
March 2026

Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley
Vol. 85 #3

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

Stewardship Update

Thank you for taking the time to read this update! Before we get to the good news, a little background for any of our new readers or those who need a reminder to the questions: What is Stewardship? How is my "pledge" different than my "giving"?

Stewardship is what we call our annual pledge drive- yes, we do this every year. A pledge can be thought of as a promise. It's a plan for what you intend to give to UUCB in the 2026-27 church year, which begins on July 1st. We invite all members and friends and regular attendees to help us in our budgeting process by letting us know about future giving. We as your stewardship team, tally up all those pledges- our promises- and give the final number to the board of trustees by mid-April, who use that information to set the budget. As a congregation we will vote on that budget at the May 17th congregational meeting. Our collective contributions represent 43% of UUCB's operating costs (most of the rest comes from facility rentals).

What we all give beginning July 1st, 2026 is hopefully the same as what we pledge but sometimes life has other plans for us and we can't fulfill what we pledged. Other times folks realize they can give more than they pledged. The 2026-27 church year will be what it will be. The task for right now is to hear from all of our members and friends and active attendees what they believe they will be able to give next year. This is how a "pledge" is different than the actual giving.

So what's the good news, you ask? Starting early has us way ahead of previous years! As of this writing...

Continued on page 3



March Services

Sundays 11 am

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

Rising Up Through Fire and Ash Worship Series

Coffee & Community

Starts at 10 am in the
Atrium

Lunch

In the Social Hall following
the service

Sunday Programming

Personal Theology

Some Sundays, 9:30 am, Fireside Room and on Zoom

March 1 – UU Mystic, Alice Yeager, The Journey of a UU exploring the Mystical

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). Email Rev. Kathryn Jay, Minister for Congregational Life: kathryn@uucb.org

Humanist Connections

Sundays at 1 pm in person and on Zoom

March 1 – Topic Selection for next month and "Free Thinkers" Discussion. Harold Ogren.

March 8 – Harold Ogren will discuss "The Hardest Problem in Science- Consciousness"

March 15 – Paul Ulbrich will discuss "What should Democrats do if they win the House and Senate?"

March 22 – Teresa Carey will discuss "The Rule of Law"

March 29 – Dennis Monthei will discuss "Medical Misinformation"

Special Events

March 1

1 pm Love Songs and Chocolate

March 6

4 pm Mindful Movement
5:30 pm Fire Soirée
(Stewardship)

March 8

1 pm Raise Your Voice in Love, for Justice
5 pm Social Justice Potluck

March 15

1 pm Hope and Resilience Workshop with Arik Housley

March 21

9 am Work Party
2 pm Death Café
6:30 pm Church du Soleil
7 pm Youth Group Gathering

March 28

No Kings March

Good Neighbor

Project Second Chance

[Ccclib.org/psc](https://ccclib.org/psc)

More info on page 8

Weekly Events (see uucb.org/weekahead)

Mondays

9 am Write For Your Life

9 am Women's Meditation Group

Tuesdays

9:30 am Improving Your Balance through Tai Chi

12:15 pm Applied UU Buddhist Sangha

12:30 pm Immigrant Solidarity Project Vigils

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 (1=1st Sunday, 2=2nd Sunday, etc.)

9:30 am Parents Discussion Group (1/3)

1 pm Working to Overcome White Supremacy 2

1 pm Immigrant Support Group (1)

Monday

11 am Textile & Art (1/3)

5 pm Climate Justice Committee (4)

Tuesday

10:15 Prep/Serve Lunch GRIP (4)

7 pm World Peace Committee (3)

Wednesday

7:15 pm Board of Trustees (1)

7 pm Social Justice Council (2)

7 pm Program Council (3)

Thursday

10 am Thank You Circle (3)

Saturday

9 am Work Party (3)

1 pm POCC People of Color Caucus (3)

2 pm Death Café (quarterly)

4 pm Parents' Night Out (3)

6:30 pm Youth Social Event (3)

Announcements

Board Listening Presence

Helen Toy helen_toy@yahoo.com

March 15: Hope and Resilience Workshop with Arik Housley



In his memoir *Always November: Lessons in Loss, Love, and Resilience*, Housley shares his courageous journey through grief with unflinching honesty. As a national speaker, Housley inspires others to “be the positive change” and

cultivate compassion and strength in the face of adversity. uucb.org/events/hope-and-resilience-workshop-with-arik-housley/

Stewardship Update continued

we're already more than 50% toward our goal! We've heard from about 30% of our members and about half of those pledges have increased over last year's pledge- THANK YOU! More good news: pledges coming in are at about a 10% increase over last year- AMAZING! As a reminder, our pledge goal this year is \$550k. Another reminder: no amount is too small and anyone experiencing hardship can request a forbearance for the year. We appreciate pledges of any amount.

