equality—empower women*

4. *Reduce child mortality*
5. *Improve maternal health*
6. *Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases*
7. *Ensure environmental sustainability*
8. *Develop a global partnership for development*