

# Beacon on the Hill August 2016

The monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley.

## From Our Board President

### Deborah Schmidt

Hip Hip Hooray and Hallelujah! We are thrilled to welcome our new co-ministers, Reverends Kristin and Christian Schmidt! This is the culmination of two years of dedicated preparation on the part of our leaders, the entire congregation, and, of course, our interim minister, Rev. Greg Ward.



As respected search team chair Kay Fairwell pointed out when she addressed our special congregational meeting, one quality we sought in our new minister(s) was a collaborative leadership style. In answer to almost every question addressed to them during candidating week, the Schmidts demonstrated their commitment to this way of doing church. We are entering the shared ministry we hoped for.

Throughout our first year, there are several support mechanisms in play to ensure that we, both congregation and ministers, transition healthfully into our new work together.

The first will be the Start-Up Workshop offered by our Pacific Western Region congregational life staff. Tailored to UUCB, with elements both for leaders and for anyone in the congregation who wishes to participate, it will provide guidance in: “examining the myths and values at work in the congregation, recognizing the stories that are still influencing the congregation, clarifying roles and expectations, and setting some initial goals.” We will let you know more details as soon as this is scheduled.

We will of course be putting in place a Committee on Ministry, the primary

function of which is, to quote the UUA website, “to do all that is necessary to elevate the effectiveness of the congregation’s ministry in fulfillment of its mission and to do so from the standpoint of this ministry’s holistic nature and synergistic possibilities.”

Our minister’s letter of call ensures that “within the first year of ministry, the Minister, Board of Trustees, Coordinating Team, and Committee on Ministry, with the assistance of an outside facilitator, will engage in a retreat for the purpose of arriving at specific understandings about the sharing of authority and responsibility, goals for the coming year, and a plan for periodic review and renewal of the ministry of the congregation.”

Preliminary goals that we have identified include: continued nurturing of trust; building on the organizational foundation established during the interim ministry, especially regarding clarification of roles and support of the Program Council; continued updating and enhancing of policies; and reducing demands on ministers and staff, which requires continued development of lay leadership.

We have called two ministers, but they will share one job. It is work that can all too easily become infinite, so we must help Revs. Kristin and Christian balance life and work. In doing so, we will contribute in an essential way to the health of this church, because the solution lies in shared ownership of our mission. Rev. Greg estimated that in the past two years we increased lay leadership by 20%. People that are engaged feel connected; connection is a force for change; and others will want to be a part of this united energy. We are on a bright and promising path; let’s stay on it!

## **Sunday Worship in August**

Worship at 11 am only

Theme for Month: **Travelers**

August 7: **The Everyday Journey**, Zackrie Vinczen with Mary Muehlbach. At times, life can seem like a mundane version of a “choose your own adventure” novel where the choices lie between paying the bills, washing the dishes, or some other tedious chore, but that doesn’t have to be the case. We just need to learn to recognize the opportunities for adventure and excitement that surround us and learn to engage our daily journey in a new way.

August 14: **The Horse That Almost Got Away, or Following Your Dreams**, Jeanne Foster with Jim Gasperini. Young or old or in between, we all have dreams, big or little. And we all have the experience of giving up our dreams—for reasons: it’s not practical, there isn’t time, I have work to do, it would be selfish, I don’t have the courage. On this Sunday of travel, we stand up for the world of dreams and for pulling dreams through into reality as a source of creativity, aliveness, and self-actualization.

August 21: **Spiritual Geographies**, Kathryn Jay with David Roberts. If we were each to make a map of our beliefs—to chart the geography of our souls—what might the “spirit of life” look like? We sing about it and use the phrase in prayers almost every week, but how do we represent it? Where would we find it on our own spiritual maps? Making sense of the complicated meaning of “spirit,” whether cheerleading, a drink, or something approaching the holy, matters, regardless of your theological perspective. In the context of Unitarian Universalism, what does it mean to be spiritual?

August 28: **Radical Hospitality: The Art of Invitation and Welcoming**, Carol Carlisle with Mary Muehlbach. We will explore how we welcome new people on many fronts at UUCB and how radical hospitality can be a spiritual practice for all of us as the church enters a new era.