Last update: we had to shift our date for the Early Pledger Party, which we're calling the **Fire Soiree**. It will now be on **Friday, March 6th from 5:30-6:30pm**. Anyone who has submitted a pledge is invited to join us for

drinks and chocolate covered strawberries, along with a short ritual out on the patio as we watch the sunset. **Bring your pledge form that night if you haven't already submitted one!** RSVP requested but not required, follow this link:

<https://forms.gle/Bh8ZFcegwAbymEH9A>

As always, reach out with any questions: stewardship@uucb.org

Yours in sustaining our UUCB home,
the Stewardship Team- Paul, Ariel, Sima,
Selene, Mary and Read.

Men's Groups at UUCB

On March 29th come join our "5th Sunday" joint meeting of the active UUCB Men's groups.

The three active groups generally meet twice a month, but the fifth Sunday provides a unique "bonus" slot in the calendar several times per year to join the groups together. For this 5th Sunday meeting, we also invite anyone who may want to learn about, join or start a new group.

The men's groups offer an opportunity for growth, fellowship and support. We try to practice deep listening and share food and meaningful dialog as we learn from and support each other.

Details: Potluck dinner in the Social Hall (bring a dish to pass) at 6 pm, meeting starts at 7 pm in the Fireside room. Done by 9 pm. For questions, please contact Tom Tripp at trippthomas@yahoo.com, who will send more information to anyone expressing interest. UUCB Membership is not a requirement.

From the Board of Trustees

Did you realize that UUCB contributes each year to three organizations we ally closely with? Most of our budget items vary from year to year, but we have annual commitments to our Partner Church in Transylvania, to GRIP and to the Sogorea Te' Land Trust. Below you'll find some history.

UUCB's first relationship with our Partner Church in Homorodujfalu came in the 1920's when members contributed money to replace the church bells confiscated in World War I. Today's UUCB Board of Trustees allocates funds for our Partner Church in the annual budget, in addition to member's individual contributions. Most monies go directly to the Village Education Fund which provides scholarships for Homorodujfalu's students attending high school or university. The local scholarship committee allocates money to the students. Another portion may be designated for computers in the local school. A small portion goes to the minister to cover internet connection costs.

Stephanie Ann Blythe

In 1966, UUCB united with other interfaith congregations to found the **Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP)**, providing services to the community, including a food pantry. Later winter shelters were added, hosted at UUCB and other congregations, until the family shelter building was built in 2006. UUCB members have supported GRIP for 60 years, fundraising and walking in the annual Harmony Walk, making Good Neighbor donations, serving monthly lunches and sometimes dinners, donating coats and other essentials, and serving as board members. UUCB will host the GRIP annual meeting this month on March 12, our third year as host.

Ladie Malek and Ray Westergard

The Honoring Indigenous Peoples Group (HIP) engages the congregation and collaborates with community groups to acknowledge past and ongoing harms done to Indigenous communities and to do our part to take restorative actions. As one of these actions, HIP obtained Board approval to place the payment of Shuumi Land Tax as a yearly budget line item to be paid to the [Sogorea Te' Land Trust](#). The Land Tax directly supports Sogorea Te's work of returning Indigenous land to Indigenous people for building urban gardens, community centers and ceremonial spaces for current and future generations of Bay Area Indigenous peoples. Shuumi means gift in the Chochenyo language.

Helen Tinsley-Jones

Board Actions February 2026

1. **February Congregational Meeting.** Planned agenda and assigned roles for the February 22, 2026 congregational meeting.
2. **Maintenance of Freestone.** To enable Operations Director Janae Heard to attend to the maintenance needs of the Freestone property, the board authorized Janae to spend up to \$12,000 during the period of January-June 2026 to support these needs. These Freestone expenses will be tracked to help the congregation when they begin the decision-making process regarding the Freestone property.
3. **GRIP Donation for FY25-26.** The board authorized spending of \$1000 from the board discretionary fund to help UUCB meet its promised \$2000 donation to GRIP.
4. **Endowment Committee.** The board approved Anita Mermel to continue on the Endowment Committee as caretaker while the Board works to populate the committee.

