



Beacon on the Hill

The monthly newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley

February 2021 – Vol. 80, Issue 2

February is Black History Month

We encourage you to take a dive into some of our UU Black history. This video, *Wilderness Journey*, produced by Ron Cordes, talks about the struggle for Black empowerment and racial justice within the Unitarian Universalist Association from 1967-1970. [Click here to watch the video.](#)

Contents

[Journeying Together](#)

[Worship Services](#)

[Special Events and Announcements](#)

[Humanist Connections](#)

[Personal Theology](#)

[Re-Opening Task Force](#)

[Family Ministry](#)

[Nominating Committee](#)

[Stewardship Committee](#)

[Chalice Leadership Team](#)

[Partner Church Committee](#)

[From the Treasurer](#)

[Social Justice](#)

[From the Executive Director](#)

Journeying Together

Dr. Rev. Michelle Collins

Henri Nouwen, the treasured Catholic teacher, activist and pastor, once described beloved community as “the place where the person you least want to live with always lives.”

This is an interesting reminder about community and what it's like to be part of a community filled with imperfect human beings like ourselves, and also the challenge to accept those we may not want to accept there.

On its surface it seems to be a straightforward reminder not to expect perfection from the communities we join or from others within them. Instead to be compassionate with those we may not want to but that we are in community with. Forgive them. Accept them. Stay open to the whole of who they are.

But here's the catch, Nouwen doesn't stop there. Right after that first sentence he adds another. Here's the whole quote: *"Community is the place where the person you least want to live with always lives... That person is always in your community somewhere; in the eyes of others, you might be that person."*

Now that's the part that we don't really want to think about. After all it's okay to get judgy about someone else, to think of them as a "they" if we're really not all that fond of them. We ourselves are always the right and the best ones, right? Of course not, and Nouwen doesn't let us get away with that kind of thinking either. Remember, he says, you are the problem person to someone else, so let's all just get on about accepting one another and being together.

Now, that takes some work! And, frankly, some humility also. But I think we'd all agree that in the end, it's worth it. It's worth it to put the work in to make our communities move towards what we hope they can be. And while they disappoint us, and when we disappoint them, we'll stick with it. With how diverse our communities are in many ways, that disappointment and that work are pretty much a given, but they're also all the stronger for it.

This month, let's celebrate and embrace our religious community here at UUCB as well as other communities that we are part of. Let us remember the words of George Odell, *"all our lives we are in need of others, and other are in need of us."*

Worship Services in February

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

Theme for February: Beloved Community

February 7 – *Beloved Community*. Rev. Michelle Collins, preaching. Sarah Ward, Worship Associate. The term 'Beloved Community' gets used for a lot of things, from churches to organizations to coffee shops and more. But where did it really come from, and what was it intended to mean and to evoke? We'll explore these things today.

February 14 – *Widening the Circle*. Rev. Michelle Collins, preaching. Sarah Ward, Worship Associate. We as Unitarian Universalists have had a varied history with regards to African Americans, both in our recent past as well as a longer time ago. During Black History month, we'll revisit some of this history, and UUCB members

will share some of their insights from our current efforts and discussions around Widening the Circle of Concern. (note: congregational meeting after the service)

February 21 – *We Need One Another*. Rev. Michelle Collins, preaching. Deborah Schmidt, Worship Associate. Throughout human history, humans have gathered in groups and in communities. We gather because we need each other for a variety of reasons, from the mundane to the spiritual. How do our communities make us more resilient, and how can we make our communities more resilient? Join us to delve into these questions today. (note: we'll be celebrating the 2020 Schweitzer awards in the service)

February 28 – *The Myth of Community*. Rev. Michelle Collins, preaching. We come into our communities with a lot of assumptions and idyllic pictures of what community may look like. But many of these pictures are only that — pictures — myths that can actually hold us back. What are some of the myths that we are holding for religious community and what are the realities? It's only through understanding these that we can lean into the real potential for our UU communities.

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 January

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 February 17 vespers service will be offered by Worship Associates Melissa Rosales and Karen Elliott.

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

Good Neighbor for February:

[Collaborising](#). Collaborising's mission is to explore humanity through social and cultural exchange. They primarily focus on race equity work but also have a community gardening project on the Richmond Greenway.

