



Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley

April 2021 – Vol. 80, Issue 4

Contents

[Journeying Together](#)

[Worship Services](#)

[Special Events and Announcements](#)

[Stewardship Campaign: Still Time to Pledge](#)

[Humanist Connections](#)

[Personal Theology](#)

[Re-Opening Task Force](#)

[Family Ministry](#)

[From the Board of Trustees](#)

[Partner Church Committee](#)

[Social Justice](#)

[From the Executive Director](#)

[Music Matters](#)

Journeying Together

Dr. Rev. Michelle Collins

Theme for April: Becoming

Becoming is an interesting theme, on so many levels. On a personal level we might think about personal life journeys and spiritual journeys and personal transformation. That's something that we do talk about regularly as Unitarian Universalists, affirming and encouraging and supporting the personal spiritual journeys and exploration that we may each be doing. It's something that I love about Unitarian Universalism, not only that we are encouraged to find our own truths and seek out our own paths, but also that we are encouraged to (prodded to) keep exploring and keep journeying and keep asking questions. That's how this relates to becoming. It's not just being satisfied with what we've become, whatever that may be, but to keep up the journeys and movement, continually becoming yet again.

Thinking about becoming collectively is a good perspective for us now too. We've passed a year of this global journey of the pandemic and have spent a lot of time doing things that we've never done before or doing things in ways that we haven't considered before. I don't think a single one of us a year ago could describe what our world and our church would look like in this moment. We've been through a ton of becoming, and I expect that I can join just about everyone in wanting a break from it all and for things to get "back to normal." Well, that's the thing about becoming and transformation. Yesterday is yesterday, and we are already in a new reality. The questions that face us now are not how can we go back to the way things were before, but rather what is it that we are called to become? What is it that we are called to become and called to pour our energy into as Unitarian Universalists? What is it that we are called to become as human beings on this changing planet with its fragile ecosystems and often tumultuous climate? What is it that we are called to become as UUCB, and not from where we were a year ago or five years ago, but what is it that we are called to become from who we are and where we are today? Let's be creative about how we are thinking about these questions and how we are doing church together, each and every week, as we craft our way forward into the ever unknown future. That is truly the work of becoming!

Blessings,
Rev. Michelle

Worship Services in April

Sundays at 11am on [Facebook Live](#) and [YouTube Live](#)

Theme for April: Becoming

How It Begins & How It Ends... and What That Means For Us Now

"Where do we come from... Who are we... Where are we going?" Throughout history, human discourse has been filled with some of these BIG questions. Where did the universe come from and how did it get here? How did our earth form? Then, the other side of these questions. What will the future of life look like here on our earth? What's going to happen to the universe? There are many theories about the future, and often many about the past as well. Whether we are gazing into the depths of space or around at life around us, there is something about the gazing and the questioning that is deeply human.

Wondering about these big questions is one of the ways that we explore our meaning and the meaning of our lives. What are we really here for? What is our purpose? And wondering about the future is something that humans have done through pretty much all of our history. While we don't have working magical crystal balls, we do have clues and scientific theories that help to guide our way. With our

world changing rapidly in so many ways, it's natural to take to questions big and small for clues about what may be ahead.

Join Rev. Michelle and UUCB's worship associates for a frolicking journey through some really big questions. We'll also have a guest appearance of our own Rev. Sue Magidson.

The Sundays of the series:

March 28 – How It Begins & How It Ends... Cosmically. Rev. Michelle Collins, preaching. Deborah Schmidt, Worship Associate.

April 4 – How It Begins & How It Ends... The Church & Religion (Easter). Rev. Michelle Collins, preaching. Andrea Brown, Worship Associate.

April 11 – How It Begins & How It Ends... Swimming through the Mystery. Rev. Sue Magidson, preaching. Lee Maranto, Worship Associate.

April 18 – How It Begins & How It Ends... Our Precious Planet (Earth Day). Rev. Michelle Collins, preaching. Sarah Ward, Worship Associate.

April 25 – What It Means For Us Now. Rev. Michelle Collins, preaching. Bob Adams, Worship Associate.

Virtual Coffee Hour immediately following worship on Sundays

After worship we invite you to switch over to Zoom for a time to connect “face to face.” The link to Virtual Coffee Hour is listed below, but we will also share it in the comments on the Facebook Live feed during worship.