Board of Trustees Changes

Newly elected Board of Trustees member Karin Werner has regrettably informed the Board that due to new circumstances, she is unable to serve her term on the Board. The Board thanks Karin for her willingness for Board service and appreciates with understanding that the timing is not currently workable.

Per UUCB Bylaws, the Board took action to fill the new vacancy by appointing Selene Fabiano to serve until the next Board election. Selene's appointment created a vacancy in the position of Secretary, which the Board filled with the appointment of Beth Pollard.

The Board elected Pier Sun Ho and Selene Fabiano to serve as Co-Presidents, and Kristin Jensen as Vice President. Lisa Maynard will continue in her position as Treasurer.

Ukulele Camp is Back

UUCB's Ukulele Summer Camp is back this coming summer! Last year was the first time UUCB has held a ukulele camp, and it was a wonderful time with lots of singing and playing in the beautiful light-filled atrium, arts and crafts, stories, and even a little dancing. Children and adults attended from UUCB and beyond, including Rev Marcus' two moms. Campers young and older learned various songs together as well as some things about Hawaiian culture, since the ukulele has been adopted as a much-loved instrument there and is now played around the world. Several campers attended from UUCB and GRIP thanks to the generous donation of scholarships from UUCB board vice president Pier Sun Ho and from the church. The success of the camp was also due to church congregants who donated and loaned instruments, tuners, and songbooks

and volunteered to provide transportation for GRIP campers. Many thanks to Read Heath who donated two ukuleles: one went to a young GRIP camper who was one of the best students and jumped with excitement on receiving his ukulele. The other went to the UUCB RE and YCC program. Also thanks to Anne Wardell, Jim Acock, Smiley Nelson, Carisa Orwig and Stefan Aubertin, and Laurel and Francey Liefert. You can register here for UUCB's 2026 Ukulele Summer Camp (July 13-17, 10 am – 1 pm). Questions? Send an email to Susan T. Mashiyama at susansharpsongs@gmail.com.

Partner Church

Have a yearning to explore the roots of Unitarian Universalism in the places where our movement arose? Here are two opportunities. And each of these tours is truly a pilgrimage, a journey into holy places that are touchstones in our movement.

The first is a Unitarian Partnership Pilgrimage, June 23 - July 3, 2026, sponsored by the Hungarian Unitarian Church. All are welcome to experience the birthplace of Unitarianism and be part of ongoing international partnership with the Unitarian communities of Transylvania. The itinerary, subject to modification, includes: Kolozsvár/Cluj – Home of the Hungarian Unitarian Church. Torda/Turda - Church where the Edict of Torda was debated in 1568. Gyulafehérvár/Alba Iulia - Cathedral of St. Michael, the resting place of notable historical Unitarian figure John Sigismund. Déva/Deva - Citadel where Francis David was imprisoned and martyred. A visit to our Partner Church village of Homorodújfalú can be arranged.

UUCB's own Jay Atkinson is leading the other pilgrimage, Unitarian Beginnings at Heritage in Poland, May 20 - 26, 2026. The Polish Brethren were the religious dissenters who challenged the doctrine of the trinity while embracing the life and teaching of Jesus. They became known as "Socinians", under the direction of Italian theologian Fausto Sozzini. The itinerary includes Warsaw, Kraków, and Raków which was settled in 1569 as a "unitarian town". While this pilgrimage is aimed toward ministers and seminarians, all UU's seeking insight into our roots are certainly welcome.

There's much more information that you can find at the Partner Church table on Sundays in the Atrium. First-time pilgrims will discover a fascinating new world of religious expression. Been to Transylvania previously? Why not go again and open many new doors. Your ambassadors are Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net

Social Justice

The March meeting of the Social Justice Council will be an In Person Potluck on Sunday, March 8 at 5:30 in the Fireside Room.

We will be preparing signs and banners for the March 28, No Kings III event, as we consider ways to involve the entire congregation in the demonstration, regardless of age, mobility, or role in the church. We want to encourage everyone, particularly those unable to march, to participate in this very important day of Resistance. Let's think about how each of us can contribute and support our marchers: make signs, learn songs, coordinate carpools,

make bag lunches, provide daycare, have a Service of Resistance with song and vigil on March 28 and flood social media with pictures. Let's think creatively how we might join together in solidarity in order for everyone to be able to participate on March 28 to preserve our democratic freedoms!

