



Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Vol. 78 #2 February 2019

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

From the Co-Ministers

Dear members and friends,

In this time of societal, economic, and generational shifts, it seems institutions of all kinds are wrestling with how to make their budgets reflect their professed values. Amid the fear and anxiety of federal workers going weeks without pay and state and local governments trying to decide how to offer adequate services to residents while honoring pension payments to retirees, it should come as no surprise that churches around the country and even we here at UUCB are also feeling a financial squeeze.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said that “a budget is not just a financial document but a moral one.” While we certainly don’t believe that the most valuable things in life can be monetized, a budget definitely reveals those things which a community is willing to support with their money. In seasons like this one when income is harder to grow and expenses harder to limit, it is natural and healthy for communities like ours to revisit our budgets and see how we might best align our resources with our mission.

Over the next many weeks, the members of your Coordinating Team will be developing a budget for the 2019-2020 church year. Here at UUCB (and in many UU congregations), the way this works is the Coordinating Team drafts a budget which the Board can then edit and approve. Once the Board approves the budget, all members of the congregation are sent a copy along with some materials explaining certain parts of it, and they then get to vote to approve it. Budgets are one of the three things that members of the congregation get to vote on directly (the other two are the sale or purchase of property and calling ministers).

This year, given that we have an accumulated deficit and a number of new expenses to incorporate into the budget, a step has been added to this process. Early this month, before developing the draft budget for the Board to consider, the Coordinating Team will be meeting with lay leaders and council/committee members from across the congregation to get their input and suggestions. As we deepen into this budget writing season together, we hope you will reflect on the following questions: What is the most transformative experience I’ve had in this congregation? How can we align church staff, programs, and resources to support more of that? If you wish, send your answers to CT@uucb.org and the Coordinating Team will be able to incorporate your perspective into this important and holy work.

In 127 years of existence, this is hardly the first time UUCB has faced financial challenges. We are a congregation learning to adapt to a new social, economic, and religious landscape in one of the most expensive areas in the country. We are also a congregation rich in faith, commitment, energy, and property. With enough time, talent, treasure, and trust, this congregation will be here on the East Bay changing lives and serving out our mission for at least 127 more years to come.

In faith,

Revs. Christian and Kristin

Worship Services in February

Sanctuary, 11 am on Sundays

Theme for February: **Trust**

Sunday, February 3 – MUSIC SUNDAY, *No One Is Alone*, Bryan Baker with Lee Maranto, Worship Associate. With the stories behind the music, we will hear Debussy, Beethoven, Shostakovich, and Sondheim as gateways to explore trust in community, in hope, in love. What did Beethoven and Shostakovich go through and how did they keep composing despite threats to their careers? What do singers in a choir need to trust and how does that trust lead to finding a deeper sense of community? What of conductors, and instrumentalists playing duets or trios?

Sunday, February 10 – *Reverse RE & Children's Chapel*. Melissa Rosales, Worship Associate. Building a community for all ages means learning and growing in many different ways. Join us for a shorter worship service followed by your choice of several smaller spiritual exploration opportunities in rooms all around the church, including a Children's Chapel for those among us in elementary school. During the service we will also say goodbye to our Director of Family Ministry, Merrin Clough.

Sunday, February 17 – *Affirming the worth and dignity of every person? Really? Everyone?* Join us for Community Ministry Sunday, led by UUCB's four Affiliated Community Ministers, the Revs. Cat Cox, Theresa Hardy, Sue Magidson, and Jane Ramsey, with Lynne Cahoon, Ariel Smith-Iyer, and Rev. Christian Schmidt.

Sunday, February 24 – *Freedom*, Rev. Kristin Schmidt with Jim Gasperini, Lonnie Moseley and Gail Simpson. Join us this Sunday for an arts-based, soul-filled worship experience rooted in black history, Gospel singing, dance by Roger Dillahunty, and special guest Alex Taite.

Good Neighbor for February (sharing our offerings): Reaching Our Young Ladies (or ROYLs for short, roylsinc.com) raises community awareness through educational presentations about the harmful effects of Human Trafficking. They work both to help prevent human trafficking and offer a safe and nurturing environment for trafficking victims. Your offering today will go to help ROYALS in renewing victims' self-esteem and providing skills and re-sources as they reenter the workforce.