Click [here](#) to join us:

Meeting ID: 332 046 821

Password: 810131

or

Dial

669 900 6833

Vespers in April

Wednesdays 6:00pm Social Time, 6:20 pm Start Time

Zoom

Join us for our mid-week online vespers services. The 30-minute Wednesday evening service will provide a time for us to gather together to experience moments of reflection, prayer and song, grounded in our UU faith. **The April 21 vespers**

service will be offered by Worship Associates Cynthia Asprodites & Karen Elliott.

Click [this link](#) to join us
Meeting ID: 830 5378 2422
Passcode: chalice

Good Neighbor for April:

[Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program \(BORP\)](#). BORP works to improve the health, independence and social integration of people with physical disabilities through sports, fitness, and recreation programs. BORP believes that sports and recreation provide a path to greater achievement to which all people should have access, and continually strives to make this a reality.

Special Events and Announcements

- **April 4 – Virtual Easter Egg Hunt.** Easter Bunny Headquarters has worked its magic again to organize a virtual Easter Egg Hunt this year! Our website is a virtual gathering place to look for clues and find the eggs the Easter Bunny uploaded. Now hop to it – those eggs won't find themselves!
- **April 4 –** join the Literature, Film & Drama Contingent for a discussion of *It's Time To Talk (and Listen)* -- How to have constructive conversations about race, class, sexuality, ability & gender in a polarized world -- by Anastasia Kim and Alicia del Prado, with Joanne Wile at 12:30. **LINK:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84257017624>
- **From the Bylaws Revision Task Force**
We need to make some updates to our church bylaws to allow for remote participation in Board meetings, email rather than U.S. mail notifications of congregational meetings, and the like. While we are at it, we hope to do some cleanup of style inconsistencies. To see a draft of the revised bylaws and contribute your thoughts, [email me](#). A semifinal version and a congregational forum to discuss the proposed changes (April 25, 12:30 pm on Zoom) will be announced in The Week Ahead. ~Ann Harlow.
- **The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has launched an Emergency Broadband Benefit Program** to help households struggling to pay for internet service during the pandemic. This new benefit will connect eligible households to jobs, critical healthcare services, and virtual classrooms. [Find out more here.](#)

- **We want to express our deep gratitude for the amazing Katya Kolesnikova**, our principal organist, for stepping in and stepping up in coordinating Sunday service music while Bryan Baker has been on sabbatical. Thank you for the beautiful music and composers you introduced to us during Black History Month, for the meaningful approach you took to selecting our music these past three months, and for being a delightful ray of sun.
 - **Bill Brown is April's Listening Presence** and asks to be reached by phone or text @ 1-831-261-1522. Please let us hear from you.
-

Stewardship Campaign: Still Time to Pledge

Care – Compassion – Community
Supporting and Sustaining UUCB



Thank you for your care and contribution. As Rev. Michele noted a few Sundays back, our commitment to UU principles, our vision and mission and our covenant come to life when we act on those commitments. With your pledge, you act to support and sustain those commitments and the spiritual community which inspires us to live out those commitments.

If your value contribution has not yet been shared, there is still time. For the next several weeks, we will be following up with members about their financial support for the next fiscal year. By the end of April, we need to give the Board of Trustees a final pledge amount for next year's budget. Every pledge is critical to knowing just how much they can budget for staff, programs, and facilities.

Pledges can be made by submitting a pledge form available from the church office or electronically. The quickest and most efficient way to pledge is to go the UUCB website, www.uucb.org, and scroll down the home page to the 2021-2022 Pledge Campaign to get a pledge form.

Lastly, the Stewardship Committee wants your feedback on this year's virtual campaign. Tell us what you thought worked well and what needs improvement.

Stewardship Committee: Michael Armstrong and Patrick Cullinane, Co-Chairs, Lynne Cahoon, Don Klose, Lenore Ralston, Deborah Schmidt, Helen Toy, Grace Ulp, and David Roberts, Board Liaison. Committee members welcome your thoughts at stewardship@uucb.org.

Humanist Connections

Sundays, 1:00 pm, Zoom

A discussion group to explore our humanity, values, ideas. *"A free and responsible search for truth and meaning."* (Fourth principle of Unitarian Universalism.)

