



THE BFUU COMMUNICATOR

Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists

510-841-4824 office@bfuu.org www.bfuu.org

May 2025



Worship Service Sundays at 10:30 AM

BFUU Fellowship Hall 1924 Cedar St, Berkeley CA & on Zoom

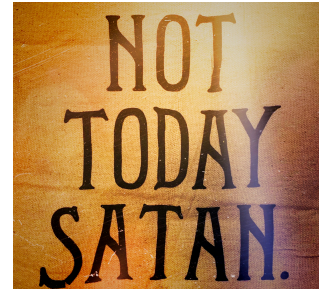
except as noted

reading this offline? please email worshiponline@bfuu.org for link

May 4: Seeing Evil

Rev. Ben Meyers (he/him)

‘The problem with Evil,’ is not just a theological topic for sermonic discourse. We live in a time where we each need to decide... ‘What do we do about it?’ The sermon will offer some suggestions—and actions for these times. Special music by Rev. Ben. Bring a Friend!



May 11: A Mother's Day reflection on Biology, Families, and Social Policy

Gillian Fynn (she/her)

Drawing on her experience working in maternal and child health, Gillian will speak about the modern family and caregiving relationships, and share data showing what progress is needed to improve maternal/infant health.

May 18: Support Frederick Douglass and his promotion of Haiti in 1893, “Until She Spoke, No Christian Nation Had Abolished Slavery” Tom Luce (he/him)

Here is a statement of commitment to promote the rejection by the U.S. and other countries of Haiti due to racism. Today Haiti is in the worst situation it has been since 1804 when it abolished slavery. Frederick Douglass, as an abolitionist had to work hard on Haiti. And there is, unfortunately, a lot of racism in the U.S.

“If, by a true statement of facts and a fair deduction from them, I shall in any degree promote a better understanding of what Haiti is, and create a higher appreciation of her merits and services to the world; and especially, if I can promote a more friendly feeling for her in this country and at the same time give to Haiti herself a friendly hint as to what is hopefully and justly expected of her by her friends, and by the civilized world, my object and purpose will have been accomplished.” - Frederick Douglass



May 25: Stepping Up When You're Needed: Answering the Call

Tom Luce (he/him)

Coming together in community, we honor those who answered their call to serve—whether in ministry or military service. Join for a special ordination ceremony for BFUU member Simone Chiodini.

Please see [page 2](#) for our shared plate partner information and [page 3](#) for Minister/Speaker bios.



Office: 1606 Bonita Ave Berkeley CA 94709
510-841-4824 office@bfuu.org www.bfuu.org

Clergy & Staff

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Reverend Tom McAninley, *Community Minister*
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Chair Phoebe Sorgen
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Margaret Hurlbert, Convener
Worship Services Committee
Jeff Palmer, Chair

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in The Communicator are those of individuals and are not necessarily those of BFUU, its officers, or its trustees.

President's Corner

Hello everyone,

Wishing everyone a Happy Spring and Earth Day!

We are planning several events in May and June: Our beloved Simone Chiodini's ordination will be on May 25th, and we will be celebrating with her and having a special lunch and music after the service. Joanna Foley is coordinating a new art installation and reception for artists from Art Esteem on June 15th.

On June 8th, we will have our Congregational Meeting and elect board members. We will update you more about this soon.

Enjoy the beautiful weather, flowers, birds and trees, and all the other beings!

Take care,
Margaret

May Shared Plate Partner

Hope for Haiti Education

Donate: <https://stcolumba-oak.com/hope-for-haitischolarshipdonations>

Hope for Haiti Education works with the Grand Ravine Community Human Rights Council in Port-Au-Prince to provide full scholarships for children in Haiti to attend school.

Worship Service Leaders

Rev. Ben Meyers (he/him)

The Rev. Ben Meyers loves living near Lake Merritt in Oakland, CA. His ministry spans 28 years: half of that time as a parish minister and half as a social justice/community minister. He is the proud father of two sons and loves spending as much time as possible with his two-year old grandson. His passion is working with individuals and faith-based communities throughout the country as a Solar and Clean Energy consultant. His mission is to accelerate the adoption of clean energy as a moral and spiritual imperative. As a proud parent of a transgender child, he is also a vocal ally and avid advocate for LGBTQ+ rights.

