



THE BFUU COMMUNICATOR

Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists

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

May 2026



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 3: Organized Love, Organized Power *Gregory Stevens (they/he)*

Our faith has always held that love is a verb but what if we understood love as an organizing force, one that moves people from isolated feeling into collective power capable of transforming the systems that shape our lives. Rooted in our Unitarian Universalist tradition and the lived experience of working people, we will lift up solidarity and collective power as the shape love takes when organized.

May 10: Keening; Grieving for a Dying World *Sharon Knight (she/her)*

Can the old-world tradition of keening help us navigate the grief of our times? Keening is a Scots-Irish Gaelic tradition of lamentation for the Dead. More than merely expressing grief, keening was ritualistically performed by women to help ferry the soul of the recently deceased into the Otherworld. In modern times we know that vocalizing can diminish the pain response and boost mood based on the release of endorphins. Let's explore a modern-day expression of keening by expressing our grief for the losses we are currently feeling in our world, and allowing the power of our raw voices to open a liminal space between what no longer works and what could come to be. Come prepared to wail and sing, to let sorrow and hopelessness pass through you and make room for new possibility.

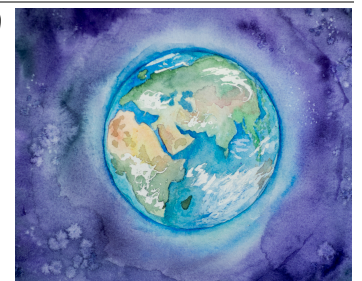


May 17: Sunday Assembly Celebration - Guide Dogs

We welcome Debra Crow of the Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB) Berkeley Puppy Raising Club. She'll be accompanied by her foster puppy Namaka who will one day be a certified guide dog. Join us after the potluck for an interactive session on assisting people who are visually impaired. Learn how to: approach a person with a disability, find out if they would like your help, walk with someone who uses a cane or a guide dog, assist someone who has limited vision, and understanding some of the dos and don'ts.

May 24: Energy - Caring for Creation *Claire Broome, M.D. (she/her)*

The service will focus on what we can do today in our homes, communities, and congregations in the face of the accelerating climate crisis. Being informed helps us choose public policy to accelerate a just transition away from fossil fuels to renewable energy. It is feasible and cheaper to build an energy system based on renewable energy, but there are forces opposing that transition. Hope comes taking meaningful actions.



May 31: Put Your Own Oxygen Mask On First

Rev. Bonnie Dlott (she/her)

With our liberal values under constant attack, it's tempting to rush from emergency to emergency, tossing our attention, time and treasure at the latest travesty. Working to protect our neighbors and our rights as Americans is vital, AND overwhelming. Join us this morning for reflections on the importance of being as compassionate to ourselves as we are to others.



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

Clergy & Staff

Reverend Tom McAninley, *Community Minister*
Lynn/Luna Orlando, *Recording Secretary*
Anders Renee, *Office Coordinator*
Sharon Knight, *Event Space Coordinator*
Ed Keating, *Facilities Manager*
Shae Jewell, *Sexton*

Board of Trustees

Gillian Fynn, *President*
Phoebe Thomas Sorgen, *Vice President*
Mike Gardner
Margaret Hurlbert
Sumi Hoshiko
Betsy Nachman (Alternate)
Ben Burch (Alternate), *Treasurer/Secretary*

Committees

Aesthetics (Subcommittee of B&G)
Chair currently vacant
Building & Grounds Committee
Abbot Foote, *Co-Chair*
Ben Burch, *Co-Chair*
Caring Community
Karen Dewald, *Chair*
Committee on Ministry
Jinky Gardner, *Chair*
Finance Committee
Ben Burch, *Co-Chair*
Abbot Foote, *Co-Chair*
Hospitality Committee
Chair currently vacant
Membership Committee
Jeff Palmer, *Convener/Chair*
Music Committee
Margaret Hurlbert, *Chair*
Nominating Committee
Virginia Hollins-Davidson, *Chair*
Personnel Committee
Ben Burch, *Convener/Chair*
Poetry Committee
Frances Hillyard, *Chair*
Religious Education (RE) Committee
Chair currently vacant
Social Justice Committee (SJC)
Chair Phoebe Sorgen
SJM Task Force (Subcom of SJC)
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

Your Board has decided to move Worship Service starting time to 11:00 a.m. for a trial period. This will start in June and run through October. Thanks to all of you who took time to complete the survey and give us your feedback, your responses guided our decision.

This may mean a cascade of other changes for some, and we would like to hear from you as we go, so that we can help to facilitate solutions.

One issue we are aware of is that for years we have relied on Jeff Palmer to do all the tasks involved in closing-up after our Sunday morning activities. Jeff will not be able to continue doing this with the later start, so we need to ask for volunteers to learn the necessary tasks and make a regular commitment to carry them out.