April 4 – Organizing for economic/political goals. Don Anderson.

April 11 – Topic Selection and Short Topic Discussion with Lee Lawrence.

April 18 – Are Humanists Winning the Reality Wars? Paul Ulbrich.

April 25 – Digital Art and NFT's. Gail Morrison and Marcia Bates.

For additional information and to receive Zoom link at start of meeting contact Marcia Bates, mjbates@ucla.edu. Group managers: Susan Singh, Ray Westergard, Al Kueffner, Lee Lawrence, Kris Homme, Anne Fitzmaurice.

Personal Theology

Sundays 9:20-10:45am, Zoom

The theme for UUCB for April is 'Becoming'. There are two speakers this month and we hope you will be able to attend. The year will wind up with another 2 speakers in May then will switch to the Summer Forum series starting in June. Dorothy Herzberg will be organizing the Summer Forums. If you have any ideas for speakers with a social justice focus that might be appropriate for a Sunday morning this summer, please let Dorothy know. Any comments or suggestions may also be sent to adulted@uucb.org

April 11 – "How to Get Through Covid"

This is a presentation of spiritual practices, techniques, and activities to enable people to thrive during this difficult time rather than really suffer.

For over 25 years, Hana Matt has been teaching World Religions and Spirituality at many graduate schools including Graduate Theological Union, Interfaith Chaplaincy Institute and Holy Names College. She has lectured on various spiritual traditions throughout CA, Washington DC, Connecticut and the Bahamas. Ms. Matt is also an Interfaith Spiritual Director and Counselor working privately with clients of all religions. Ms. Matt has been a favorite speaker at Personal Theology for many years, and we are happy to have her with us once again.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9137136420>

April 25 – The Rudderless Boat—Images that Guide Us

Sue Ellen Parkinson

This talk and slide show will be about the artist, Sue Ellen Parkinson's experience as she's followed the legends surrounding some of the most profound mystics.

Through painting these iconic figures, and using the Benedictine practice of *viseo divina*, she has gone on both inner, and outer pilgrimages. She'll focus primarily on Mary Magdalene, but will also include Eve, Saint Hildegard Von Bingen, Saint Clare and Saint Francis of Assisi, The Black Madonna and more! Much to her own surprise, she's fallen in love with these Christian mystics, and is happy to report, "I feel loved right back." She says that each image she's painted has been like a stepping stone towards her own liberation. Join her on this creative journey!

Sue Ellen Parkinson is a visionary artist who explores the Sacred Feminine through her paintings. Coming from outside the Christian tradition, her work has led her on an unexpected journey that has profoundly changed her life. Her dream-like paintings are interesting from both a spiritual and cultural perspective. Within them, she weaves elements of her own life into the inspiring stories about the Christian mystics. She believes that creativity can be an essential component in transformation. Read more on her website: www.sueellenparkinson.com

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9137136420>

Opening Task Force

When will it be safe and healthy for us to gather in person? As more of us are vaccinated, the Task Force is having discussions about the timing for implementation of our reopening phases. We want to regather as soon as possible but recognize the importance of following public health advice. The importance of careful consideration is highlighted as Italy has again moved to lockdown with a 10% increase in cases.

The Task Force discussions are guided by the planning principles we adopted to guide our work.

1. The common good and the health and welfare of our congregants is foremost in our deliberations.
2. We commit to listen deeply to congregants.
3. Draft reopening plans will be shared for review and comment with key UUCB entities, e.g., Program Council, Coordinating Team, Buildings and Grounds, Family Ministry, Music, Social Justice, Pastoral Care.
4. Reopening will be consistent with congregational risk levels and tolerance and based on science-based health indicators set by the county, state and WHO.

5. The congregation will be kept informed of reopening efforts and have the opportunity to share concerns and suggestions.

In a public organization like the church, we will likely not know who has and who has not been vaccinated. As we do not know the health risks and vulnerabilities of our fellow members, mixing the two groups without appropriate public health protocols could place the unvaccinated members at risk of serious illness.

As we move to the vast majority of the congregation being vaccinated, the Task Force does anticipate a celebratory outdoor service event, currently June is being discussed. Before then, the Task Force will be having a Town Hall Zoom meeting with representatives of church small groups to discuss the protocol responsibilities for small group gatherings and how we will manage those protocols.