Personal Theology

Sundays, 9:30–10:45 am, Fireside Room

Feb. 3: Oren Jay Sofer teaches meditation and communication nationally. A member of the Spirit Rock Teachers Council, he holds a degree in Comparative Religion from Columbia University, is a Certified Trainer of Nonviolent Communication, a Course Trainer at Mindful Schools, and a Somatic Experiencing Practitioner for trauma healing. Oren is the author of *Say What You Mean: A Mindful Approach to Nonviolent Communication*. His topic is ***“Living our Values: Speaking and Listening with Awareness***

Feb. 10: Rev. Dr. Matthew Fox is a spiritual theologian, an Episcopal priest and an activist for gender justice and eco-justice. As a spiritual theologian he has written 37 books that have been translated into over 60 languages. Fox holds a doctorate in the history and theology of spirituality from the *Institut Catholique de Paris* and is the founder of the University of Creation Spirituality in California. Rev Fox is a recipient of many distinguished awards. His topic is ***“Naming the Unnameable: 89 Wonderful and Useful Names for God.”***

Feb. 17: Alex Pappas, retired College of Alameda instructor of world religions and psychology (40+ years), past president of the Theosophical Society in Oakland, writer, a student of comparative religion especially nondual paths such as Vedanta, Theosophy, Alice A. Bailey and esoteric Buddhism. He has lectured at various locations including Germany, Turkey, India and US. His book *Heaven and Nirvana* is a comprehensive text of dual and nondual religious traditions. ***“The Great Mystery; An Approach to Reality; East Meets West.”***

Feb. 24: Lonnie Moseley (UUCB Membership Co-Chair, Member of UUCB Program Council and Social Justice Council) **and Cordell Sloan** (UUCB Board of Trustees member, technology guru, dream expert, jazz musician, and son of Rev. Cordell Sloan, Sr). ***“Hidden Messages Within Negro Spirituals.”***

Humanist Connections

Sundays, 12:30 pm, check kiosk for location

Format: A 10- to 15-minute presentation followed by moderated, timed discussion and a potluck at 2 pm (bring a dish to share or donate \$5). All are welcome!

Feb. 3: *Unconscious Cognitive Bias*, Kris Homme (*Mistakes Were Made (But Not by Me)* by Carol Tavris)

Feb. 10: *What the Arts Mean to Us*, Diane Rusnak

Feb. 17: *Medical Myths and Miracles*, Kris Homme (*Doctoring Data* by Malcolm Kendrick)

Feb. 24: *Free Discussion, 10-minute topics*, Harold and Denise Ogren

Special Events in February

Sat. Feb. 16, 7:30 pm and Sun. Feb. 17, 1 pm – Love Songs and Chocolate! Come celebrate with us. Listen to gorgeous music and enjoy delicious treats. Tickets are \$15 and will be available at the door.

Sat. Feb. 23, 6 pm – Soul Line-Dance Potluck Party (see Social Justice)

Sun. Feb. 24 – Freedom Sunday, with special activities after the service (see Music Matters)

From Our Director of Family Ministry

Merrin Clough

As I begin to write, I realize this is my last newsletter article to you. How sweet and sad that feels to me. In my time working at UUCB I have come to treasure the people of this community so deeply. I wish I could share with you all the insights I've gathered in my time here. Stories of children's disarming wisdom. Elders' deep commitment to community and a future beyond their reach. Families forging love out of big pain and uncertainty, or everyday details like dinner, traffic jams, cleaning the house. So many stories of what brought you to this spiritual community: hunger for connection, search for purpose, the need for soulful nurture. But those are not my stories to share. They are yours, and a gift I carry with me always. I count them each as a great blessing. Thank you for sharing your journey with me.

Before I go, I would like to share with you a bit of my hope for UUCB. But before doing that, I want to acknowledge that my departure has heaped on a new layer of stress to what are already challenging times for the church. For some, especially those with responsibilities in Family Ministry, the last month has been abuzz with sorting out details about how to support the program after I am gone. There's a lot of work ahead as the current program year continues, and the search for a new Director of Family Ministry begins. Let's take a deep breath. That's a lot on top of big decisions that need to be made about the church's finances and future. Let's take another deep breath. That's all big stuff.

