

Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists

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

July 2025



Worship Service Sundays at 10:30 AM

BFUU Fellowship Hall 1924 Cedar St, Berkeley CA & on Zoom *except as noted*

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

July 6: Humor and History

P2 President's Corner

Hank Pellissier (he/him)

Brace Yourself! Nothing is Sacred when BFUU presents an irreverent service, featuring scandalous limericks about members, satirical observations on the ceremonies, blasphemous jokes about all religions, a quiz competition on best-forgotten UU history, and ridiculous selfdeprecating Sing-A-Longs. Virginia Hollins-Davidson is the Liturgist with Hank Pellissier as Minister of Mischief.



July 13: TBA

Theo Kocs-Meyers (he/him)

July 20: It's Written in the Stars

Anders Renee (he/him)

Does it feel like we've been in this timeline before? 2025 is a pivotal year astrologically since all of the outer planets have entered new signs for the next 8+ years. By looking back at the past we can better understand our present and maybe get an idea of what to expect in the future.





July 27: Good Trouble *Mary MacKay (she/her)*

A Time for Everything. That's what it says in Ecclesiastes... "a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak." There are times in life, and times in America, when we are called to make "good trouble" in the words of the late Congressman, John Lewis. And as we learned in the Civil Rights movements of the 60's and 70's, this is not something to be untaken lightly – or alone. Join us as we explore the religious dimensions of moral courage, the importance of non-violent protest, and the long history of fighting for something greater than oneself. "God has no children whose rights may be safely trampled on" - Frederick Douglass



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

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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,

Happy first day of Summer! June has been a great month at BFUU. It started off with an excellent, informative Immigration Rights event with amazing speakers that almost filled the house, organized by Betsy, Gillian, Nancy, Hank, Sumi, and me. We hope to have more events to help immigrants and others that are being attacked in our current administration.

We also had our June Congregational Meeting, at which Gillian Fynn, Betsy Nachman, Sumi Hoshiko, and Hank Pellissier stepped up to the plate to became board members. We appreciate that, and give them a big welcome! Thank you to Jean Marie Stine, Ben Burch, Simone Chiodini, and Tom Luce for all of their work while serving on the board.

Rev. Ben Meyers, who has been speaking monthly at BFUU for several years, and was a full time minister with us for nine years previously, is moving on to become a full-time chaplain. This is sad for us, but he is excited about his new career. We wish him the best and welcome him back when he is more available. We will miss his wonderful music and sermons, which were always thoughtful and provocative.

I wish you all a wonderful summer, and lots of joyful activities!

Margaret

July Shared Plate Partner

ArtEsteem

Donate: https://www.artesteem.org/donate

The Center for ArtEsteem's mission is to empower individuals to be self-aware and inspired through art, creativity, and education, making positive choices to break the cycle of violence for themselves and their communities. We envision a world where everyone is whole, safe, loved, educated and valued. In all our work, ArtEsteem promotes the understanding that we can choose peace over conflict and love over fear. Check out the ArtEsteem art show currently on display in Fellowship Hall!

Worship Service Leaders

Hank Pellissier (he/him)

Hank is founder/director of Humanist Mutual Aid Network, a nonprofit working mostly in Africa. He lives in Piedmont with his wife Carol, they raised two bio-daughters, and they're now guardians of a foster refugee girl from Ethiopia, plus Hank has a bio-son (he was the sperm donor to two lesbian friends). Hank is currently a contracted education writer for GreatSchools.org, he was previously managing director for a futurist think tank, the Institute for Ethics & Emerging Technology, and a columnist for Salon.com, SFGate.com, and NYTimes (SF edition) His main interest is wealth distribution/global egalitarianism/poverty alleviation; he just launched a website titled Eat The Rich. He also writes limericks and doggerel, decades ago he was a performance artist and a SF Slam Poetry co-champion.

Theo Kocs-Meyers (he/him)

Anders Renee (he/him)

Anders has been living in Oakland since 2011 and is grateful to add BFUU to the many different spiritual communities that he's a part of. When he's not in the BFUU office, Anders does astrology readings for clients. Since 2017 Anders has been a member of the Reclaiming tradition where he currently plans public rituals and teaches magic classes. He loves dancing, playing non-competitive board games, cuddling his two cats Alvin and Isadora, putting his body in bodies of water, looking for cool rocks, and rocking cool socks.