Until then, the Task Force will be closely monitoring local public health advice, and the latest advice from the CDC. Here's the latest advice from the CED [When You've Been Fully Vaccinated | CDC](#).

What Hasn't Changed

For now, if you've been fully vaccinated, you should still take steps to protect yourself and others in many situations, like wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet apart from others, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces. Take these precautions whenever you are:

- In public
- Gathering with unvaccinated people from more than one other household
- Visiting with an unvaccinated person who is at [increased risk of severe illness or death from COVID-19](#) or who lives with a person at increased risk
- You should still avoid medium or large-sized gatherings.

What We Know and What We're Still Learning

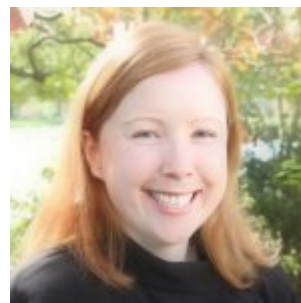
- **We know** that COVID-19 vaccines are effective at preventing COVID-19 disease, especially severe illness and death. **We're still learning** how effective the vaccines are against variants of the virus that causes COVID-19. Early data show the vaccines may work against some variants but could be less effective against others.
- **We know** that other [prevention steps](#) help stop the spread of COVID-19, and that these steps are still important, even as vaccines are being distributed.
- **We're still learning** how long COVID-19 vaccines can protect people.

We hope all will receive their vaccine soon. Thank you for your support and for your opinions. At any time, feel free to contact the Opening Task Force at planning@uucb.org.

OTF (Opening Task Force) Members: Patrick Cullinane (Chair), Sheldon Jones, Greg Lemieux, Lisa Maynard, Rev. Catherine Boyle, Tess O'Riva, ED, and Rev. Michelle Collins.

Family Ministry

Rev. Catherine Boyle,
Director of Family Ministry



“The sun just touched the morning;
The morning, happy thing,
Supposed that he had come to dwell,
And life would be all spring.”
— Emily Dickinson

Happy Spring UUCB!

And do you know what that means?

The bunnies are coming!

Almost a year ago (give or take a couple weeks thanks to the Catholic liturgical calendar), we hosted Easter online for our kids and youth. With COVID restrictions, we will once again be hosting this event on April 4. Please check the Week Ahead and FM Newsletter the week of for official links. The event will include an online Easter Egg Hunt with prizes for the winners. We will also be sending out a very special Easter surprise in the mail or on your doorstep, so look out for buns on the run.

Spring is also the time for the celebration of our Mother Earth and recommitment to our dedication to her by fighting for the environment and all of the planet's species. In April we will explore these themes in worship, RE and beyond. If you are looking for ways to honor Gaia this month, here are some suggestions you can do right now:

1. Switch your search engine - Google is a verb now but what if we “Ecosia’ed” it instead. [Ecosia](https://www.ecosia.com/) is a search engine that plants trees every time you use it. Now that’s a breath of fresh air.
2. Look for sustainable labels if you eat fish. [FishWatch.gov](https://www.fishwatch.gov/) provides this information for making smart choices.

3. Turn off your computer at night. This saves 40 watts of electricity.
4. Implement Earth Hour anytime and turn off and unplug all your electronic devices for an hour. Earth Hour already passed this year on March 27th but the mission continues on.
5. When purchasing new personal grooming products like brushes, opt for the wooden ones over plastic.

I hope this season blossoms for you, beloved ones.

In faith,

Rev. Catherine Boyle

From the Board of Trustees

Helen Tinsley-Jones

Vice President, UUCB Board of Trustees



Sometime in mid-February, I received a surprise phone call from a congregational member. “Hi, this is Ingeborg. Have you ever heard of Frederick Tillis?” As a member of the Board, I previously had had a couple of very warm phone conversations with Ingeborg. I answered “No,” realizing that either my music education or memory had likely failed me. “He was a famous African American musician, wonderful,” Ingeborg continued. As we spoke, I was already doing an internet search. “Yes...I see, a prolific composer, amazing, important. I had no idea. Is it ok, Ingeborg, if I share this information with the congregation? And let everyone know that it came from you?” “That’s ok, but not necessary,” she answered kindly. We went on to talk of other things.