As a child my life was full of chaos and challenges. Early on I learned that it's when things get really crazy that genuinely fresh possibilities emerge. I think that's because challenge and uncertainty break down our feeble human expectations of how things should be or how things have always been. Also, our ideas about what we can do, or are not able to do, get proven wrong. The trick is that there is a fine line between the stress swallowing us up or pushing us in a new direction. I've found that when communities face this kind of change, thoughtful discernment and committed efforts can turn an uncertain mess into a hopeful future. When we allow loving relationships to guide the way forward, we are better able to navigate troubled waters.

Fortunately for Family Ministry, you have two teams that provide just that kind of leadership. The Family Ministry Committee, as you know, oversees the program. Recently a new team has formed to think deeply about the future of Family Ministry. They're called REnew, REvise, Refresh. January through May they are meeting twice a month to learn about current trends in faith formation. They are also paying close attention to the church's financial situation and the Board Working Group reports. Their big question is, how might we better use our resources (volunteers, staff, money) to meet the spiritual needs of families and grow lifelong UUs? Their goal is to make recommendations for significant changes in 2020-2021. Then beginning next fall, the Family Ministry committee will gather input on these recommendations and plan to implement those that are best suited for UUCB. That's big. It's exciting!

There is so much possibility as heaps of uncertainty gather like clouds around the hill. The work of the REnew, REvise, Refresh team offers just the kind of thoughtful discernment and committed effort needed right now. Your leaders on the Family Ministry Committee continue to be so capable and wise. Personally, I am sad to leave my job as this challenging and inspiring work begins to take shape. Some people have asked me if I feel pushed out of my job because of the changes ahead and the financial strain. That's certainly not the case. Rather, I know that right now in my life I'm not the right person for the job. I feel proud to have helped the church get to this point. I am grateful for the opportunity to love, learn, and grow with you along the way.

President's Corner

Jack Duggan, President of the Board of Trustees

We are in a budget crisis and some may feel like this is something new, something we just discovered like a huge mess tumbling out of a just opened closet door. This crisis has been years in the making.

There's nothing unusual about our situation. Like so many mainline churches and UU congregations we have shrinking membership. Today people don't go to church the same way they did sixty years ago. Churches, community organizations, bookstores and a host of once-thriving institutions are sinking.

UUCB is not immune. We have been running a deficit for years. To meet expenses the by-laws allowed limited temporary borrowing from restricted funds. When you're in a deficit temporary loans are never temporary. During a long period of transition we continued to borrow more just to make expenses. The old lines of reporting and management weren't there. Oversight suffered.

How we got here is not nearly as important as where we go from here.

Right now people are upset in the congregation, some people are angry, some people are very worried. If we use that energy that's a good thing. The wagons are circling, programs need to be protected. We the congregation need to think very seriously and deeply about what's important to each of us. Then we need to think very hard about what's important for the congregation. We are going to have some very hard discussions. And as long as we can live our principles, as long as we can do this holding hands and respecting each other, valuing our diversity and sustaining our unity, we will succeed.

I hope this work will be taking place everywhere in the church. The Board of Trustees will meet February 6 at 7 pm in the Fireside Room. The Committee for Financial Oversight, a group of church leaders with financial experience, will make a full report of their findings and recommendations to the board with discussion to follow.

On February 9 at 9:30 am at the Church there will be a meeting of church leadership, a budget summit. On February 10 the Congregational Meeting will focus on the Church's financial health. These meetings are to inform us all as we work on the budget for 2019/2020. The budget should be a congregational effort, everyone who can should participate. That effort will come together at the May Congregational Meeting when the budget is due to be presented and voted on.

Now is the time to step up and now is the time to do the hard work. If it feels like our back is against the wall, that's a good thing. The wall has been there for a long time. Let's step around it, look at everything with fresh eyes, do a balanced and sustainable budget and make it work together.

Coordinating Team Notes

Deborah Schmidt, Coordinating Team Convener

Creating a solid budget for the upcoming fiscal year is very challenging. UUCB members pledge generously but are fewer in number now, so pledge revenues are declining. At the same time, our building needs maintenance and we must compensate staff fairly. We are determined to avoid adding to our deficits. Our current budget was balanced by not filling our business administrator position, which is not a sustainable option.

We hope you will engage with us in learning, asking questions, defining priorities and thinking creatively about this budget. All are invited to attend the Feb. 6 board meeting or the Feb. 7 conference call to hear the Committee for Financial Oversight (CFO) report (details in *The Week Ahead*). On Feb. 9 the CT is hosting a Budget Summit, inviting board members, the CFO, the Program Council and constituent programs and committees.