Gillian Fynn (she/her)

Gillian was born in England, raised in Africa, in what was Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. She then lived internationally, coming to the US in 1978. Gillian lives in Berkeley and is fortunate to have two adult children and two grandchildren living close by. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, now semi retired. She worked for many decades in the field of Maternal/Child Health, particularly mental health.

Tom Luce (he/him)

Now 87, born in Barre, Vermont, I chose to go to the Catholic seminary in 1956 and one of my classmates was Max Dominique, a Haitian from a leadership family, the reason why I chose to go to Haiti in 2004. In 2000, I joined my hometown UU Church, First Church Unitarian, Barre, Vt., because they were the only church supporting the same-sex marriage law.

After retiring from teaching French and Spanish in my hometown and moving with wife, Judy, to Berkeley in 2005, I, as a member of Oakland UU, began working in 2006 with BFUU's Cynthia Johnson on the "Declaration of Peace", a national campaign for stopping the Iraq war that was proposed at the GA in Louisville Kentucky as an AIW in 2006. Soon after, I joined BFUU and have continued to be supportive.

Because of my relationship with my wife, I participate in a local Catholic parish, St. Columba, Oakland, where I was asked to develop an international service program, HopeForHaiti:Education/HHE, in 2010 since I had already developed some community based groups in Port-Au-Prince. This group has survived and is in its 15th year providing school for a total of 1,000+ students in the inner-city communities of Martissant and Grand Ravine.

Social Justice Watch

Mon. April 28, 5:00 pm - Special City Council meeting re Palestine! 1231 Addison St. just west of Acton. We want a Gaza ceasefire and divestment Resolution. Potentially added - supporting the return of [Mahmoud Khalil](#) who is detained in a horrid Louisiana prison and may be deported, though here legally, for protesting legally and non-violently. Ask the City Council and Mayor to support him, as well as the Resolution for a ceasefire that the Peace and Justice Commission approved Sept. 30. council@berkeleyca.gov, mayor@berkeleyca.gov. The agenda and Zoom info should soon be on the City website.

Sat. May 31, 10:00 am Travis Air Force Base flash mob crosswalk dance during commissary traffic. Learn the easy dance with [this video](#). Contact Phoebe 510-646-3596 for carpools. We protest deportations and US taxes arming Israel instead of human needs.

Sun. June 1, 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm. Community Presentation on Immigrant Rights and Services - How we can help! BFUU Hall. Organized by Betsy, Gillian, Nancy, and Margaret. Contact one of them to pitch in. Please help publicize! Let them know if you can come early to set up that night.

Monthly Monday meetings at 5:30 occur in the Main Library on Kittredge St. towards **creating a tiny house village in Berkeley** for houseless youth, similar to the wonderful one we helped create in Oakland. To get involved or support, contact our longtime ally and former BFUU speaker, Sally Hindman, Exec. Director Tiny Village Spirit <https://www.TinyVillageSpirit.org>

RALLIES, PROTESTS, EVENTS:

<https://www.indybay.org/calendar/>

<https://indivisibleeb.org/>

<https://www.fiftyfifty.one/events>

Give federal electeds a peace o' yo mind daily! **Capitol Hill: 800-826-3688**

Hank made new **BFUU T-shirts**, bright yellow so other UU's can spot us from a distance at protests, etc. Want one? Ask Gillian after a Sunday service. Only \$10! We broke them in on the national day of global action, Saturday April 5 **in front of Berkeley Tesla on 4th Street. People protest there every Saturday at noon, also at College/Ashby on Fridays at 5pm.** On the national "Hands Off" day, Gillian and Phoebe organized an earlier gathering at 11:00 am which was well-attended, then went to MLK Park for a more intimate but more visible protest, while Margaret and others went to North Berkeley BART station which, though less visible, garnered a huge crowd. Resistance may be more important than ever, and solidarity lifts our spirits in this time of frightening news.

Social Justice Watch cont'd

Later that day, a training at BFUU prepped Travis Air Force Base protestors who blockaded April 9 in honor of [David Hartsough](#) who passed recently.

