



THE BFUU COMMUNICATOR

Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists

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

August 2026



Sunday Services at 11:00 AM

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

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

August 2: Mind Cure: How Meditation Became Medicine

Rev. Dr. Wakoh Shannon Hickey, BCC (she/her)

How did meditation move from the religious margins of American culture to mainstream biomedicine? Mind Cure: How Meditation Became Medicine traces the religious history of mind-body healing from nineteenth-century religious movements led largely by white women, to several African American religious movements, to early public-health initiatives, to the modern "mindfulness" industry. It also explores what got lost along the way.



Photo by Chelsea Gates on Unsplash



Photo by Filipe Resmini on Unsplash

August 9: Lessons from a Tuscan Grasshopper

Rev. Dr. Jeanne Foster (she/her)

The little creatures of the interdependent web of the universe have a lot to teach we big ones if, in the tradition of Henry David Thoreau and Annie Dillard, we will have the patience and take the time to "simply see."

August 16: The Beloved Harvest: Seeds of Solidarity, Fields of Liberation

Gregory Stevens (they/he)
"There are decades where nothing happens, and there are weeks where decades happen" - V.I. Lenin. This service draws on the history and lessons of Black August, ancient flood myths, and harvest traditions to explore liberation as patient cultivation rather than sudden arrival; a freedom planted by generations, gathered collectively, and never grown alone.

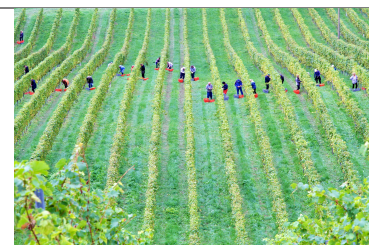


Photo by Matthias Mitterlehner on Unsplash



Photo by Andre Mouton on Unsplash

August 23: Who on Earth are We?

Gillian Fynn (she/her)

What does it mean to be human in 2026? How will historians describe us? How does the frenetic pace of change impact our sense of identity? What networks sustain us and how can we protect them? Where are we putting our energies, our priorities. What inspires you, gives life meaning?

August 30: Ctrl - Z

Rev. Amy Zucker Morgenstern (she/her)

Ctrl-Z is such a wonderful invention: when we have done something that we suddenly regret, we can simply Undo it. Does that only work on our computer keyboards? Amy thinks not. Sure, what's done is done, but we still have the power to revise and rewrite. What would you like to do a little differently in your own life? And in our communal life?



Photo by Miguel Ángel Padriñán Alba on Unsplash

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



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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
Sunday 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

As I write this we are 99 (ninety-nine) days away from November 3rd, and the Mid Term Elections.

Please consider if you are doing whatever is possible within your circumstances, to Defend The Election. We live in perilous times. Perhaps not more perilous than others have faced, but this is our moment of testing.

How ironic, that in the year that we celebrate 250 years of our Democracy, we are in real danger of losing it. I hope you have found your place in the struggle.

Let me know if there are ways you think that we in this Fellowship could do more. Hold Fast.

-Gillian Fynn

August Shared Plate Partner

Doctors Without Borders

Donate here: <https://give.doctorswithoutborders.org/campaign/675296/donate>

We provide independent, impartial medical humanitarian assistance to the people who need it most.

Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) cares for people affected by conflict, disease outbreaks, natural and human-made disasters, and exclusion from health care in more than 70 countries. Over the past five decades, MSF has grown from a group of a few hundred volunteers to an international movement of over 65,000 staff providing over 17 million medical consultations every year.