As current treasurer Mary Muehlbach nears the end of her term, we are open to your recommendations for her successor.

These are times of change, challenge – and possibility. We are grateful for your continued commitment, and we are hopeful that, even with necessary cuts and additional expenses, our beloved church can remain true to its mission and chart a sustainable path.

The Coordinating Team meets on first and third Thursdays from 10 am to 12 noon. If you're interested in attending, please contact the CT Convener to verify meeting time and place. Questions for the CT?

Email CT@uucb.org.

Social Justice Council

UUCB Social Justice Sponsored Projects

Each year the UUCB Social Justice Council receives applications for Sponsored Projects: The SJC supports the project both in people power and budget-wise. At the April meeting the projects are presented along with budgets and then voted on. Those that are approved are then presented to the congregation at the May meeting. A sponsored project receives congregational support in the form of resources, such as worship time, funding, engagement, etc.

It's time to start thinking and planning for the UUCB sponsored projects in social justice for the 2019-20 church year. Our current projects are Confronting Oppression and Opposing Human Trafficking. This year's sponsored projects have held several very successful events.

To apply for sponsorship of your project, you need to gather a group of members who commit to devoting time and energy to the project, and you must complete an application for submission to the Social Justice Council. To receive an application, email Sheldon Jones at sejones1950@gmail.com. Completed applications must be submitted by March 31, 2019. If you have any questions or would like some coaching on the process, please contact Sheldon Jones or Beth Jerde.

Literature, Film and Drama Contingent (LFDC)

WHOO-BOY! The LFDC set up great expectations for its fourth year of employing the humanities to teach us about the phony social-construct of race and all the baggage that flows from it. Many thanks to all who participated in a wonderful discussion of *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*, and especially to Lonnie for her obvious love of the book and care in guiding us through it (with assists from Professor Cordell re the neuroscience). Some of us "already knew that!" while others wish we had known – or paid more attention. We also acknowledged that, while we share moments of awareness of unconscious bias (MAUBs), we will never be able to eradicate from our minds the prejudices we have learned and absorbed.

For February 3rd: A Mélange to celebrate Black History Month! Julie Rogers will discuss "The Origins of Whiteness"; Helen Tinsley-Jones will share her family's quilt depicting the Underground Railroad; Lonnie and Cordell will present "The Hidden Messages Within the Negro Spiritual." All are welcome to join us! (And, as there is no reading involved, you might want to get started on our book selection for March.

March 3rd: Discussion of Deborah Lipstadt's memoir, *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Survivor*.

The Social Justice Council is looking at a possible new Sponsored Project.

It would be working with one of our Good Neighbors, Youth Spirit Artworks. They are looking for support in creating "the first tiny house village for homeless youth," which was inspired by the youth at YSA. If the UUCB congregation would become involved as a participating member, our responsibilities are expected to include:

- (1) Creating support and awareness of homelessness and CEY (Communities Empowering Youth) projects amongst members.
- (2) Recruiting 12–15 congregants to participate in build days (to be built by the fall of 2019).
- (3) Publicizing CEY projects and events to congregation.

p.s. example: the Beth El congregation has been meeting monthly with YSA.

The Social Justice Council Has Fun

We have marched, we have vigiled, we have protested, we have advocated, we have learned, we have accompanied, we have raised funds. We did this in 2018 (See January *Beacon*). We also know how to have FUN!!! So to kick off 2019 we are hosting a Soul Line-Dance Potluck Party! **Please join us on Saturday February 23rd.** We start with a potluck dinner at 6 pm followed by dancing from 7-10 pm.

This is a FUN(D)RAISER to bring people together from within UUCB and beyond, to build relationships, to build community. Dancing will be facilitated by Ifasina TL Clear.* Ifasina centers people of size and people with disabilities, so some may be dancing standing while others are seated – ALL are welcome. She encourages movement and joyful body engagement.

RSVP required: uucbsoullinedance.eventbrite.com

Donations accepted at door (\$20/sliding scale) — no one turned away for lack of funds.

Questions: uucbsoulline@gmail.com

*Ifasina TaMeicka L. Clear is a Spiritual Coach, Body Positive Coach, and Community Educator. She is a certified Usui Reiki Level 1 practitioner and Level 2/Master Level studies student of Master Reiki Teacher Bah'Dori Oyanna, Atlanta Georgia. Ifasina is an ordained interfaith minister and a spiritual artist who believes deeply in the sovereignty of creation and the sacred act of honoring one's inner wisdom.