On March 8 at the monthly Social Justice Council Meeting, an in-person potluck at 5:30 in the Fireside Room we will begin by making joyful signs and learning and singing songs inherited from freedom struggles throughout history as well as new songs coming out of the resistance to ICE in Minneapolis and beyond.

Look for **Paper Dolls** in the atrium to color and design as part of a **Free Families** action from the ACLU and other organizations. **ICE has resumed the cruel practice of family detention. Under this revived policy, ICE places children—including infants and toddlers—in detention in appalling conditions alongside their parent, where families wait to see if ICE will remove them from the U.S. or if they will be granted protection and be allowed to remain in the country.** Bring your family including children to cut out and color paper dolls. We will send our collection of paper dolls to our state and local officials and members of congress and the ACLU, after using them in artful ways for our No Kings actions.

The Good Neighbor Recipient for March is Project Second Chance which provides free, confidential instruction in reading, writing and spelling to English-speaking adults with literacy skills below a 6th grade level. PSC recruits, trains and supports volunteer tutors, who work one-on-one with learners to help them achieve their individual literacy-related

goals and empower them in their work and personal lives.

Climate Justice Committee

In the midst of the deeply disturbing upheaval in our country, the CJC continues to work towards a healthy environment for all, particularly for those living with injustice and poverty. This year we are collaborating with Richmond's Tiny Village Spirit for unhoused youth by purchasing trees and shrubs to make the site ready for the residents. We are also exploring ways we can help with air quality issues at the Village.

We are planning an event for April in celebration of **Earth Day**, determining the details and we hope to have engaging presentations relevant to justice and preservation of all life. We would really appreciate help to make this event happen, so please contact me if you're interested! Watch for further details!

Community member Joanna Pace will make a brief presentation at our next meeting about organizing folks to maintain the **#7 AC Transit bus route** that runs along the Arlington. (The closest public transportation to UUCB.) Please let me know if you ride the #7 bus and want to help.

Many climate groups are concerned that the **Bay Area Air District** will respond to fossil fuel industry pressure to roll back strong air quality standards for indoor appliances (a primary source of air pollution) adopted in 2023. We need these standards to protect public health— reduce premature deaths, asthma attacks, respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. Many groups are contacting the Air District advocating they maintain-strong standards. Please consider signing the Sierra

Club letter: Reduce Pollution via Strong Local Standards

Join us if you want to help create a socially just, environmentally sustainable world with other caring and dedicated UUCB members. We meet on Zoom the 4th Monday of the month from 5-6:30pm.

Sheila F. Tarbet

The Bridging for Democracy Project held a great first meeting on February 8 --- and has scheduled another for **9:30 a.m. March 8, in the Fireside Room.**

Twelve of us engaged in deep conversations about the need for “bridging” in many settings. We agreed that we all need to train ourselves to “bridge” with those who disagree with us without losing our cool – to make real human contact across major political and world view differences, *without* trying to convince others of our opinions. This isn’t about arguing, it’s about connecting at a deep human level.

Homework for March meeting:

1. Watch a movie: The Best of Enemies on Netflix
2. Listen to a podcast from Braver Angels on abortion.
3. Watch one or more of the episodes on The Enemies Project.
4. Dave mentioned one between a MAGA woman and a trans woman, here.

Cal's Othering and Belonging Institute is supporting our conversations, which we plan to continue with members of a more conservative local church. All are invited to join our March gathering.

Good Neighbor

Project Second Chance

[Cclib.org/psc](https://cclib.org/psc)

Provides free, confidential instruction in reading, writing and spelling to English-speaking adults with literacy skills below a 6th grade level. PSC recruits, trains and supports volunteer tutors, who work one-on-one with learners to help them achieve their individual literacy-related goals and empower them in their work and personal lives.

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.

NEWSLETTER ITEM SUBMISSIONS: Submit announcements and articles by email to beacon@uucb.org. Due to limited space, we do not publish announcements for events occurring outside the church community. **The deadline for submissions** is the 15th of the month. **Questions?** Please email beacon@uucb.org. (Beacon is compiled and edited by Charis Domador.)

WEBSITE: uucb.org

PHONE: 510-525-0302

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS:

To subscribe to the email version of this newsletter or "The Week Ahead at UUCB," email connections@uucb.org. You can also find both newsletters at the website under "News."

UUCB general discussion list:

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

Email list for families: Email kathryn@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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Lisa Maynard, Treasurer
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