During that phone call, I decided that I would indeed send out Ingeborg’s information about Dr. Tillis to our congregation. For a couple of reasons. First, it was Black History Month when attention on all aspects of African American past and present culture is highlighted. (I know, it’s now April as you read this, but Black history is important year round.) Secondly, I wanted to appreciate a member’s taking the time to reach out with information she felt was important to know. So Ingeborg’s tip has found its way into this month’s Beacon.

Dr. Frederick Tillis was an extraordinarily gifted and influential musician, composer and poet. Born in Texas in 1930, he was playing trumpet and saxophone in jazz nightclubs by age 12. He earned his doctoral degree at the University of Iowa and

taught at a succession of HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities), including Wiley College, Grambling College (now University), and Kentucky State University, eventually being recruited to join the faculty at UMass Amherst, where he taught until his retirement in 1997.

Working in the African-American spiritual tradition and blending European classical with jazz, Dr. Tillis is known for more than 100 compositions, including works for piano and voice, orchestra and chorus, along with chamber music. He also created a large choral work, Freedom, in response to the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. Tillis died in May, 2020. For more interesting facts and to hear some of his work, please check out this [link](#).

There is a third reason that I'm recounting all of this to you, and that is to encourage our members to be in touch with the Board. Your input and ideas—questions, concerns, comments, critical feedback and, yes, the sharing of information—are essential to the renewal and flourishing of our Beloved Community. Every month, a member of the Board of Trustees is available as a Listening Presence. Bill Brown is April's Listening Presence and asks to be reached by phone or text @ 1-831-261-1522. Please let us hear from you.

All voices are precious in this UUCB community.

*Like a cherry tree living on earth
my fruits come in colors of the rainbow
with roots nurtured in the fertile soil
among hill, mountains, and meadows.*

Tree of Life, from "Breaking Dawn and Healing"

Dr. Frederick C. Tillis

in love and appreciation,

Helen Tinsley-Jones,

Vice President, UUCB Board of Trustees

Partner Church Committee

Stephanie Ann Blythe

By way of the Balázs Scholar Program (thank you, Anne) comes word of a fundraising effort to provide laptops to vulnerable Transylvanian girls. The International Women's Convocation has teamed up with the Unitarian Providence Charity Organization (Gondviselés Segélyszervezet) to provide electronic devices (laptops) for girls who are disadvantaged or living with disabilities – from both rural and urban areas – so they will be able to attend school remotely. Vulnerable girls cannot afford interruption in their education. Disruption to learning only exacerbates existing inequalities, leaving girls even more vulnerable to abuse, early pregnancy, and poverty. With your help, we can provide access to education for girls who may not otherwise have the chance in a COVID-19 world – and ensure that they have the choice to write their own futures.



Rev. Attila Vagyas from the Providence Organization writes, “Even though Romania is part of the European Union and thus beneficiary of EU’s social development programs, many are left behind. Our organization reaches many isolated rural communities, where we have gotten to know vulnerable girls full of potential. In these troubled times, when remote learning is the new normal, access to a digital device has become a matter of access to basic education – and an opportunity to make the most of one’s life. With your help, we can give some of these girls a hope for the future.”

The details can be found at the UUA’s crowdfunding website Faithify.com. Here’s a direct link: <https://faithify.org/projects/help-create-a-brighter-future-for-vulnerable-transylvanian-girls/>

By the time you read this message there will only be a week left in this campaign, so please make a donation right away. We see that a few UUCBers have already donated! And now donations will be matched!

Longtime IWC supporter Julia Harris, recognizing that extraordinary times require extraordinary solidarity and action, has offered to match all gifts from this point on to help us achieve our goal. Your gift today, in any amount, will have twice the impact! Take advantage of this exciting opportunity to have your generosity matched dollar for dollar!

It’s this kind of direct social justice action that UUs pride themselves on. Make a difference with your donation. You can always contact Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net about this project and anything else that’s Transylvanian!

Social Justice Council

Members of the Social Justice Council are planning their Sponsored Projects for 2021, either extending and supplementing what was done in 2020 or presenting

new projects for 2021. Anyone from UUCB may fill out an application for a Sponsored Project to receive resources and support from the council. If approved, the Project will be presented to the Congregation signaling the full support of the Congregation behind the Project. If you have a Project that you would like to submit and have at least 3 other people to work with you, please contact the SJC for an application. Applications are due on April 30.