Special Events and Announcements

- **January 31, after Worship Service – Board of Trustees Candidates Forum**

Get to know the Board of Trustees Candidates in this informative and interactive forum during the Coffee Hour time slot. The candidates for the one one-year seat and the three three-year seats are: **Ariel Smith-Iyer**: One-year seat. **Bill Brown, Randall Hudson, and Cordell Sloan (incumbent)**: Three-year seats.

[Click this link to join us on Zoom:](#)

Meeting ID: 332 046 821

Password: 810131

- **February 7, 12:30pm – The Literature, Film, and Drama**

Contingent Celebrates Black History Month with a discussion of *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent*, by Isabel Wilkerson (Cordell Sloan)

[Click here to join on Zoom](#) or visit <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84257017624>

- **February 14, Congregational Meeting**, final date for voting for Board candidates. Unless previously requested, you will not be receiving the congregational meeting packet of info for the Feb 14 meeting by US Mail. Please watch for the email packet being sent by the first week in February.
- **February 26, 6-8 pm – UUCB Presents the 2021 Lawrence Lecture: *Where Do We Go from Here? What I've Found in The Fire and Hot-Mess Times***. We are excited to welcome the Reverend Jacqueline J. Lewis, Ph.D., Senior Minister at Middle Collegiate Church in New York City, activist and public theologian. She leads her congregation to work for racial, gender, economic, and LGBTQIA equality, and against gun violence, preaching “*Love God, Neighbor, and Self-Love. Period. Everything else is commentary.*”

All are welcome to join us for an evening with Reverend Jacqui Lewis. Admission is free. Donations are welcome.

- **Kerry Simpson is the Board's listening presence for the month of February.** She may be reached at: maryann.simpson@gmail.com and (510) 508-8098.
- In May 2020, Barbara Cullinane and Deborah Schmidt were announced as the recipients of the Schweitzer Medal for their more than 15 years of dedicated service to UUCB and Unitarian Universalism. Hoping the shelter-in-place rules were very temporary, we deferred the formal awards presentation to when we could be together in person. We wish to wait no longer! **Barbara and Deborah will be presented with the awards recognizing their exemplary commitment during the worship service on February 21.**
- **History of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley**
Dorothy Herzberg would like to write, with help from the congregation, a booklet on the History of UUCB as a fundraiser. The booklet will showcase how wisdom, humor, resilience, compassion and commitment have held UUCB together for more than 130 years. If you have any anecdotes, history of programs, events, etc. that have held together this remarkable congregation, please send them to dorothyherzberg@gmail.com or mail them to: Dorothy Herzberg, 1006 Richmond St. El Cerrito, CA 9530. Dorothy's recent book, *Through the Writer's Eye*, includes 10 UUCBers among its 17 authors, and it is available on Amazon.

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.)

February 7 – Fears of Getting Old. Discussion led by Gabe Kramer.

February 14 – Topic selection for March plus discussion of short topics raised at the meeting. Discussion led by Ray Westergard.

February 21 – Fascism. Discussion led by Don Anderson.

February 28 – Direction of Biden Administration. Discussion led by 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 9:20-10:30am, Zoom

The theme for February is *Beloved Community*. We will have two sessions in February. As Rev. Cat Cox retires from her 18 years with UUCB as an Affiliated Community Minister, she will speak on the relationship between compassion and accountability on February 7. On February 21, two of our UUCB members extraordinaire, Helen Tinsley-Jones and Julia Rogers, will share their thoughts on Beloved Community. The Zoom link for both sessions will be published in 'The Week Ahead' and posted on the UUCB website. Please join us.

February 7 – *Compassion - the Key to Accountability* with Rev. Cat Cox

Rev. Cathleen ("Cat") Cox is a Unitarian Universalist spiritual director serving individuals, life partners, and communities, both UU and interfaith, by offering guidance and tools for creating balanced, meaningful and relationally centered lives in this world and this age.

Her approach to spiritual development is eclectic, drawing on classical Unitarian and Universalist theology, current psychological and ethical paradigms of human development, as well as cross-cultural wisdom traditions and world religions.

She holds the degrees of Master of Divinity (Starr King School for the Ministry) and Master of the Art of Teaching (UC Berkeley) as well as two California teaching credentials. She has an extensive background in speaking, teaching, writing, and workshop facilitation. She is certified as a dreamworker by the Institute of Advanced Archetypal Studies and is a 2002 recipient of the Margaret Fuller Award of the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation for her work on the archetypes of feminism.