On April 12, our second **Peace Gathering** at BFUU was an inspiring success! Two featured speakers on Africa were riveting, [Anne Garrison](#) of [Black Agenda Report](#) and a gentleman from Congo Connect and Thrive, as were representatives of multiple organizations, networking and connecting the dots! Code Pink raised over \$300 for UN Relief by selling delicious home made baked goods. Thank you, Hank, and all who helped!

On April 16, another wonderful event took place in our Hall: **Indigenous Rights, Climate Forests in Chile**: Report Back featuring Anne Petermann and Orin Langelles on the Mapuche struggle to reclaim ancestral land, culture, spirituality, and food sovereignty. This was also a book launch and signing of "Portraits of Struggle" by Orin Langelles, organized by our longtime ally, Karen Pickett of Bay Area Coalition for Headwaters.

Time for another Project Censored book party at BFUU? They're doing excellent research re treacherous [military AI](#).

Far rightwing organizers have achieved **RECALLS of progressive electeds** nationwide, including SF DA Chesea Boudin, Alameda County DA Pamela Price, and Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao. Next targeted-Contra Costa County DA [Diana Becton](#). It's difficult to adequately counter pervasive lies when we are hugely outspent and media is complicit. But maybe we can save Becton, and Barbara Lee is replacing Thao! So keep the faith, and keep resisting in large ways and small. Enjoy the process!

SJC usually meets on 3rd Sundays after lunch in the foyer. Sorry I forgot the April meeting because I had a gig in SF and my son just got married, officiated by his former BFUU RE teacher Rev. Jeff Melcher.

Peace & Love, Phoebe Thomas Sorgen, BFUU Social Justice Committee facilitator

L to R: Betsy, Melissa and Gillian wearing their new BFUU T-shirts in front of Tesla on Global Action Day.



BFUU Sponsored Events



BFUU OPEN MIC



Berkeley Fellowship Monthly Open Mic 3rd Fridays

Friday May 16 at 7:00 PM

Musicians, Poets, Magicians, Comedians, Storytellers, etc.

Sign-ups begin 6:30. Perform or just come to enjoy! Show time 7pm

BYO potluck refreshments (optional) Suggested donation \$10–\$20 No one turned away.

Sponsored by BFUU Social Justice Committee

To get low volume Social Justice announcements/alerts, email: bfuusjev-subscribe@lists.riseup.net

Host: Lady Driftwood (she/her) from Art on the Spot and Her 2 Sense!

Featured Artist: Evelie Delfino S  les Posch
(she/her/siya) & Mahal EthnoFusion Music Myth
Magic Ensemble

Evelie is a sacred song singer/writer; recording artist; drummer; dancer; Tibetan and Kundalini yogini; Pranic healer, Certified Sound Therapist; choral director; storyteller; actress; music educator; independent scholar; and magical activist whose talents have flourished for over forty years, spanning the traditions of her ancestors and the progressive edge of ceremony and world music. She performs with and directs Mahal, a kosmik-ethnik-ekstatik-trance-tribal fusion muzik ensemble.



Freestyle Dance

May 2nd, 9th, 23rd, 30th and May 15th 7:30 - 10:00 PM in Fellowship Hall

There's no instruction. Our dancing DJs play a wide range of music to get you moving – world, funk, blues, pop, electronic, oldies, and more.

Requested donation \$20, no one turned away for lack of funds.

Some work-exchange is available. **FREE for BFUU Members!**



Berkeley History Club

Wednesday May 14th, 7 - 9 PM and Potluck dinner at 6 PM in Fellowship Hall

Come build community with people who enjoy conversations around historical topics. For more information write eventpartner@bfuu.org

1st Sundays Writing Group

May 4th at 12:30-2 PM in the Fellowship Hall Lobby

BFUU is sponsoring this free writing group open to word lovers from all levels of experience. Bring pen and paper for writing or a piece that you would like to receive supportive feedback on.