Music Matters

Bryan Baker, Director of Music

February is full of music, and there are two services with extra special music. "No One Is Alone" is the title of the **Music Sunday, Feb. 3**, that starts the month and the theme of Trust. With the stories behind the music, we will hear Debussy, Beethoven, Shostakovich, and Sondheim as gateways to explore trust in community, in hope, in love. What did Beethoven and Shostakovich go through to keep composing despite threats to their careers? What do singers in a choir need to trust and how does that lead to finding a deeper sense of community? What of conductors, and instrumentalists playing duets or trios?

Later in the month, on **Freedom Sunday, the 24th**, we will look at spirituals and gospel music and the origin and secret messages hidden in the music. The choir sings Rollo Dillworth's arrangement of the gospel song "Take Me to the Water." A wonderful guest singer joins us that day, Alex Taite, a Bay Area tenor who – in addition to opera and Broadway – has a special focus on spirituals.

Love Songs & Chocolate returns. It is our annual feast of fun and heart-warming songs about love from opera to Broadway to jazz to cabaret ... and desserts featuring oh so many kinds of chocolate delights. **Saturday Feb. 16, 7–9 pm and Sunday Feb. 17, 1–3 pm.** Both days the festivities are in the Social Hall, the tunes and the treats.

Yours in harmony,
Bryan

Stewardship Committee

Challenging Times: Sanctuary – Sustenance – Service

Loss of intern, office, family ministry and custodial staff. Budget needs straining revenue resources. Indeed, these are challenging times for UUCB.

As Rev. Christian noted in his last congregational letter, we are grappling with serving each other and our local community while sustaining the spiritual home which helps support these efforts. Leadership is focusing on ways we can ensure the future of our congregation as a sustainable, powerful and responsible spiritual force in our lives and the lives of those in our surrounding communities. Now members' and friends' financial support is more critical than ever to take care of each other and our spiritual home and live our values through service on church committees such as pastoral care, social justice and family ministry.

Pledges – our gratitude commitment – to UUCB account for around 50% of the annual budget. The median annual pledge, i.e. one-half below and one-half above, is about \$1,400 per pledge unit or \$4/day. With an annual budget of around \$1 million, consider the following cost per time period to operate UUCB:

- \$83,000 per month or
- \$19,000 per week or
- \$2,700 per day

As we prepare for our annual stewardship campaign, we encourage you to think deeply about why you value UUCB in your life and what you dream we can do and be together. With deep gratitude, consider then how you can most generously preserve and enhance these values and dreams. Now is the time to be all in for UUCB.

Your Stewardship Committee wants to know your thoughts about what draws you to UUCB and what you value here. How does UUCB serve you in providing Sanctuary, Sustenance and Service? As Rev. Kristin noted in a recent service, when our hearts are in a holy place, we want UUCB to continue to thrive, to be a value village for our children, to comfort and support us in challenging times, and to nurture us spiritually so we can envision and create our better selves and a better world.

Share your thoughts with Stewardship Co-Chairs Patrick Cullinane, 510-420-0415, pbc117@sbcglobal.net, and/or Lynne Cahoon, 510-526-5638, or leave a note in the Stewardship mailbox. With your permission, we will post your ideas in the Atrium so we can learn and affirm the values we share and cherish that need our steadfast support. Watch for the Stewardship Committee table in the Atrium on Sundays. Committee members will be present to answer questions and provide information about the March campaign.

Mark your calendars for key dates in our campaign to secure generous support for what we value about UUCB.

- Canvasser Training, Saturday, Feb. 16, 9:30–11 am – **We need your help**
- Kick-Off Sunday, March 3, 2019
- Campaign Time, March 3 to 24, 2019
- Celebration Sunday, March 24, 2019

Your Stewardship Committee thanks you in advance for sharing your thoughts and for your support of our Beacon on the Hill. Lynne Cahoon, Co-Chair, Patrick Cullinane, Co-Chair, Mac Lingo, Jo Maxon, Bob Moore, Ira Nelken, Rev. Christian Schmidt, and Helen Toy.

Good News from the Endowment Committee!

We received wonderful news recently from Rev. Laura Randall, UUA Legacy Campaign Director!

UUCB, as part of an overall UUA legacy effort that generated more than \$92 million in legacy gift-intentions across Unitarian Universalism, may expect to receive \$133,025 in matching money with the initial payment to start in fall 2019.