February 21 – *Beloved Community in Action and as a Spiritual Practice* with Helen Tinsley-Jones and Julia Rogers

Helen Tinsley-Jones is a member of the UUCB Board of Trustees, People of Color Caucus (POCC), Social Justice Council, and leader of our Honoring Indigenous Peoples project. Julia Rogers is a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist at Kaiser Richmond. She is also a member of the Social Justice Council, leader of WOWS (Whites Opposing White Supremacy), and a practitioner of NVC (non-violent communication).

I hope to see you all at these Personal Theology Seminars.

Anne Wardell/Personal Theology

Opening Task Force

What rules or protocols do we want for the phased opening of UUCB? Your responses to the recent congregational poll are informing the development of draft protocols. The draft protocols are being reviewed by key congregational leaders to ensure those who know well the daily operations of UUCB have the opportunity for review and to provide advice. These leaders include representatives of Buildings and Grounds, Membership, Music, Family Ministry, Personal Theology, and Program Council. Once we have the key leaders' input, we will share the draft protocols with you for your review and education.

Each opening phase will have its own set of protocols. Current phases are as follows:

- **Phase 0:** Closed to all but limited staff/volunteers, for facilities security and mail processing
- **Phase 1:** Closed to all but essential staff, schools, outdoor activity such as landscape maintenance (not gatherings)
- **Phase 2:** Open to small group rentals, outdoor programs/gatherings
- **Phase 3:** Open to small church meetings and programs
- **Phase 4:** Reopen Sunday, services only indoors, limited capacity
- **Phase 5:** Reopen remaining Sunday programming, limited capacity
- **Phase 6:** Post vaccine, expand capacity
- **Phase 7:** New Normal

As protocols are developed, staff will develop the procedures to implement the protocols.

Pastoral Care Need?

Please remember that if you or a UUCB congregant you know is sick, hospitalized, recovering, grieving or otherwise in need of attention and support, please email Pastoral Care at pastoralcare@uucb.org

Stewardship Campaign Impact

The pandemic has placed unanticipated and costly items on the current and future budgets of the church. Staff are preparing a list of those items so Stewardship can share with you the additional challenges we need to address in our deliberations about our financial commitment to UUCB.

We continue to live in “interesting” times. 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.

Family Ministry

Rev. Catherine Boyle, Director of Family Ministry



In a reading written by Rev. Dr. David Breeden, he gives us a prophetic call to build beloved community:

May I be all in for beloved community.
May I be all in, despite the challenges.
May I be all here for beloved community.

May I be ready for the beauty
because I long for the possibilities.
Yes, I am here for beloved community.

May I see the beauty of you in community; of us in community.
May we be the beauty of beloved community.
May we be the dream together

The call to tear down the systems of injustice and oppression and build the Beloved Community here starts at home. One surprising way to build connections and understand each other is over a sweet treat.

Who knew cookies could be so sweet?

Here is a recipe for Jar Cookies even the youngest members of your family can help put together. Make them and share the love around the neighborhood. Attach and write a kind card along with how to bake instructions to send some sweetness during this pandemic this month of love.

Vegan Chocolate Cookies Jar Recipe:

The recipe below comes from HelloGlow. You will need
8-ounce lidded glass jar Ingredients

1 cup flour
½ teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons ground flax seeds
¼ teaspoon salt
½ cup cocoa powder
¾ cups raw cane sugar

½ cup vegan chocolate chips

Instructions:

Combine the flour, salt, flax seeds and baking soda in a small bowl. Spoon the mixture into the bottom of a large glass jar and pack it down with the back of a spoon.

Layer in the cocoa powder, sugar and chocolate chips, being sure to pack each layer with the back of a spoon before adding the next layer.

Attach the following recipe prior to giving your gift:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a medium sized bowl, combine ¼ cup + 1 tablespoon canola oil, ¼ cup Silk Almondmilk and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract.

Whisk well. Gradually fold in the dry ingredients and use a fork to combine everything.

Roll the dough into 1-inch balls and place them onto a lined baking sheet.

Bake for 12 minutes. Let cool for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

Be sure to post pictures of your cookie jars on UUCB's Facebook!