Sunday Service Speakers

Rev. Dr. Wakoh Shannon Hickey, BCC (she/her)

Rev. Dr. Wakoh Shannon Hickey, BCC, is a Board-Certified Chaplain (interfaith); a scholar of religions; a Candidate for UU ministry, scheduled to see the Ministerial Fellowship Committee in September; and a priest of Sōtō Zen Buddhism, which she has practiced for 40-plus years. Wakoh has taught college and served as a chaplain in university, hospital, palliative-care, and hospice settings. FMI: www.interfaithspiritualcare.net

Rev. Dr. Jeanne Foster (she/her)

Jeanne Foster grew up in New Orleans. She is Professor Emerita Saint Mary's College of California and former minister in Modesto. She has spoken in pulpits as wide-ranging as London, New Orleans, and San Francisco. She is also a writer and translator. A Blessing of Safe Travel won the QRL Poetry Award and The Living Theatre: Selected Poems of Bianca Tarozi, won the Northern California Book Award for Poetry in Translation. Among her other works are Goodbye, Silver Sister; Your Form Became My Own; and Appetite: Food as Metaphor, an anthology of poems by women. Ascoltando una conchiglia (Listening to a Shell), her selected poems translated into Italian, was published in 2025 by Molesini Editore Venezia.

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.

Gillian Fynn (she/her)

Gillian is a lifetime activist for Peace and Justice. Semi-retired she has a small Psychotherapy Practice in Berkeley where she resides. Gillian is a member of BFUU and currently acts as Board President.

Rev. Amy Zucker Morgenstern (she/her)

Rev. Amy Zucker Morgenstern has served with our congregations in Middlebury and Rutland VT, Palo Alto (for 22 years), and Santa Rosa. She also writes an online religion advice column, Ask Isabel, and is a DMin candidate in Theology and the Arts. She and her wife Joy live in San Francisco, and their grown daughter is in college. Apart from part-time ministry, Amy loves to read, resist fascism, make art, and be with friends and family.

Social Justice Watch

We are delighted that photos from Hank's fun and energizing radical political history quiz at our last Community Activist Potluck now adorn our walls until David Solnit's amazing protest art goes up. Joanna and Hank have added to the photo collection. Before our Aug 10 potluck, featuring Patricia Ellsberg in person and whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg via video, Phoebe hopes to add photos of them and other anti-nuke luminaries: Helen Caldicott, Joanna Macy, Ann Fagan Ginger, and perhaps Harvey Wasserman, Marylia Kelley, Jackie Cabasso. Their work is heroic!

We are proud that some of the photos are people who have graced our Hall stage: Ralph Nader, Medea Benjamin, Jodie Evans. Perhaps on the big heart in our foyer, how about permanently displaying photos of famous people who spoke at BFUU including Country Joe McDonald, Alice Walker, Wavy Gravy, Barbara Lee, Michael Parenti, David Hartshough, Mumia Abu Jamal via phone from prison, and [Rev. Clark Olsen](#) whom BFUU sent to Selma, answering MLK's nationwide call to clergy, where he was attacked by the KKK with two other UU pastors. Rev. James Reeb died in our minister's arms.

Just shy of our nation's 250th deMOCKracy anniversary, many BFUUsers attended a fabulous SJC sponsored event on July 2. Powerful speakers included Kshama Sawant from Seattle City Council, Margaret Kimberly of the Black Agenda Report, Kevin Cooper by phone from death row, Rita Barouch of Cuban Solidarity, lead organizer extraordinaire (who wears many hats) Jeff Mackler, and — especially - Daniel Sheehan who kept us spellbound.

Daniel Sheehan's name should be a household word. Before Harvard Law School, he resigned from the ROTC after questioning instructors' sanity, told he might have to kill Vietnamese non-combatants. He participated in numerous famous legal cases including the Pentagon Papers, Watergate Break-In, Karen Silkwood, Greensboro massacre, La Penca bombing, [Dakota Access Pipeline protests](#), and more. He chose the Pentagon Paper excerpts that were published by The NY Times. He established the Christic Institute and the Romero Institute, non-profit public policy centers. He exposed the untold story of the assault on Nicaragua years ago, as well as the Iran Contra scandal and Contragate Secret Team. Quite enlightening! Let's have him back.