More Community Events

Well of Song with Sharon Knight

Thursday May 1st 7-8:30pm in Connie Barbour Room

Let's make expressive music and sound together! We'll drop into an improvisational vocal flow that combines technique, melody, and harmony with authentic expression to experience the healing connection of singing together. Come exactly as you are, and know you are safe to express whatever you need to express. Drums and percussion instruments welcome. Sliding scale donations of \$15 - \$30 per session appreciated. No one turned away for lack of funds. REGISTER HERE: <https://shop-sharonknight.com/products/the-well-of-song-an-interactive-music-experience-with-women-of-the-well>

Breathe Move, Play! Interplay with Rev. Jojo and Cindy Phillips

In person: 2nd and 4th Sundays 1pm-2:30 in Fireside Room (5/11 and 5/25)

Online: 1st and 3rd Sundays 1pm-2:30 on Zoom (5/4 and 5/18)

Unmute you body. Bring in your creativity. Experience the Joy of Living in the Moment! Refresh your soul and find amusement. Retrieve the Wisdom of your body. Build Community and Strengthen you Connections! \$5-\$15 donations accepted, no one turned away for lack of funds.

RSVP by email josefina.gabuya@cst.edu or tenniscp@gmail.com

Immigration Rights Community Presentation

Sunday June 1st 3pm-6pm in Fellowship Hall

OUR MISSION is to educate our congregation and the wider East Bay community about organizations and individuals who have been helping vulnerable immigrants for decades, how they have been helping, and how we can help them protect our friends and neighbors who are being threatened, detained, and deported during the second Trump Administration.

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS: Bay Area Center for Immigration Evaluations (BACIE), East Bay Sanctuary Covenant, Friends of La Peña, Indivisible East Bay's Immigration Committee, Ingrid Roberson, Chief Deputy Supervisor of Public Instruction, CA Dept. of Education, Lawyers' Committee on Civil Rights, Lifelong Medical Care

I. 3pm **SHARP** to 4:15pm: presentations from our attending agencies with time for Q&A

II. 4:30pm to 5: Friends of La Peña and East Bay Sanctuary Covenant will give an introductory version of their immigrant rights trainings they do twice a month at La Peña.

III. 5:15pm to 6pm: Refreshments will be available. A table will be set up for each of the presenters, where you will be able to chat with them and pick up printed materials.

Weekly Meetings

BFUU Choir Practice on Tuesdays at 7:00 PM

Choir members practice songs for worship service and fun! Please contact Margaret at muscom@bfuu.org

Worship Service on Sundays at 10:30 AM

Please contact worshipservices@bfuu.org for committee information.

Monthly Meetings

Board of Trustees Meeting 4th Thursday 5/22 at 3:00 PM on Zoom.

Social Justice Committee Meeting 3rd Sunday 5/18 after service (noonish)

Please contact Phoebe at sjc@bfuu.org

Worship Service Committee Meeting 1st Wednesday 5/7 at 5:00 PM

Please contact worshipservices@bfuu.org

Regular Committee Meetings

Aesthetics (subcom. of B&G)

Meets as needed

contact [Aesthetics Committee](#)

Buildings & Grounds (B&G)

Meets once per month,

contact [Ben and Abbot](#)

Caring

meets as needed

contact [Karen Dewald](#)

Committee on Ministry

meets as needed

contact [Jinky Gardner](#)

Finance

Meets as needed

contact [Ben and Abbot](#)

Hospitality

meets as needed

contact [Hospitality](#)

Membership

meets as needed

contact [Jeff Palmer](#)

Music

meets as needed

contact [Margaret Hurlbert](#)

Nominating

meets as needed

contact [Virginia Hollins-Davidson](#)

Personnel

Meets as needed

Contact [Ben Burch](#)

Poetry

Meets as needed

contact [Frances Hillyard](#)

Religious Education

Meets as needed

contact [RE Committee](#)

Social Justice Ministry

meets as needed

contact [Margaret Hurlbert](#)

Social Justice (SJC)

3rd Sunday noonish - after service

contact [SJC Chair Phoebe](#)

Worship Services

1st Wednesday at 5:00 PM

contact [WSC Chair Jeff Palmer](#)

Pastoral Care with Rev. Jojo

Rev. Jojo V. Gabuya (they/them) is a Pastoral Care Provider whose ministry focuses on befriending hostility, tending to stress and trauma, and mending brokenness that affect one's health and well-being as a person. Rev. Jojo helps BFUU members and guests in connecting with a Sacred Reality, developing radical compassion, practicing revolutionary love, and unlocking their body wisdom through InterPlay and other somatic practices. **They** is currently holding in-person meetings, either at the BFUU Minister's Office or, at the home of anyone in need of pastoral care, by appointment. To schedule an appointment, kindly email revjojo@bfuu.org, or call (209) 693-8947.