## **Summer Forum in August**

A speaker series focused on social justice, Sunday mornings at 10 am in the Fireside Room.

August 7: **Dr. Stanley Klein**, UC Professor of Vision Science, UUCB member, and active member of the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science (IRAS), “**Science and Religion**”

August 14: **Lonnie Moseley and Cordell Sloan**, UUCB members, “**Growing Up Black in America**”

August 21: **Earle Canfield**, volunteer Executive Director of ANSWER Nepal, “**Nepal: The Earthquake, the Schools and the Children**”

August 28: **Dr. Stephen Zunes**, Professor of Politics and International Studies at the University of San Francisco, “**The Middle East Today**”

## **Family Ministry**

### **Merrin Clough**

**Coming of Age:** Here at the UU Church of Berkeley we offer a wonderful rite of passage opportunity for teenagers in 8th through 10th grades. At this age, youth are in one of the most formative and pivotal times of their lives. As UUs we believe that each and every one of us has a piece of the truth. The Coming of Age program helps teens explore and articulate the beliefs they hold most dear as they begin to intentionally craft the kind of person they want to be.

This program is intentional and intensive. September through May the youth will participate in weekly workshops designed to guide them on a journey of spiritual self-awareness. They will participate in three regional retreats with other UU youth. They will write personal credo statements and share these with their friends, family, and the congregation during a worship service. All along the way, they will be supported by mentors who are trusted adults in our congregation. These mentors will help the youth explore our wider church community and find their place in it.

If you and your child are interested in participating in this program please complete [this survey](#). The information you provide will help us plan this year's program.

If you are a long-time UU and interested in being a Mentor contact [Merrin Clough](#).

**Fall Start Up:** This year our Family Ministry activities will start up in phases over the next two months. Here's a quick rundown of key dates to put on your calendar:

On **August 21** the youth groups will resume meeting. The elementary kids will continue to meet in multi-age groups until mid-September. The children will get to choose between the Miracles Group that explores science and a sense of awe, or music making workshops with the Youth and Children's Choir.

On **August 28** families of 8th-10th graders are invited to the Coming of Age Orientation at 12:30 pm. [RSVP here](#).

**September 11** is the Solano Stroll. All families are encouraged to attend and participate in UUCB's outreach efforts.

On **September 18** there will be an All Ages worship service with our new ministers! After service is the Volunteer Training for all teachers, advisors and mentors – [rsvp for the training here](#).

On **September 25** children's religious education classes will resume. Our age groupings this year are toddler time, K-grade 1, grades 2 and 3, and grades 4 and 5. After service there will be a Family Open House for all children and both youth groups.

**Loving Hearts, Helping Hands:** As the program start approaches we've got some strong teams of volunteers: the Family Ministry Committee and Youth Adult Team, toddler and early elementary teachers, high school youth

group advisors, and welcome table greeters. We are looking for a few more folks to join the grades 4 and 5 teaching team, middle school advisors, Coming of Age mentors, and volunteer support team. Consider joining us in this fun and inspiring work with our children and youth. [Click here](#) to learn more, or email Merrin Clough, [merrin@uucb.org](mailto:merrin@uucb.org).

## Work Party August 20

Spend a Saturday morning at UUCB sprucing up the place for our new ministers and new church year! Sign up on the board in the Atrium, or RSVP to [Lynne Cahoon](#) if you'll be there for breakfast, or just show up. Please mark your calendar if you're available August 20, 8:30 am to noon. Projects to choose from will include polishing brass door hardware, weeding, inventorying dishes, and cleaning kitchen surfaces. Nothing too strenuous, and you'll be working in good company!

## Reminder of Fall Schedule

Starting September 18, **Sunday services will begin at 9:30 and 11:15.** The early service will be an intimate gathering on the chancel (stage) of the sanctuary until attendance grows to the point of preventing that. **Personal Theology will start at 9:30, beginning September 4.** Choir practice will start by 10:40. Between Personal Theology and the 11:15 service, you can enjoy coffee and snacks, visiting with old and new friends (be sure to greet people holding purple mugs!), and peruse the information and sale tables in the Social Hall.