Mary MacKay (she/her)

Mary MacKay is a lifelong Unitarian Universalist and longtime member of Live Oak UU in Alameda and First UU in Honolulu. She has preached regularly at both for many years. Mary is a retired Geologist and an amused observer and grateful participant in being human and is happiest when wandering the Bay Area hills. She thinks the arc of the moral universe is very long and does not bend towards justice on its own – but takes all of us, every day, in ways large and small.

Social Justice Watch

Social Justice Watch by Phoebe Thomas Sorgen

Many BFUUers have been protesting repeatedly for democracy, not monarchy or oligarchy or a billilonaires' club. Signs are creative. Energy is uplifting. Protests are often listed on **IndyBay.org** Are we all Immigrant Ambassadors yet?

By the time this goes to press, BFUU's Social Justice Committee will have held our second Singing Protest for Justice and Peace on University Ave. between Acton & Bonar. This location/time was chosen for high visibility. After the protest/sing-a-long on June 27, we will decide if people prefer a different location or time. The first one was SO fun with 15 attendees including Marjorie Mikels (her brainchild) with her accordion and Betsy Rose who loves that we are doing this! Open Mic: Songs, Poems, Chants for Peace & for Palestine with instruments, rattles, drums, voices and signs/banners: "Ceasefire Now, Break the Siege, Lift the Blockades, Let in Food & Humanitarian Relief, SPARE IRAN, HANDS OFF IMMIGRANTS! STOP ICE! HANDS OFF our LEGISLATORS. MARINES/Nat'lGuard OUT of CA!" Our taxes fund massive weapons of mass destruction in the US and Israel, funds needed for healthcare, education, and housing here in the USA! Code Pink is co-host.





Photos from the first Sing 4 Justice event, taken by Phoebe

Left: Marjorie Mikels and her granddaughter

Right (L to R): Betsy Rose, Margaret Hurlbert, Mark McDonald, Marjorie Mikels

Social Justice Watch contd.

On Fridays from 4:30 to 6 there is also a banner hang for Gaza at the nearby pedestrian bridge across the freeway.

Margaret and Phoebe marched small sections of the well-attended Right to Return Interfaith Ceasefire Coalition's pilgrimage on June 8. Mike Kerr did most of the 22 miles!

BFUU was also represented at the emergency protest against war on Iran (and WW III) at Embarcadero Plaza on June 22 and at Travis Air Force Base on June 24 where, with four other septuagenarian women, Phoebe was arrested and cited for blocking the workers' commute onto the base because she agrees with Chris Hedges that the way to stop the genocide and wars is to stop the weapons shipments - Peoples Arms Embargo! Also, deportees are being flown out of Travis. Susan Crane, who spoke at BFUU long ago, attends the Travis protests. Phoebe also connected at Travis with youngsters who are very concerned that, while in many ways useful, unregulated AI poses a more severe threat to our species than nukes. They seek seasoned activists' collaboration.

There will be a similar action at Beale Air Force Base in Marysville on July 16.

Off the screens and into the streets!



Above: Mike Kerr (L) and Phoebe Thomas Sorgen (R) at the Berkeley Shellmound during the Right to Return Interfaith Pilgrimmage for Palestine Below: Rev. Ben Meyers (R) and his son Theo (L) at the Open Mic night on June 20th. Theo will be speaking at BFUU on July 13th!



Social Justice Watch contd.

Opinion: San Francisco Bay Area Should Provide Free Public Transportation by Hank Pellissier

The San Francisco Bay Area is beautiful, with fantastic weather, food, diversity and culture. We're also internationally famous for our progressiveness, creativity, and innovation. I believe the next amazing world-leading feature we can add to our cornucopia of attractions is Free Public Transportation. Imagine how wonderful it would be if Muni, BART, Caltrain, AC Transit, SamTrans, SF Bay Ferries, and all the other transportation services were absolutely free?

Providing this convenience would deliver enormous, varied benefits to the 7.6 million SF Bay Area residents, and would make us a lovable destination for tourists. This goal - Free Public Transportation - is ambitious, but it isn't impossible, or even original. Truth is, many people world-wide already enjoy free rides in their smart municipalities. New York City mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani is promoting free transit, with a plan that's gained the endorsement of economists from Chile, United Kingdom, Greece, and the USA.