Per UUCB bylaws, the funds will be placed in what the bylaws call the “Board-Designated Endowment Fund.” Because the amount is more than \$25,000, only the congregation – not the Board – can vote to spend or otherwise allocate it for any purpose.

Thank you, Shelter Rock and UUA!

Thank you all who participated!

Beth Pollard, Grace Ulp, Ira Nelken, Susan Singh
Lenore Ralston, Chair, Endowment Committee
Linda Laskowski (consultant)

Committee on Financial Oversight

Last September, the Board created a Committee on Financial Oversight (CFO) to insure we had an accurate picture of our finances, could meet our current financial obligations, and to put procedures into place to stabilize the church’s finances. Also in September, \$120,000 was borrowed from church members to enable us to meet our current expenses.

Over the past few months the Committee on Financial Oversight has been working with the treasurer, Coordinating Team, and Monte Meyers, an external accountant, to get an accurate picture of our financial situation. The CFO met with the Board on January 4 to describe how deficits of approximately \$215,000 were created and funded in the past three years.

A more detailed report may be found [on our website](#), or on the Member Table.

Current cash status: We had a cash balance of \$93,000 as of the end of December, thanks to \$120,000 of loans and prepaid pledges from members. Other than additional withdrawals from the endowment, we currently do not have a source of funds to replenish more than \$260,000 of restricted account cash, money designated for things like cutting trees or the Ellis Music Fund. The cash for these accounts was used to pay operating expenses and will need to be replaced as those restricted expenditures are made.

Use of endowment funds for major repairs: We have spent \$209,000 of the endowment withdrawal approved by the congregation last January for the Safir Room, with a set aside of another \$73,000 for completion in the next few weeks. The Board, CFO, and Oversight Committee are evaluating the impact of delaying the remaining authorized repairs in light of the potential for additional unbudgeted withdrawals from our endowment funds for urgent repairs and/or the replenishment of restricted accounts.

The Committee on Financial Oversight will be discussing its findings and recommendations with the UUCB Board at its February 6 meeting (7 pm). You are invited to hear this information, which will be repeated via conference bridge the following evening (7 pm), Dial-in Number: (218) 339-7800, Access Code: 396766#.

Partner Church Committee

Stephanie Ann Blythe

We have good news from Transylvania via our friend Eva Kelemen. Her husband, the Reverend Levente Kelemen, is doing well after a second bout of stomach and esophageal cancer. Remarkably, he still has his voice, albeit a bit huskier. Eva sent two links to videos featuring Levente. He is an expert horseman and would certainly have gone on the pilgrimage by horseback last year in celebration of the 450th anniversary of the Edict of Torda. Instead, he sent his two sons, whom he has taught his horseman's skills. Levente's parents, who live in our partner village of Homoródújfalú, are doing well. Dad is 84 and Mum is 77 and they still keep a cow, pigs, sheep, chickens, and ducks.

It's the relationships we have with the Kelemens and the many people in Homoródújfalú that drive our commitment to the Partner Church movement. Add to that the twenty-plus Balázs Scholars* and other Unitarian ministers across Transylvania and we have an extensive network of personal connections. *Thanks to all who have responded to requests for support of these wonderful folks with gifts of clothing, loaning of bicycles, touring and hosting with families and coming to listen to them when they speak in Personal Theology every May.

Last month we outlined some of the actions we need to take so that all these relationships remain alive. But these things don't happen without your participation. We recently lost Roger Thompson, who was one of our Partner Church Committee stalwarts for many years. He and Marion were steady financial contributors, as well. Are you ready to take their place? First, it will start with a conversation with me or Anne, then we'll set a meeting date and move from there.

Ready for what comes next? Contact Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net for more information. Let's do this!

Buildings and Grounds Committee

Larry Nagel

We have four significant items to report from your Buildings & Grounds Committee:

- We will be holding a work party to perform upkeep and maintenance of the building on Saturday, March 2. Come for breakfast at 8:30 am, start work at 9 am, and stay as long as you can, but no longer than noon. No tools or special skills required, just a desire to help maintain our magnificent buildings and grounds. The work party will be rain or shine, although we only work outside if the sun is shining.
- The Safir Room is almost finished and we are planning on having the next Board of Trustees meeting on February 6 in the Safir Room. Stay tuned for further details.
- Contra Costa County has declined our permit to remove 63 dead or dying Monterey pine trees from the grounds, and is instead allowing us to cut down only 25 trees. We are appealing the decision and the hearing for the appeal will be sometime in February.
- The Endowment Fund Repair projects for painting and sealing the exterior of the building and for replacing the atrium skylights are both on hold pending action from the Board and a possible vote at the next Congregational meeting.