With faith and love,
Rev. Catherine Boyle

Nominating Committee

Board of Trustees Candidates Forum – January 31, after Worship Service

[Click this link to join us on Zoom:](#)

Meeting ID: 332 046 821

Password: 810131

Get to know the Board of Trustees Candidates in this informative and interactive forum during the Coffee Hour time slot. The candidates for the one one-year seat and the three three-year seats are:

Ariel Smith-Iyer: One-year seat

Bill Brown, Randall Hudson, and Cordell Sloan (incumbent): Three-year seats

The candidates will have the chance to elaborate on their written candidate statements being sent to all members, and to answer your questions about serving on the Board. The new Board will be seated after the congregational meeting of February 14, 2021.

Voting for Candidates

Voting will be online and available to members by January 31, with an alternative method available; see church communication on voting instructions. Even though this is an uncontested election, please show your support for these four wonderful members who are generously contributing their talent, time and dedication to our church community. Voting will end at the time of the congregational meeting on February 14.

The candidates were selected by the Nominating Committee, which is comprised of Victoria Bowen, Dayana Claghorn, Robin Cooper, Selene Fabiano, Max Jenny, Don Klose, and Marta Tobey, and convened by Board Vice President Beth Pollard. For more information, email Nominating@uucb.org, or call Beth at 510-812-6284.

Stewardship Campaign 2021-2022

Care – Compassion – Community
Supporting and Sustaining UUCB



Watch for them and be inspired by them. Starting in February, each Sunday worship service will support our Stewardship Campaign by featuring video vignettes of church members speaking to their care for and commitment to UUCB. We hope fellow church members will influence our own pledge amount decision making by addressing three key questions:

- Why is UUCB important to you?
- What difference has UUCB made in your life?
- Why do you pledge to support UUCB?

The words “Care, Compassion, Community” and the image of our mosaic Tree of Life provide focus for this year’s campaign to support and sustain UUCB for the fiscal year July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

The Mosaic Tree of Life is an especially relevant symbol for us in this challenging

time. It reflects how each of us helped create this beautiful mosaic, this UUCB Beloved Community, by sharing just one “leaf” of sharing potential selves. Out of many we created a canopy of love, caring, beauty and diversity. Just as the leaves are made up of fragments of china and keepsakes, the tree also symbolizes the compassion and care of our community, as we bring what matters to us and our imperfect, broken selves together for inspiration and healing.

This Year of the Pandemic has challenged our campaign as well as our lives and calls for creative and generous responses. The campaign has to be completely virtual; we cannot meet or communicate in person in our usual stewardship activities. Some members have lost jobs or otherwise experienced severe financial hardship, potentially compromising their capacity to pledge as before. Ironically, the stock market has been generous to others, who may choose to give much more than their usual pledge.

Government stimulus checks may be inadequate for some, but also encourage others more fortunate to share them with UUCB.

In addition to our usual expenses to providing facilities, programming, and staffing, the church faces significant additional costs to make facilities safe for us to gather. Early estimates for viral protective and preventive items such as an advanced air filtration system may add additional costs this year of over \$100,000.

Now, more than ever before, our personal valuing for UUCB and our thoughtful generosity will determine our ability to support and sustain our canopy of compassion in the next fiscal year.

Key Stewardship Campaign Dates

Feb. 13	Early Pledge Gathering
March 7 to 28	Stewardship Campaign
March 28	Celebration Sunday

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.

What The Chalice Circle Experience Has Meant For Me

Dick Sherman

Chalice Leadership Team

I share these thoughts hoping they will inspire more of you, especially more men, to participate in a Chalice Circle.

I was born in 1942 in New York, to parents who were both members of the Communist Party....a so-called “red diaper baby”.... and grew up in the height of the cold war and the McCarthy period of American History. It was a very scary time in a lot of ways. We were “secular” jews...religion was, according to Marxists, “the opiate of the people”. But we barely, if at all, acted as jews, never celebrating even the high holy days. I was an atheist (first by birth and then by conviction), not bar mitzvahed, and never set foot in a synagogue. I was very politically active in, amongst other things, the “ban the bomb” movement of the 50s; the civil rights movement of the 60s; the anti-Vietnam war movement of the 70s....you get the picture.



I was a graduate student at the University of Toronto from 1964-1969, working towards a PhD in political philosophy, until my first wife (a Canadian) and I moved to Berkeley, where our two children were born. I dropped out of philosophy because it was too “ivory towerish”. Instead, I went to law school. So both as a child, as an activist, in graduate school, in law school, and then in a 40 year career as a lawyer, I was trained to think critically, challenge authority, and to be very argumentative. What then, am I doing in a “church”, and what then, am I doing in a chalice circle program which is decidedly NOT a place to argue with anybody?