The entire nation of Luxembourg has offered free public transportation to both its citizens and visitors since 2020. Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, has given free transit to its residents since 2013. In France, thirty-five cities provide free public transportation. Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, offers free rides to seniors, disabled, and students. In Maricá (Brazil) – the entire municipal bus system is free. Delhi (India) – offers free metro and bus travel for women. Madrid & Barcelona (Spain) offer free (or heavily discounted) passes to youth and seniors. Even in the USA, free public transit is already here. Kansas City, Missouri, has enjoyed a free bus system free since 2020. Olympia, Washington, has fully fare-free intercity transit. Missoula, Montana, is free for all riders. Columbia, South Carolina, has free buses, and Chapel Hill, North Carolina, has enjoyed free transit for over a decade. Ithaca, New York, and Madison, Wisconsin, offer free transit to students. But if the San Francisco Bay Area offered free transit, we'd be the LARGEST municipality in the world to offer Free Transit to everyone, resident and visitor alike. (Population of Luxembourg is 666,430. Kansas City 510,704. Population of San Francisco Bay Area is 7.6 million in the nine-county area)

Providing free transit would be tremendously beneficial to millions of people, for three major reasons:

- 1. Combat Climate Change increased public ridership would reduce harmful CO2 fossil fuel emissions. Estimates from Kansas City and Tallinn Estonia's suggest an increase in ridership of 15 percent. Another estimate from a pilot project in New York City suggests a ridership increase of 30 percent. These increases in people taking public transportation instead of driving their own cars indicates a total reduction of 5.4 10.8 tons of emissions would be eliminated, leading to better air quality, improved public health, and long-term climate gains.
- 2. Reduce Traffic Congestion & Parking Difficulty Estimates suggest public transit would decrease traffic congestion in dense urban areas and chokepoints like the Bay Bridge by up to 15 percent. Car ownership would also be reduced. Traffic in San Francisco is the second-slowest in the USA (NYC is #1) and getting worse every year. Parking costs in San Francisco are also the second-worst in the USA (NYC #1), and again, it is continually getting worse.
- 3. Promote Social Equity Free transit removes a financial cost that hits low-income residents hard. Transportation is the second-biggest expense after housing for many Americans. In the Bay Area, a monthly Clipper pass can cost \$86–\$98 per system, and much more for multi-agency commuters. For people living paycheck-to-paycheck, this is a significant cost. People of color, immigrants, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities rely more heavily on public transit. 55–70% of frequent transit riders in the Bay Area are from low-to moderate-income households, but these riders usually pay more per mile of transit than wealthy drivers. Free fares equalize access regardless of income or geography. Free transit would help people 1) take jobs they couldn't otherwise afford to commute to, thus improving the economy, 2) Stay in school without worrying about bus fare, 3) Get to appointments, child care, or grocery stores without skipping meals to afford transit. To conclude: Free Public Transit should be seen as a civil rights and economic justice intervention. Our motto: "We want to move freely around our beautiful bay"

The Cost? How can San Francisco Bay Area pay for Free Transit throughout our large region?

Share The Money. Institute estimates the cost as \$1.5 billion annually. This sum can best be obtained from the 37 local billionaires who, combined, have an approximate wealth of \$885 billion. The \$1.5 billion for free transit is only 0.17% of the local billionaire wealth. NYC's Zohran Mamdani suggests. similarly a 2% tax on anyone earning more than \$1 per year. Billionaires can view the "fair transit donation" they are asked to contribute not as punishment or an "envy tax", but as their investment to create a municipality that is better for everyone, themselves includes. They can pride themselves on instigating a world-leading, legacy-defining reform that will etch their names in history as leaders of a bold utopian reform.

Community Voices

Garden Update from Christine

In 2018 I went over to Berkeley horticulture and purchased a small verbena. The small Purple flowered plant basically fit in the palm of my hand. It was planted in the box in front of Jim's plaque next to a lavender which had also been added along with a lemon balm, oregano, chocolate mint. Within a year both of them took off and in serval years got to be larger than 3ft in diameter. BFUU's sexton, Shae, helped move it into one of the barrels to split up those purples. The verbena is still doing well for a drought tolerant plant. Literally I haven't watered much and everything grows and grows. Even the roses!

Now the BFUU roses many of which are thornless are doing quite well. We just had one bloom on the east side, it gets about 3" in diameter big light pink and I see there are 3 more puffs of pink about 5' of the ground. The rose behind it is as tall as the building, oh yes! Has anyone here looked at it lately? There are several new forming rose bushes and they need little water.





Jim's memorial gardens, which BFUU shares with New School, continues to flourish once again and things are always changing!