Left to Right: BFUU Members Barbara Myers, Michael Kerr, John Bigby, Lisa Plank, Phoebe Thomas Sorgen and Daniel Sheehan who spoke at BFUU

Social Justice Watch

Meanwhile, we continue protesting wars, environmental harms, surveillance and loss of civil liberties, and other injustices including in Iran, Lebanon, Palestine, and the development of treacherous Super Artificial Intelligence. Please sign the call for a global treaty:

www.AiTreaty.org. Sign up here for notices of Ai protests/marches etc: <https://stoptherace.ai/>

For democracy, join Gillian and others Saturdays noon to 1ish in front of Tesla, 1731 4th St. Greg Palast wrote a great article re our nation's 250th: <https://www.gregpalast.com/palast-4th-july-revolution/>

Virginia, Marjorie, Michael, and Phoebe will go to the Lawrence Livermore nuclear weapons Lab at 9am on Hiroshima Day, Aug 6 and possibly risk arrest in non-violent (always!) direct action. Let us know if you want to join us. Scroll down for deets: <https://bit.ly/4hBo7TZ>

Our own DAMON GUTHRIE (Woody's grandson) plays with his band. FREE

Fri July 31 8-10 pm, Circus Pub, 389 Colusa Circle, Kensington. <https://kensingtoncircuspub.com/> Captain D and the Scallywags are fun and raucous, bringing a new slant on traditional seafaring songs. Their lively, positive vibes infect audiences who dance and sing along. We can dance at BFUU early for a bit, then head to the pub to support and enjoy Damon. They were a hit at a BFUU Open Mic.

Don't miss our 3rd Community Activist Potluck on that topic 6pm Aug 10. Patricia Ellsberg (Dan's widow) will come in person! Please help publicize it, and register here: <https://tinyurl.com/BFUUEllsberg>

Thanks to Marjorie and Glenn for flyering Mime Troupe shows. Fantastic show this summer re Ai. Next ones nearby: Aug 22,23 in Williard (aka Ho Chi Minh) Park, Aug 29, 30 Cedar Rose Park. 1:30 live music. Don't miss them, and do get flyers from us if willing pls.

Let Phoebe know if you'd like to pitch in with the Ann Fagan Ginger Legacy Project. Thanks to Michael, Justin, Margot Smith, Esteban, Nicole, and Abbot for helping us make big headway. Thanks to Craig for his inspiring video of her memorial at BFUU on June 6. She was a GIANT! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GuSTU3GIFRY>

LOVE FIRST, and courage!

Phoebe Thomas Sorgen

BFUU Social Justice Committee Chair



Together, WE will keep stopping injustices!

BFUU Sponsored Events



BFUU OPEN MIC

Berkeley Fellowship Monthly Open Mic 3rd Fridays

Friday August 21st 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: Phoebe Thomas Sorgen (she/her) is a voice teacher, former opera singer, and longterm activist/organizer who takes pride in her many arrests for acts of conscience.

Featured Artist: TBA



Freestyle Dance

August 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th 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!**



1st Sundays Writing Group

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.

Community Events

East Bay Activists Community Potluck

Monday August 10th 6pm in Fellowship Hall

BFUU's Social Justice Committee is sponsoring this community building potluck for activists in the East Bay. Bring a dish to share and stay for a screening of "*Ordinary Insanity*" a short film of the last interview with Daniel Ellsberg. Daniel's wife Patricia will speak after the film with time for discussion.

EAST BAY ACTIVISTS COMMUNITY POTLUCK

Monday **August 10 @ 6pm** in Fellowship Hall

Topic: Nuclear Weapons, Treaties, and Disarmament

6pm Potluck begins

- Please bring food or drink to share
- Let us know your dietary restrictions in the RSVP form



7pm "Ordinary Insanity" Screening

- Watch this short film capturing Daniel Ellsberg's last interview

7:30pm Patricia Ellsberg speaks

- Daniel's wife Patricia will speak about his posthumous book *Truth and Consequence* followed by a discussion



25th Anniversary of 9/11 – "Operation Terror" Movie and Discussion

Wednesday September 9th 6:30 pm

Everyone is welcome to the September 9, 2026 movie and discussion, with potluck snacks. This program is meant to recognize the events of September 11, 2001. This program also honors all those lives lost that day and, in the many years since, because of our government's involvement and response to this national and world-wide altering event.