Social Justice Council will be producing a live panel for the 2021 General Assembly titled "Periwinkles and More" addressing our experience with anti-racism work.

UUCB's Good Neighbor program under the auspices of the SJC, is an integral part of our congregation's culture of giving. Each month, on the first Sunday of the month, we invite a representative from a local nonprofit to come and tell us about their organization. This past year, of course, many of the groups had to send in videos, instead of being able to hear them in person. Nevertheless, we are still able to learn about the ways in which each of the nonprofits assist people in our community.

UUCB's good neighbor for April is **Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program** (for the physically disabled). We hope to collect at least \$1000 for our Good Neighbor organization each month. In past years, when we met in person, it was easy to collect those kinds of donations over the course of a month. But now that everything is online, we have been collecting less and less - at a time when nonprofits need money more than ever! Please don't forget to make an offering (click into our [UUCB PayPal account](#)) to UUCB and Bay Area Outreach and Recreation serving the physically disabled community. Make sure you write in the notes that you want your donation to go towards our Good Neighbor.

Sponsored Projects

Restoring Our Earth for All-Environment & Environmental Justice

Spring brings many opportunities to celebrate Earth Day with our local community, the international UU Community, and millions of people all over the world working for environmental justice and a healthy environment.

In honor of Earth Day, an upcoming free on-line local event

[The Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour](#)

Sundays 10:00 – 3:00 Free

April 25 and May 2, 16, and 23

The virtual garden tour will visit 25 native plant gardens in the East Bay, and present a fascinating live talk by entomologist and professor Dr. Doug Tallamy, author of *Bringing Nature Home* and other books on gardening for wildlife. Learn about the amazing little things that are essential to our web of life! [Read more and register here.](#)

From Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth

As part of "Spring for Change: A Season of Sacred Activism," join the international UU Project Drawdown Initiative. Some may say humans are heading to "Game Over," but we say "GAME ON!" through the 2021 UU Drawdown Ecochallenge. "Game On" also refers to a game of friendly competition to collectively lower carbon footprints through a variety of types of lessons, actions, advocacy and engagement based on Project Drawdown, its many solutions to climate change, and UU principles and values. More information is available here <https://www.uumfe.org/campaigns/project-drawdown-uu-initiative/> and you'll be able to sign up to participate soon!

Check out other current UUMFE campaigns here: www.uumfe.org/campaigns/

Confronting Racism and Oppression

The **Anti-Racism Task Force Periwinkle Project** has planted many periwinkles and will be installing a plaque commemorating the unmarked graves of the enslaved. A ceremony date in April TBA.

Diverse Books for Richmond wishes to send ARMLOADS OF THANKS to the many members and friends who donated to this project. For seven months now, people have been purchasing books from Richmond's Multicultural Bookstore and donating them to the libraries of three elementary schools in the city: Verde, Highland and Grant. Close to 150 books have been ordered.

The books are now at church, waiting for bookplates to be pasted in with the message: "The Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley is happy to donate this book to the students of [] Elementary School."

Many of the books highlighted so far have focused on African-American children. Beginning in May, we will launch another book drive featuring Latino students. Judy Sam and Helen Toy will deliver the books to the schools when their principals and librarians feel the time is appropriate.

The Literature, Film & Drama Contingent— Our discussion of *The Bookwoman of Troublesome Creek* was robust! We reflected on various topics detailed in this historical fiction about Pack Horse Librarians (a project of the WPA program of FDR) and the blue people in Kentucky in the late 1930s. From the cruelty of prejudice -- even in misery, starvation, pellagra, isolation and ignorance -- to how the love of reading helped these poverty-stricken folks overcome their fears and superstitions about their bookwoman's skin color. We also viewed the story through the lens of disability. Kudos were given to author K.M. Richardson's way with words, her descriptions of flora and fauna, and to Cussy Mary's mule, Junia, who had a mind of her own. To the love story, not so much....