Peace

Gillian

May Shared Plate Partner

Computer Technologies Program

Donate here: <https://www.ctpberk.org/support-our-work/>

The Computer Technologies Program's mission is to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities by providing training in information technologies, self-marketing strategies and advocacy in partnership with the business and workforce development communities.

CTP is the world's first program of its kind. Founded in Berkeley, CA — the birthplace of the disability rights movement — we have provided over one million hours of services since 1974, helping people with disabilities identify their strengths, overcome barriers, prepare for employment, and achieve greater independence.

Worship Service Leaders

Gregory Stevens (they/he)

Gregory is a former Baptist preacher, long time labor organizer, and interfaith community activist. They're the lead organizer for the Unitarian Universalist EcoSocialist Network, but by day sell their labor power to California Interfaith Power & Light. Gregory has an MDiv from Claremont School of Theology and an MA in Activist Anthropology from California Institute of Integral Studies.

Sharon Knight (she/her)

Sharon Knight is the Event Space Coordinator here at BFUU, and is also a lifelong musician and creative. She is in love with this beautiful jewel of a planet, and spends much of her time pondering how we can re-enchant the world.

Sunday Assembly East Bay

The Sunday Assembly is a secular congregation that celebrate life. Our motto: live better, help often, wonder more. Our mission: to help everyone find and fulfill their full potential. Our vision: a secular congregation in every town, city and village that wants one. We're a non-religious community that meets up to enjoy each other's company and encourage one another to do our best. We gather as a larger group on one Sunday a month. While there's an order to our meeting, we have no doctrine, no sermons, and no liturgy. Instead, we have speakers on wide-ranging topics, sing fun lyrics, and eat lunch together. On other days between the celebrations, we also get together to have book clubs, dine at restaurants, go on hikes, see movies, and lots more. For more information: <https://www.sundayassemblyeastbay.org/home>

Claire Broome (she/her)

Claire Broome, M.D. was Deputy Director of the US CDC from 1994-1999. She has advocated on energy policy in California for the past 15 years at the California Public Utility Commission and the California Energy Commission with Sierra Club California and 350 Bay Area. She is active in the Peace and Social Justice community with a focus on "Care for Creation" by accelerating our transition to renewable energy.

Rev. Bonnie Dlott (she/her)

Since retiring after 11 years of ministry with the Napa congregation, Rev. Bonnie Dlott had the privilege of serving the UU congregations in Santa Rosa and Petaluma as a contract minister. Rev. Bonnie is a Bay Area native and spends her time communing with nature, cooking, traveling, and playing with her two grand babies.

Social Justice Watch

BFUU Social Justice Committee actions are often reported here. Photos tell part of that story. A bigger priority - what to do going forward:

Fri May Day - STRIKE! No Work, School, Shopping. SF Civic Center 2pm. Scroll down on Bay Resistance for [local march times](#).

SF 2pm Civic Center rally. Then march to Art-In at Sales Force Plaza 4ish.

Berkeley 11am 2300 Ellsworth march to 2151 MLK for 11:30 Rally.

Fri. weekly 4-5:30 Banner Drop (& party) on Berkeley pedestrian bridge **for PALESTINE:** <https://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2026/04/20/18885688.php>

Wed. weekly 5-6: Indivisible Berkeley RALLY. MLK @ RUSSELL in front of south branch library. Bring a sign and join Hali Hammer in song.

Thur. May 7, 5pm - Speak against **Flock SURVEILLANCE** @ City Council, 1231 Addison St near Bonar. Lobby now: <https://indivisible-berkeley.org/no-to-expanding-flock-in-berkeley/>.

More talking points: https://docs.google.com/document/d/15SDtl18ivWM_lm6Be8XeieoAi_zQmgzc/edit

Councilmember Blackaby D6 is the swing vote: bblackaby@berkeleyca.gov, council@berkeleyca.gov

Sat. May 9 Interfaith Pilgrimage for Palestine. 8am-4pm, 12 miles thru Oakland, but you can do a short leg. Register: <https://www.im4humanintegrity.org> Supports the [Oakland People's Arms Embargo](#). Related [petition](#) (but beware: ActionNetwork spams!) Moms' Day was created by a Unitarian for peace. Divest from war; invest in life!

Mon. May 11, 6:30 BFUU **Community Activist POTLUCK** with Hank's new twist: a history QUIZ with prizes. 1st potluck was great, thanks to many hands making light work.

Mon. May 11, 8:00 Following the potluck stick around for Marjorie's new twist: fab FILM screening "Earth's Greatest Enemy" (spoiler-It's the military!)