I have added a start of a local salvia/sage which is doing great and hopefully will bloom sometime soon. It is in a barrel close to the New School gate. I planted it here to eventually fill out this barrel with red and white tiny flowers.

I / we are developing new garden plans for all perimeter beds. I plan on adding a raised portion on the east side and filling in the between areas of the chasmenthe (orange) with varied vibrant colored flowers. The north bed will hopefully have ferns and new beautiful ground covers that love redwoods. I am currently regrowing the coral bells which got broken and they're both doing well.

Dear BFUU Community,

I have moved to Minnesota as of June 3rd. I am very sad to have to leave so many friends and Neighbors. It is much cheaper to live in senior housing in a very good situation closer to three of my four children at this time. And the state has what they call the Minnesota elderly waiver, which means that if you are in Elder housing, and run out of money, you get to stay! I have seen too many of my friends at Redwood Gardens and under Kaiser Permanente and Alameda County have very difficult illnesses and end of life situations. Be well, be strong, and be happy. UU's are the salt of the earth, along with librarians, feminists, tree huggers and other helpers.

Xoxoxo. Wyndy Knox-Carr

P.S. I do get to keep on writing book reviews for the Berkeley times, however, so you will have to keep in touch and tell me details of what's going on.

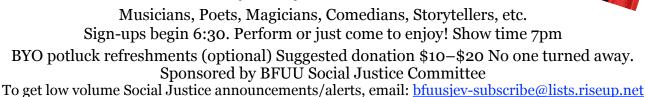
BFUU Sponsored Events



BFUU OPEN MIC

Berkeley Fellowship Monthly Open Mic 3rd Fridays

Friday July 18 at 7:00 PM



Host: Evelie Delfino Såles Posch (she/her/siya) 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.



Featured Artist: **Jeff Liu (he/him)** is an artist working in both animation and music. He worked for the majority of his professional career at Cartoon Network Studios as a storyboard artist and supervisor. He's had the unique opportunity to use both animation and musical skills by drawing and writing songs for the shows he's worked on. Jeff also enjoys collaborating with friend and fellow songwriter Eric Wong in the band The Birds I Heard. Aside from making art, Jeff likes to cook and spend time with friends, family, and four-legged creatures (dogs usually and cats occasionally).



Freestyle Dance

July 11th, 25th 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 July 9th, 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

July 6th 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 July 3rd 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 (7/13 and 7/27)Online: 1st and 3rd Sundays 1pm-2:30 on Zoom (7/6 and 7/20)

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

Democracy Forward Fundraiser Protest Song Sing-Along with Tamsen Fynn Sunday July 27th 5 - 7 Bancroft Community Gardens @ 1308 Bancroft Way

Tamsen will provide songbooks. \$25.00 suggested donation

New Dance Class at BFUU on Monday nights called MOVE! See below.



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 <u>worshipservices@bfuu.org</u> for committee information.

Monthly Meetings

Board of Trustees Meeting 4th Thursday 7/24 at 3:00 PM on Zoom.

Social Justice Committee Meeting 3rd Sunday 7/20 after service (noonish) Please contact Phoebe at sic@bfuu.org

Worship Service Committee Meeting 1st Wednesday 7/2 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	July 2025		
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		7:00 pm Choir Practice*1	2	7:00 pm WSC Meeting* 7:00 pm -CB Well of Song	4	5
6 10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service*1 12:30 pm - FH Writing Club	6:30 pm - FH MOVE!	8 6:30 pm - FH Improper English Dance 7:00 pm Choir Practice*1	7:00 pm - FH Berkeley History Club	10	7:30pm Freestyle Friday	12
13 10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service*1 1:00 pm - FR Interplay with Rev. Jojo	6:30 pm - FH MOVE!	7:00 pm Choir Practice*1	16	17	7:00 pm BFUU Open Mic* - FH	19
20 10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service*1 12:30 pm - FH Social Justice Committee	Communicator Deadline 5:00 pm - CB Joy of Singing 6:30 pm - FH MOVE!	7:00 pm Choir Practice*1	23	3:00 pm BFUU Board of Trustees Mtg*	7:30pm Freestyle Friday	26
10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service*1 1:00 pm - FR Interplay with Rev. Jojo	5:00 pm - CB Joy of Singing 6:30 pm - FH MOVE!	7:00 pm Choir Practice*1	30	31		



Frances Hillyard Josephine Jaszczyk

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 AUGUST COMMUNICATOR:

July 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