Well....in 1975 my first wife and I divorced and she moved back to Toronto with our two young children. I stayed here and remarried to Vicki De Goff who became not only my wife, but also my law partner. We practiced, together, for 40 years! Vicki passed away, prematurely, on New Years Eve, 2015. Before her death Vicki warned me not to spend the rest of my life alone, and to find a community of which to be a part. Following her always sage advice, I visited UUCB, was welcomed by Lonnie, and well... immediately felt I had found a place where I would be comfortable sitting on a pew (now being present as a face on a zoom screen), be accepted as I was, be part of a community, and grow even as I aged. But where does Chalice Circle fit in, and why?

I was lost in grief, and in life. No longer a husband. No longer a lawyer. My children and five grandchildren living in Eastern Canada. As I eased into the church my life began to change, and for the better. Early on, someone suggested I join a chalice circle. I had no idea what that would be, and I suspect many of you reading this do not either, especially men who, like me, are used to functioning in the world quite differently. For the essence of a chalice circle is where a small group (usually 6-10 folks) meet for two hours twice a month, but not to “discuss” the “topic”, which is usually something very open-ended, such as “Paths Not Taken”, “Awakenings”, “Friendship”, “Your Story”, etc. But if not to discuss, what then? To learn the skill of “deep listening” and enjoy the pleasures of being listened to in that way. To just “listen” attentively, certainly means not arguing, but it also means not even

commenting, not even asking questions, not wondering what to say in response... just be fully present and Listen. And then, when it is your turn to share whatever you want to say on the topic, doing so without fear of being judged, advised, interrogated, etc. What a unique and new experience that was for me! And I have been participating in a chalice circle every year since! A few years ago I even began "co-facilitating" several groups with the wonderful Cynthia Asprodites. I have also joined the Chalice Circle Leadership Team which oversees the program, trains new facilitators, extends the program, and constantly improves it.

Imagine, giving up analysis (except of one's self); giving up critical thinking, and not engaging in argument. Imagine learning to speak and listen, from the heart. Imagine trusting strangers, who become friends, with one's innermost thoughts and feelings. It is an exceptional experience and was transformative for me. I imagine it might be for you as well. I urge you to give it a try if you haven't, and continue to participate if you already have.

Partner Church Committee

Stephanie Ann Blythe

The circle of life brings news of the passing of two Partner Church stalwarts, but it also brings heartening news from our friends in Homoródújfalú.



Jay Hanks was the kind of intrepid traveler who would visit anywhere in the world despite the language and cultural barriers that might stand in his way. When the first group from UUCB visited the village in 1990, Jay stayed behind and spent four days meeting and photographing these people who were struggling in the aftermath of the Communist downfall. Jay then came home to start what we now call the Transylvanian Partner Church Committee. Jay's last visit to the village came in 2010. Partner Church is just one of the many things for which Jay will be remembered by UUCB members.

Vena Flint was another generous benefactor of the Transylvanian Partner Church Committee. The Circle of Life announcement noted, "Vena and Dean took an interest in the Unitarian Church in Transylvania and made a significant financial contribution to the rehabilitation of the church building in Romania." In fact, the Homoródújfalú church's community house was named for the Flints by the villagers. Part of the good news received from the village are pictures of the now-completed repairs and renovations to the community house.

The other good news is that only one villager was positive for Covid and quickly recovered. Due to the lockdown the church was closed and congregants were not able to celebrate Easter together. Reverend Attila's mother was hospitalized for three weeks in the city of Brasso, but has recovered. That's the best news of all!

And finally, ten students from Homoródúfalu were recipients of your generosity from the Village Education Fund. Everyone thanks you for the support.

So now, who will step forward to carry forward what Jay and Vena contributed to the betterment of life in Homoródúfalu? Anne and I are grateful for Ann Harlow's donation in memory of Vena. Thank you, Ann! With completion of the community house, what's next on the village's to-do list? Your contribution could be the spark for the next big thing. One day we might even send a team of volunteers to work side by side with villagers with shovels, hammers, and saws in our hands. This is what Partner Church was envisioned to be. Maybe we can turn vision into action.