Fri. May 15, 7 - 9 (signups from 6:30) Christine D hosts our monthly **OPEN MIC**. Our OM's have been ROCKIN lately!

Apr 27-May 22 Jury trial. MUSK suing Altman (Open Ai/ChatGPT) for racketeering! Contact Phoebe to protest/flyer. Mon-Thur 8 am. Oakland fed bldg, 1301 Clay St. suite 400S, Courtroom 1, 4th Floor. Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers. DEMO Mon. 4/27 noon-2pm. Phoebe

Social Justice Watch

may organize a press conference and demo the next day at noon and every Tue. The good news is, one of them will lose. A pox on both!

A new **ACTION CALENDAR**: <https://www.actiontogetherwest.org/bayarea>

Re Berkeley 3/28 march, enjoy the **MUSIC VIDEO** by Craig G: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lmoinM8Djk>

PHOTO montage by Pat Zambryski, compiled by her hubby James Lerager:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/h2i2asgaijrxm7ak3cql/260328-NoKingsBerkeley_PZambryski.pdf?rlkey=rvr4ggzgtg804itbkh5dqk71wd&e=1&st=b3hxsntq&dl=0

If you have more Berkeley 3/28 march photos, pls post here: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/UUG128cmkPSEJiT6>

Want to stop looming Ai risks, assaults on truth and democracy, the worsening nuclear threat, the wars on Lebanon, Iran, Gaza, Venezuela, Cuba, AND war on the poor, trans people, immigrants etc. here in the US? Give **CAPITOL HILL** a daily cathartic peace o' your mind: 800-826-3688

SJC is a great team! We're blessed with too many fine peeps for listing names, but because they've been particularly helpful and aren't in the photos, special thanks to **Hank, Annie W, Glenn, Michael K**, and whoever has temporarily slipped my mind! **Mac and Tarnel** also helped a lot 3/28 and before.

Finally, are you wearing a [red whistle](#) in case ICE is spotted? Do you pass out kits? We need more in our foyer. New ACLU Know Your Rights booklets are at BFUU now.

This column is dedicated to our dear friend and ally, the late **Dr. MICHAEL PARENTI** who often filled our Hall as well as our hearts. Here he is regaling us at BFUU:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kWKopNMgDzk&t=367s>

He was brilliant, and so funny! More videos: <https://www.youtube.com/@themichaelparentilibrary>

With LOVE and gratitude that, together, we are creating a more just world,
Phoebe, SJC facilitator

BFUU Social Justice in Action



Above: Marjorie, Virginia, and Phoebe singing after the annual April 6 public reading of Dr. King's Beyond Viet Nam speech on Oscar Grant Plaza, Oakland



Above: Phoebe and other BFUU members marched in Berkeley for No Kings

Below: BFUU members Betsy, Margaret, Tom, Virginia, Gillian, and Andy march during No Kings with the purple banner (photo by Kirsten White)



Left: BFUU members march downtown Oakland for No Kings (photo by Gillian Fynn)



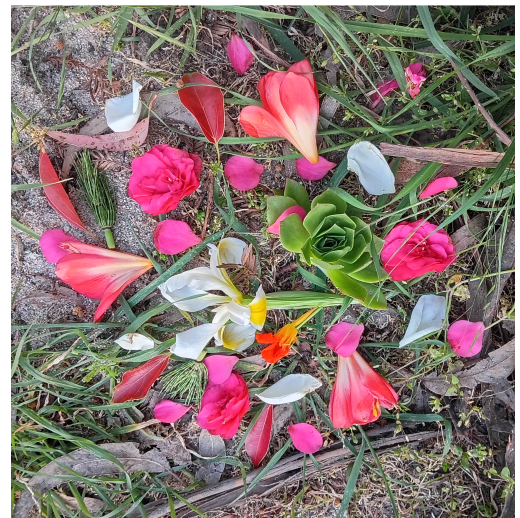
Right: Phoebe and former Berkeley poet laureate Rafael Jesús González lead the march for No Kings in Berkeley



Mandalas



On March 22nd BFUU member and Board President, Gillian Fynn, led the Fellowship in making mandalas from natural objects (pictured above). Cici Hyde was inspired by the service and shared photos from mandalas she has made (pictured below). She says "Since then I have taken to collecting and making the mandalas outside on my walk, and hope other people will see them and smile, and enjoy them as much as I enjoy the process"



BFUU Sponsored Events



BFUU OPEN MIC

Berkeley Fellowship Monthly Open Mic 3rd Fridays

Friday May 15 at 7:00 PM

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

Sign-ups begin 6:30. Perform or just come to enjoy! Show time 7:00pm

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)**

Featured Artist: TBA

Freestyle Dance

May 1st, 8th, 22nd, and 29th 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 12th, 7 - 9 PM, 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 - postponed to June

1st Sundays 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.