The truth is important and the facts discovered by many in the 9/11 movement severely contradict the government & corporate media story of events. The movie "Operation Terror" and this presentation will deal with these facts!

After 14 months, the families of 9/11 victims finally forced the Bush administration to investigate. The 9/11 Commission was then low budgeted and directed by someone involved with the Bush administration. Those 9/11 families and others discovered that the 2004, 9/11 Commission Report, would ignore their many questions and doubts. In fact, the 9/11 Commission Report was unable to provide any facts that supported the government/corporate media story all while ignoring facts and witnesses that contradicted that same story.

Meanwhile, a letter driven anthrax attack campaign against two Congresspersons would scuttle any Congressional investigation. There will be books/CDs available & petitions to Congress and others that call for an independent investigation of 9/11 that has been ignored these past 25 years. Event organized by Michael Kerr with help from Marjorie. Co-sponsored by the BFUU Social Justice Committee.

Warning: the movie and presentation may be distressful to some.

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

Sunday Service on Sundays at 11:00 AM

Please contact worshipservices@bfuu.org for committee information.

Monthly Meetings

Board of Trustees Meeting Thursday 8/27 at 3:00pm on Zoom

Social Justice Committee Meeting 3rd Sunday 8/16 after service (noonish)

Please contact Phoebe at sjc@bfuu.org

Sunday Service Committee Meeting 1st Thursday 8/6 at 7:00 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](#)

Sunday Services

1st Thursday at 7:00 PM

contact [SSC Chair Jeff Palmer](#)



Karen Dewald

Joanna Foley

Virginia Hollins-Davidson

Hank Pellissier

Glenn Turner

Poetry Corner

Fire rips away forest
stops breath

From ghostly trees
ghosts of birds
call us

We shake the soot from
our wings
and continue flying

Poem by
Frances Hillyard

Fellowship Calendar August 2026

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

A Lot in Common - Film screening, potluck and celebration!

Potluck and celebration starts at 6pm, Film screening at 7pm with discussion following.
Suggested Donation \$10, but NOTAFLOF <https://www.transitionberkeley.org>

Celebrate founding members of the Peralta Community Garden, Carole Bennett-Simmons and Dave Drummond. A community garden grows community as well as food, flowers and consciousness.

2 11:00 am - FH+Z Worship Service * ¹	3	4 7:00 pm Choir Practice * ¹	5	6 7:00 PM - Z SSC Meeting 7:00 pm - BR Gurdjieff Group	7 7:30pm Freestyle Friday	1 3:00 pm - FH Oaktown 8's Squaredance and Picnic
9 11:00 am - FH+Z Worship Service * ¹	10 6:00 pm - FH Activists Potluck and Ellsberg Film Screening	11 7:00 pm Choir Practice * ¹ 6:30 pm - FH Improper English Dance	12	13 7:00 pm - BR Gurdjieff Group	14 7:30pm Freestyle Friday	15 6-9pm - FH Transition Berkeley Potluck and Film Screening
16 11:00 am - FH+Z Worship Service * ¹ 12:30 pm - FH Social Justice Committee	17	18 7:00 pm Choir Practice * ¹	19	20 7:00 pm - BR Gurdjieff Group	21 7 pm - FH Open Mic Night	22 9:45 am - 4:00pm - FH Insight Meditation Day of Loving kindness
23 11:00 am - FH+Z Worship Service * ¹	24	25 7:00 pm Choir Practice * ¹	26	27 7:00 pm - BR Gurdjieff Group 3:00 pm - Z Board Meeting	28 7:30pm Freestyle Friday	29
30 11:00 am - FH+Z Worship Service * ¹	31					

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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SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR SEPTEMBER COMMUNICATOR:

August 21, 2026 at 11:00 AM

Please email office@bfuu.org with submissions.

Address Correction Requested

Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists

1606 Bonita Ave.
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