The midweek suppers and vespers services will return to **Thursday evenings** beginning about the middle of September, so please plan your calendar accordingly.

These decisions were made by the Coordinating Team after much deliberation including input from the Transition Team, Program Council, Music Committee and staff.

# Help Our New Ministers Learn Names and Faces

## Michael DeWitt for the Fellowship One Team

Follow links on the [uucb.org](http://uucb.org) home page to create or update your profile in the online Church Directory (which will be password-protected). If you need help, volunteers will be available on Sundays starting September 18. You will also be able to have a new photo taken. If you have questions, contact Alisa at (510) 525-0302 x306, [administrator@uucb.org](mailto:administrator@uucb.org).

## Help UUCB While You Shop

### Ann Harlow

There have been some changes to the eScrip and SHARES programs (in which, for shoppers who are registered, a designated school or organization like UUCB automatically receives a percentage donation). Safeway has dropped out of eScrip, and the SHARES program (Lucky, SaveMart and FoodMaxx) has merged with eScrip, so you don't need to carry a SHARES card any more. You can just register your phone number on the eScrip.com website. For Piedmont Grocery and Diablo Foods you register a credit or debit card.

Most importantly these days, you can get money sent to UUCB through your **online shopping** (including for travel) if you do it right. On eScrip, there's an "online shopping mall" ([shopping.escrip.com/](http://shopping.escrip.com/)), and if you download and install the "ForgetMeNot" app you'll be reminded, when you go to other online retail sites, to click if you want a percentage to go to UUCB. Be sure to download the right version of ForgetMeNot for your browser.

We recently suggested shopping on Amazon through Amazon Smile ([smile.amazon.com/](http://smile.amazon.com/)), but that only yields a 0.5% donation to UUCB. If you shop on Amazon through the eScrip mall, they say UUCB gets 1.2%. (Amazon

does not participate in the ForgetMeNot program, nor do Target, Macy's, and a few others.) It's a challenge to remember not to go to amazon.com directly, but the church will benefit considerably if those of us who use Amazon change our habits. There's a "Shop Amazon" button right at the top of shopping.escrip.com.

If you shop locally at Pharmaca, please go to escrip.com and register your Pharmaca card (you can get one at the store if you don't already have one, and it will earn you 3% rebates on all non-pharmacy purchases).

## **Become a Chalice Circle Facilitator**

### **Lenore Ralston**

Please support our 2016-2017 Chalice Circles by becoming a facilitator. We welcome returning facilitators as well as first-time facilitators. Contact [Lenore Ralston](#) (510-685-5050). Markate Daly and Joanne Wile are also supporting the Chalice Program this year. Lenore is planning on coming to church early (9:30 in the Social Hall) on both August 7 and August 14 for a Q&A. Participant sign-up will begin on September 4.

## **Coordinating Team Report**

### **Lisa Maynard, Convener**

During July, Coordinating Team members Joanne Wile and Lisa Maynard continued to work on operating policy updates, while Mary Ellen Morgan worked on a variety of church business in her roles as Director of Administration and Acting Chief of Staff.

We launched into the church's new fiscal year without great fanfare, in excited anticipation instead of the visit from our ministerial candidates. The



CT met with both candidates on July 6, and looks forward to working with Revs. Kristin and Christian Schmidt when they begin their co-ministry in just one more month!

*The Coordinating Team meets twice monthly, usually on the first and third Wednesdays from 3 to 5 pm. Our summer schedule will vary, so if you're interested in attending, please contact me ([lbmaynard3@me.com](mailto:lbmaynard3@me.com)) to verify our schedule and meeting place. Questions for the CT? Email [CT@uucb.org](mailto:CT@uucb.org).*

## **Program Council Report**

### **Joanne Wile, Convener**

The Program Council held a potluck dinner during candidating week with the potential new ministers. We discussed the role of the Program Council in decision-making, representation of the various groups in the church, and ideas about the two Sunday services. Mary Muehlbach and Carol Carlisle are joining the Council as co-representatives for the Worship program area. A task force will be meeting with Mary Ellen Morgan to explore audiovisual improvements in the church.