East Bay Potluck for Activists + Radical US History Quiz Contest + Film Screening

Monday May 11th 6:30-9:00 in Fellowship Hall

Co-sponsored by Humanist Mutual Aid Network

Potluck - bring whatever you want (except alcohol) Prizes for Quiz winners, topics are Women's Rights, Black liberation, Labor Rights, and Berkeley Activism. Then at 8pm film screening for "Earth's Greatest Enemy" a documentary about the biggest polluter - the US Military. **FREE** — only 65 tickets available - RSVP at by texting 415 309 3505.



Community Voices

Vulnerability Talk with Beth Miller hosted by Open Circle Center

Sunday May 17 3-5pm in Connie Barbour Room

You are invited to a satsang with Beth Miller where we will explore spiritual awakening and vulnerability. Together, let's dive into what we know in our essence. Opening to an ever-deepening realization that what we are in the truest sense is an inside job – an inward surrendering of anything and everything that is in the way of knowing, living, being and expressing our true nature of loving being-ness. Often, we humans, shy away from vulnerability. We have been taught it is weak, unattractive, needy; even failure.

In a welcoming circle of kinship let's explore the beauty, the fears, and profundity of vulnerability. We are whole and holy beings, naturally soft and tender aching to be fully alive and free – longing to know the vulnerability of our interconnectedness; called to being totally at One with our sacred humanity and all of Life. As counter-intuitive as it appears, being vulnerable is holding hands with the Divine.

Beth Miller is a spiritual teacher, psychotherapist, and author devoted to deepening in our true nature and living in loving relationship with all of life. Her work weaves psychological depth with direct spiritual inquiry into presence, love and wholeness. After raising 2 sons and completing her doctoral study in psychology, Beth taught at California Institute of Integral Studies and UCSF, maintained a private practice and led workshops in resilience. Her first book, *The Woman's Book of Resilience: 12 Qualities to Cultivate*, was published in 2005, and came from her doctoral dissertation.

Poetry Corner

Today was the last day.

I took down photographs from
mantel and piano –prim in it's niche
made the wall stark, free of her paintings.
Chimney, doors, windows the wind resounds.

I thought of her hand on a Formica table
A showy rose in a vase she had thrown herself
Her hand on a faucet
In the garden a paving stone worn with her tread.

Today was the last day, and I could not package her,
had to say goodbye to things
she had touched.

But not to the soul fleshed in light
rising to the task. Rising.

Frances. Hillyard



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 Thursday 5/28 at 3:00pm on Zoom

Social Justice Committee Meeting 3rd Sunday 5/17 after service (noonish)

Please contact Phoebe at sjc@bfuu.org

Worship Service Committee Meeting 1st Wednesday 5/6 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](#)



Tom Luce
Gail Penso

Would you like a birthday shoutout in the Communicator? Email office@bfuu.org with your birthday!

Fellowship Calendar May 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 7:30pm Freestyle Friday	2 3-7 pm - Courtyard New School Spring Festival
3 10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service *1 12:45 pm - FH Cathy Raingarden Art Show reception	4 5:00 pm - CB Joy of Singing	5 7:00 pm Choir Practice *1	6	7 5:00 PM - Z WSC Meeting 7:00 pm - BR Gurdjieff Group	8 6:30 pm - BR Menopause Wellness 7:30pm Freestyle Friday	9
10 10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service *1 Mother's Day	11 5:00 pm - CB Joy of Singing 6:30 pm - FH Activist Potluck 8:00 pm - FH Film Screening	12 6:30 pm - FH Improper English Dance 7:00 pm Choir Practice *1	13 7:00 pm - FH Berkeley History Club	14 7:00 pm - BR Gurdjieff Group	15 7 pm - FH Open Mic Night	16
17 10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service *1 12:30 pm - FH Social Justice Committee 3-5 pm - CB Vulnerability Talk with Beth Miller	18 5:00 pm - CB Joy of Singing	19 7:00 pm Choir Practice *1	20	21 7:00 pm - BR Gurdjieff Group	22 7:30pm Freestyle Friday	23
24 10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service *1	25 Memorial Day	26 7:00 pm Choir Practice *1	27	28 7:00 pm - BR Gurdjieff Group 3:00 pm - Z Board Meeting	29 7:30pm Freestyle Friday	30
31 10:30 am - FH+Z Worship Service *1	Stay after the service on Sunday May 3rd for a reception with local illustrator Cathy Raingarden and her art show called: <i>Protest Sketches: Voices from the Street</i> . The art show will be on display in Fellowship Hall until June 6th.					



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

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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

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