Rev. Jojo is an ordained minister in the Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples SF, which was co-founded by Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman. **They** is a member of the Eco-Preacher Cohort at the BTS Center, a Certified InterPlay Leader, and a Happiness and Well-being Coach.



Fellowship Calendar May 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p style="text-align: center;">Please Plan Ahead:</p> <p>Direct links to meetings/registration have ¹ after the link.</p> <p>Other links send an email to the convener – please allow time for a reply.</p> <p>If you have questions, please email office@bfuu.org or call the office at 510-841-4824 ext. 1.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">* Fellowship event ¹meeting link</p>				<p>1</p> <p>7:00 pm -BR Gurdjieff Group</p> <p>7:00 pm -CB Well of Song</p>	<p>2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7:30pm Freestyle Friday</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>4</p> <p>10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service^{*1}</p> <p>12:30 pm - FH Lobby Writing Group</p>	<p>5</p> <p>6:30 pm - FH MOVE!</p>	<p>6</p> <p>7:00 pm Choir Practice^{*1}</p>	<p>7</p> <p>5:00 pm WSC Meeting[*]</p>	<p>8</p> <p>7:00 pm -BR Gurdjieff Group</p> <p>6:00 pm -FH Improper English Dance</p>	<p>9 6:30 pm -BR Menopause Wellness</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7:30pm Freestyle Friday</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>11</p> <p>10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service^{*1}</p> <p>1:00 pm - FR Interplay with Rev. Jojo</p>	<p>12</p> <p>5:00 pm - CB Joy of Singing</p> <p>6:30 pm - FH MOVE!</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7:00 pm Choir Practice^{*1}</p>	<p>14</p> <p>7:00 pm - FH Berkeley History Club</p>	<p>15</p> <p>7:00 pm -BR Gurdjieff Group</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7:30pm Freestyle Thursday</p>	<p>16</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7:00 pm BFUU Open Mic* - FH</p>	<p>17</p> <p>7:00 pm -FH East Bay Square Dance</p>
<p>18</p> <p>10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service^{*1}</p> <p>12:30 pm - Social Justice Committe</p>	<p>19</p> <p>5:00 pm - CB Joy of Singing</p> <p>6:30 pm - FH MOVE!</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7:00 pm Choir Practice^{*1}</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Communicator Deadline</p>	<p>22</p> <p>3:00 pm BFUU Board of Trustees Mtg[*]</p> <p>7:00 pm -BR Gurdjieff Group</p>	<p>23</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7:30pm Freestyle Friday</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>25</p> <p>10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service^{*1} and Simone Chiodini's Ordination</p> <p>1:00 pm - FR Interplay with Rev. Jojo</p>	<p>26 Memorial Day</p> <p>5:00 pm - CB Joy of Singing</p> <p>6:30 pm - FH MOVE!</p>	<p>27</p> <p>7:00 pm Choir Practice^{*1}</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>7:00 pm -BR Gurdjieff Group</p>	<p>30</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7:30pm Freestyle Friday</p>	<p>31</p>

HAPPY

BIRTHDAY

Tom Luce

Gail Penso

David Yandle

Spiritual Growth and Social Justice in the Heart of Berkeley

Building character, enriching spirits, promoting community, and serving humankind through spiritual growth and social action.

BFUU OFFICE

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 12pm-4pm or by appointment

BFUU OFFICE STAFF

Sharon Knight - Event Space Coordinator

Phone: 510-841-4824, ext. 3

Email: rooms@bfuu.org

Anders Renee - Office Coordinator

Phone: 510-841-4824, ext. 1

Email: office@bfuu.org

SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR JUNE COMMUNICATOR:

May 21, 2025 at 11:00 AM

Please email office@bfuu.org with submissions.

Address Correction Requested

Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists

1606 Bonita Ave.

Berkeley, CA 94709

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Office: 1606 Bonita Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709 | Fellowship Hall: 1924 Cedar St., Berkeley, CA 94709

T: 510-841-4824 | **E:** office@bfuu.org | **www.bfuu.org**