The rest is up to you! Contact Stephanie Ann Blythe at steph62850@yahoo.com or Anne Greenwood at annegt1@sbcglobal.net to let us know how we will carry out your generosity of time or treasure with a little bit of toil thrown in for good measure. (You can donate directly on the uucb.org website and click on the 'give' button.)

From the Treasurer

Larry Nagel

The UUCB Finance team, consisting of Tess O'Riva, Diana Steinbach, Monte Meyer of Shining Star Consulting, and me, continues to prepare for the financial review of the books for FY 2020-21 with the audit firm Healey and Associates. The last audit was done for FY 2015-16, so we are way overdue.



This article describes the UUCB financial results through November 2020. Year to Date Total Revenue was \$465,348, which is \$89,411 better than budgeted. Year to Date Expenses were \$324,882, which is \$56,214 better than budgeted.

The bottom line is that, as of November 30, we are running a surplus of \$140,466, which is \$145,624 better than budgeted.

At the end of November, the Mechanics Checking account balance was \$553,761, which includes the \$382,572 Cope Ministerial Housing Fund, and the Mechanics Savings account balance was \$152,805. Hence, our cash reserves at the end of November were \$323,994. The UUA Board Designated Endowment balance was \$891,532.

On a personal note, this will be my last Beacon article. At the February Congregational Meeting, the Board of Trustees will elect a new Treasurer and my term will end. Although the job has been very challenging, I have enjoyed immensely working with everyone on the Finance Team. Hopefully, I've made the Treasurer's job a little easier for the next Treasurer.

If you have any questions, please contact me at lwn@att.net or call me at (510) 558-0842.

Social Justice Council

At our January Social Justice Council Meeting people were asked to think big and throw out ideas for projects we might consider to fulfill the mission of the council and honor the gifts and legacies recently contributed to further our work. These ideas are not fully developed, but were suggested to see if they might spark interest in the council and the congregation at large. We include them at the end of the article for feedback or further ideas that might draw in our congregation and the community at large. Comment and suggestions to socialjustice@uucb.org.

Sponsored Projects

Confronting Racism Project

- **Diverse Books to Richmond Schools:** Having just celebrated the birth of Martin Luther King, Jr., welcomed in a new President, and as we move into Black History Month, let us continue to act wholeheartedly upon our UU values. Unitarian Universalists, as we know, are called to live out our respect and support for all people of color. UUCB's Anti-Racism Task Force is encouraging projects that invite congregants to be active participants in these UU values. One significant way we can do that is to engage with our ongoing program, **Diverse Books for Richmond Schools**. Please be on the lookout for emailed lists of books that are needed in Richmond elementary schools and that we can provide for them.
- **The Literature Film & Drama Contingent** of the Social Justice Council celebrated Kwanzaa by viewing a documentary called The Black Candle and discussing it, along with the meanings invoked by Kwanzaa's Seven Principles: Umoja (Unity); Kujichagulia (Self-Determination); Ujima (Collective Work & Responsibility); Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), and Imani (Faith) – and how we can better incorporate them into our daily lives. There was laughter and camaraderie during a rich afternoon, and song: “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” once referred to as the Black National Anthem, written first as a poem by James Weldon Johnson, and performed for the first time by 500 school children in celebration of President Lincoln's birthday on February 12, 1900, in Jacksonville, Florida.
- **Whites Opposed to White Supremacy:** WOWS meeting for February will be Sunday, February 28 at 12:30. Contact Julia at: socialjustice@uucb.org for

information and links. WOWS works to challenge racism in ourselves, our community, and our world. We usually meet on the fourth Sunday of the month. We also meet about three times a year with UUCB's People of Color Caucus (POCC), with whom we partner to confront racism.

Standing With Homeless Youth

- **YEAH's Tiny House Empowerment Village.** If the fates allowed, the first of the Tiny House Village youth have moved in as this was published. [Click here to check out the exciting video of the campus.](#) Recent fund raising has focused on buying a second bathroom trailer and continued grounds beautification. Donations can be made at: youthspiritartworks.org (click on "donate"). Future opportunities to be involved may include mentoring, cooking meals, and organizing worship services and other activities.

Environmental Justice

- Our environmental project has made a wonderful connection with the Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth. UUMFA is working with Project Drawdown to encourage UU congregations and members across the globe to put climate solutions into action. This project is still developing, but we expect to start asking people to sign up and participate, potentially in teams, in the Drawdown Ecochallenge online. We have many other ideas for actions the congregation and neighbors can take to restore our environment for all. A simple thing many people suggested, to plant native plants and trees that draw down atmospheric carbon and restore the ecosystems we need for our pollinators, insects, and birds to thrive. We're looking forward to continuing our work in 2021.