April 4 at 12:30: the LFDC will discuss *It's Time To Talk (and Listen)*, by Anastasia S. Kim and Alicia Del Prado. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84257017624>

Housing for Youth

Youth Spirit Artworks has set the date and time of the Grand Opening of our Tiny House Empowerment Village. The Opening will be held Friday April 2 11am to noon, both as a Covid safe in-person event at 633C Hegenberger Rd., and also as a Zoom event for folks who want to stay home. We will provide more details soon!!! Or text: Sally 510-282-0396.

From the Executive Director

Tess Snook O'Riva, Executive Director



We are in transition. That much is obvious. But compared to upending our reality around this time last year, we are now defining and constructing the New Normal. It feels a lot like laying the train tracks in front of the train as it's moving, but we are building it and we are progressing.

This month's theme of Becoming encapsulates this for me. There's a lot wrapped up in that word. You need to have an idea of what you want to become, invest the resources, and do the work to "become". In this case, all at the same time.

For the past 12 months, we have all held the UUCB boat as steady as possible, surviving multiple continuous, sometime simultaneous, storms. And this is in addition to our personal lives full of health, family, employment, and other challenges. The impressive dedication of staff, volunteers, and our communities held us together throughout, as individuals and as UUs.

Moving forward, there is energy and progress on so many fronts I've had to start using new tracking software to try and keep remotely organized.

- Stewardship is setting the financial foundation for all that we will do.
- Contracts are under review to ensure we have the right language and the right partners.
- Landscaping master plans are being discussed.
- Multi-platform presentation of services and meetings are in the works (aka livestream).
- New Board members are being onboarded and trained.
- A Finance Committee has been appointed.
- Job processes are being documented to facilitate smooth personnel transitions.

- The Opening Task Force is hosting thoughtful discussions about in-person church.
- We're participating in the NorCal Resilience Network for emergency planning.
- Budget talks have started.

And that's just scraping the surface. There's much more that isn't in the front of my brain right now. Many of the projects that we'd *like* to do need more people power, which may not be able to happen until more people are vaccinated, we can get our collective heads above water, and then see how much bandwidth we have. I have definitely noticed more energy, more rental inquiries, more "Are we there yet?" mentality and conversations.

However, in our enthusiasm to get as close to what we used to have as possible, I want to lift up and be clear that WE ARE NOT YET THERE. I personally can't get vaccinated for a while. There are still a lot of unknowns about this virus, and this is absolutely the *wrong* time to let our guard down and feel like we have an invulnerability shield. I appreciate all those protecting me and my family by continuing to wear masks, social distance, and wash hands.

That said, I hold every hope that we are almost there. We will be able to find the silver linings and the learnings of this past year and implement ideas that unite us like never before. Just. A. Little. Longer. *sigh*

Music Matters

Bryan Baker, Director of Music

Greetings Dear Congregation,

I have been enjoying my sabbatical time. While I still have three other choruses and teaching, I have had a chance to slow down a bit and reflect. To go to Muir Woods, meditate more often, walk at ocean's edge... and to learn more about music, particularly that outside the usual Western canon. Even now, I am attending the national conference of the American Choral Directors Association (virtually, of course) and it is full of diversity. An inspiring variety of sessions, and it is wonderful to see again and again plans to expand, plans to make music by under-represented composers more available, with composers, scholars and publishing companies working together.

I have been exploring music by Black composers and women composers with delight, excitement and amazement. So much great music I didn't know! With Bachelors and Masters degrees, even a Doctorate in music, how did I never hear about Nathaniel Dett, William Grant Still, Undine Moore Smith, and so many more? Well, I am making up for lost time :-)



I know the music making has continued at UUCB during my absence and - as I was sure it would - continued brilliantly. My very sincere and continuing thanks to Katya, Katie, Meghan, Marcelle, Paul, Rod, Phil and Susan. I will be joining this fantastic team again in the middle of April. I am excited to return and share some of the music I've learned recently. You'll be hearing from John W Work II, Rosephanye Powell, Sarah Quartel, and others and others. I find myself keeping in mind two phrases lately: "Body - Mind - Spirit - Voice" and "Music opens paths to the soul".

Yours and harmony,

Bryan



Mailing address: 1 Lawson Road, Kensington, CA 94707

Telephone: 510-525-0302

Email: info@uucb.org

Copyright © 2019 The Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley. All rights reserved.

You subscribed to this list when you visited or joined UUCB.

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)