The Program Council will have a retreat on August 13 and will hold its next regular meeting on September 7 at 7:15 pm. Members are welcome to observe Program Council meetings. A report of the decisions made by the council in 2015-16 can be downloaded [here](#) from the Church Documents page of the UUCB website.

## **Social Justice**

**Social Justice Council Meeting** – The normally scheduled monthly potluck and meeting for July was cancelled due to the unavailability of key council members and the importance of focusing on the calling of our new ministers over that weekend. The potluck meetings will resume on **August**

14, at 6 pm in the Fireside Room.

**Literature, Film & Drama Contingent (LFDC) of the Confronting Racism Project** – On July 10, 2016, LFDC held a special meeting to discuss and provide support in the face of the horrible events of the previous week in St. Paul, Baton Rouge, and Dallas. Reverend Craig Scott provided the following opening words from Martin Luther King, Jr.:

And I say to you, I have always decided to stick to love. For I know that love is ultimately the only answer to mankind's problems. And I'm going to talk about it wherever I go. I know it isn't popular to talk about it in some circles today. I'm not talking about emotional bosh when I talk about love. I'm talking about a strong, demanding love, and I have seen too much hate. I've seen too much hate on the faces of the sheriffs of the South. I've seen hate on the faces of too many Klansmen and too many White Citizens' Councilors in the South to want to hate myself, because every time I see it, I know that it does something to their faces and their personalities, and I say to myself that hate is too great a burden to bear. I have decided to love. If you are seeking the highest good, I think you can find it through love. And the beautiful thing is that we are moving against wrong when we do it, because [1st Epistle of] John was right. God is love. He who hates does not know God, but he who has love has the key that unlocks the door to the meaning of ultimate reality.

*From an August 16, 1967, speech by Martin Luther King, his last as president of the SCLC.*

The LFDC will meet next on August 7 to share thoughts on *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd as well as share “One thing you don't know about me.”

**Social Justice Chalice Circle Summer Pilot** – The group commenced on July 17 and continues for 4 sessions. See Linda Laskowski for more information.

## **Other Social Justice Opportunities and Information**

**Ceasefire Walks:** Friday nights in Richmond at 7 pm.

Contact [maw.jane@gmail.com](mailto:maw.jane@gmail.com).

**GRIP:** UUCB volunteers prepare and serve lunch to hungry and homeless people at the GRIP Souper Center in Richmond on the fourth Tuesday of every month. Want to volunteer? Contact [raywest2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:raywest2@sbcglobal.net).

**Read-Aloud:** Volunteers are needed to read aloud at local elementary schools in Richmond and San Pablo. Contact Judy Sam at [jssam47@yahoo.com](mailto:jssam47@yahoo.com).

**Good Neighbor:** July's recipient was Bay Area Community Land Trust, the only non-profit in the East Bay developing housing cooperatives and providing home ownership for low-income and moderate-income households.

August's recipient will be UUCB's partner church, the Unitarian Church in Homorodujfalu, Romania. Our financial support over 25 years has enabled 10–21 students each year to take advantage of further educational opportunities that they otherwise could not afford. Although the economic situation in rural Romania has improved somewhat, families are struggling. The village is ethnically Hungarian and almost all Unitarian, and thus subject to discrimination and reduced economic opportunity in Romania.

Visit the **Social Justice table** on Sundays. If you want to be added to the **Social Justice email list**, contact [maw.jane@gmail.com](mailto:maw.jane@gmail.com).

## **Community Ministry**

**Rev. Jane Ramsey**

## Hospice Chaplain II

Gaunt is the only way to describe him.

sunken cheeks,

sunken eyes,

emaciated body.

He sits upright in his bed,

glasses on,

a word search book in his hands.

“I’ve had this cough forever

....it doesn’t mean anything

I’ve been sick like this before

.....and I always get over it

All I need is some physical therapy to strengthen my muscles.

God?

Oh yes, I talk to him all the time

What do I pray for?

To get well, of course...”

So I pray for a cure

not believing it will happen.....

searching my soul for a shred of faith in the kind of miracle he is asking for

so that I may not speak in an in-authentic way....

But this is not about me.....

and I move on....