Possible Sponsored Project Ideas for 2021/22

- Support and work with community groups trying to stop future fracking permits and put limitations on placing wells near schools and playgrounds.
- Track Gov. Newsom's action as compared to talk, and pressure him to keep those promises (He vetoed a bill for a pilot project to redirect resources to community groups to aid in public safety.)
- Support the Poor People's campaign and determine urgent local issues to be mitigated under that umbrella. Eg. Campaign for Medicare for all, \$15/hr federal minimum wage. Stop egregious climate hazards put on poor communities.

- Set up blood donation drive at the Church with safe pandemic practices, as hospitals are in dire need.
- Start a large community food garden.
- Working with Operation Dignity - put together utility bags for the homeless with toiletries, small food items, etc. and distribute.
- Reconstitute the UUCB Peace Committee and create projects for Peace.
- Sheila - further education about the destruction of the planet.
- Implement an after-school typing proficiency program for middle school students to aid in computer use and coding.
- Invite youth from our Good Neighbor organizations to share needs and ideas for support, eg. youth from YEA, and YES.
- Reach out to Chalice Circles to participate in social justice projects.
- Work with school counselors who help homeless students to build up resources they need.

From Our Members

Masks of Color Friends



This project has wrapped!

Over the course of nine months, I made 400 masks, with donations totaling \$6593.00! With deep appreciation, THANK YOU for engaging in this endeavor in one way or another. Folks contributed fabric, funds, the mask templates, ideas; you procured masks and presented them to others.

The dollars that came in were gifted to the following:

- People in the East Bay impacted by COVID-19
- Another immigrant family beyond UUCB's accompanied family
- Generation UUers who graduated high school in 2020
- Refugees and volunteers struck by the derecho storm in Cedar Rapids, IA
- Herd & Flock Animal Sanctuary in Vacaville assaulted by wildfires
- Richmond Emergency Food Pantry

- Berkeley Food Pantry
- Youth Spirit Artworks (YSA)

Stay SAFE and keep wearing your mask!

From the Executive Director

Tess Snook O'Riva, Executive Director



When I was trained in Cross-Cultural Conflict Resolution, the first thing we explored was that ALL conflict is cultural. What??? They defined “cultural” to mean everything that makes you who you are right now. It’s not just race, ethnicity, gender identity, or any other demographic you self-identify with. It’s also how your parents dealt with conflict. Your birth order. What role you have in your family’s dynamics. Your financial situation over time. Where you are on your spiritual path. What kind of self-exploration you’ve done, including how much therapy you’ve had. It also includes how you’ve reacted to all these influences.

Culture, in this context, is individual and therefore unique. You inherently don’t match exactly with anyone else. So how do we reach across the aisle to those different from us to support our President’s and our faith’s call for unity? These are some steps we can take:

1. **Be aware of your own world view** – This is a “check your filters” thing. Many of us have things we need to *unlearn*. Know that going in, and be aware of what you notice, how you instinctively react, and what your internal dialogue is saying.
2. **Develop positive attitudes towards cultural differences** – Embrace the unknown. Challenge yourself to hang out in discomfort. That’s where growth happens. Listen to radio stations you don’t normally tune into. Get out of the echo chamber full of those who already agree with you.
3. **Gain knowledge of different cultural practices and world views** – Our own Literature, Film & Drama Contingent (LFDC) of the Social Justice Council continually recommends media that educates and enlightens us. Also look for books and documentaries about rural America.
4. **Develop skills for communication and interaction across cultures** – Your best tool is asking questions appropriate to the situation. That’s NOT asking someone where their family is from. It IS asking what pronouns they prefer. And you start by sharing of yourself, your own culture. “I prefer the pronouns she/her/hers. What do you prefer?”

The real challenge for Unitarian Universalists is to try and understand those people on the far right of the political and social attitude spectrum. But if we are to be part of the solution, it is up to each and every one of us to try and see where those

people are coming from. Our President and Vice President have called for Unity. We will answer that call.

Email ed@uucb.org or attend EAT meetings for more info (see uucb.org for details)!



Mailing address: 1 Lawson Road, Kensington, CA 94707

Telephone: 510-525-0302

Email: info@uucb.org

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