If any of these projects fits your interests and your skills, we would love to have you on our team. Please contact Larry Nagel at (510) 558-0842 or lwn@att.net. Or, just drop in at the Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting which is the first Thursday of every month at 4 pm in the Fireside Room.

Pastoral Care

This December, holiday remembrance came early for some UUCB Elders and others.

The Family Spirit Circle (a monthly gathering of UUCB families, this month organized by Melissa Rosales) baked gingerbread cookies, decorated sugar cookies, wrote notes and created colorful cards. With the addition of Ghirardelli holiday chocolates, all these goodies were bagged to create 20 love packages!

Through the coordination of Barbara Cullinane of Pastoral Associates, these packages were then delivered to UUCB Elders and others who are not able to come to church regularly because of illness, functional limitations and/or caring for loved ones. Some were also Esteemed Elders, having reached birthdays of 90 and over. Three recipients were Esteemed Elders who are still able to join us regularly for church.

We wanted to remember and thank them all for the ways they have helped UUCB grow, change, and develop. We wanted to acknowledge that we would not have our church today without their “time, talent, and treasure” over the years.

Those who delivered the “holiday bags of remembrance” reported recipients’ pleasant and moved responses to being remembered and many wonderful hours of conversation. Barbara and Melissa hope to do this again next year, creating a new tradition for many years to come!

Ways You Can Help

- The Program Council is collecting job descriptions for UUCB volunteer positions—large and small, one-time and ongoing. They should include why the job is important, skills and/or physical requirements, and time commitment. If you have any already written or can help by writing up what you are currently doing as a volunteer, please submit it to your Program Council representative or programcouncil@uucb.org.
- If you’d like to get a little more involved as a volunteer, membership co-chair Lonnie Moseley (lonniemoseley@hotmail.com) is probably the best person to talk to for the time being. Eventually we hope to have a robust volunteer management program—the job descriptions are a start. Contact Jean Gleason (jrglsn@gmail.com) if you would like to help develop the program.
- An immediate opportunity is to become one of the “Connectors” or canvassers who will meet with members and friends, individually or in small groups, to explore our love of UUCB and our commitment to its future. There will be a training session on Saturday, Feb. 16, 9:30–11 am. See contact info under Stewardship above, or stop by the Stewardship table on Sundays.
- If you are leaving any food or beverages in the UUCB kitchen, PLEASE LABEL IT (with date)! Too much goes to waste because we can’t tell if it belongs to someone or has been left as a donation for staff or for the Sunday snack table.
- If you’d like to help plan a fundraising event for the spring, contact Deborah Schmidt (deborahschmidt@gmail.com) or Ann Harlow (annharlow@pacbell.net). Possibilities include a glorified rummage sale featuring art and antiques, a silent auction, a chili cook-off, and more.
- If you still haven’t paid for your winnings in the December silent auction, please do so!

Thank you!



Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley

1 Lawson Road
Kensington, CA 94707-1015

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 a “pathways to membership” session, sign the membership book, and commit to supporting this church through participation and financially. To become a member, please contact our Membership Co-Chairs, Lonnie Moseley or Paul Hudson (membership@uucb.org), or speak with one of the co-ministers.

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.

WEB SITE: <http://uucb.org>

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS:

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

UUCB general discussion list:

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

Email list for families: Email family.ministry@uucb.org

Welcome, Visitors!

Every Sunday morning in the Atrium, visitors are invited to talk with our Welcome Table volunteers before and after worship services. There is a separate welcome table for families with children. Coffee, tea and snacks are available in the Social Hall, and if you use a purple cup we will know to greet you as a newcomer.

Childcare is available on Sundays from 9:15 am to 1 pm in the childcare building and play yards.

Contact Information

Office Hours: M–F, 9 am–5 pm

Phone: (510) 525–0302

Fax: (510) 525–9631

Email: info@uucb.org

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

AC Transit Bus #7, which stops at the Berkeley and El Cerrito Del Norte BART stations. Call (510) 817–1717 or visit www.actransit.org for schedule.

