



THE BFUU COMMUNICATOR

Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists

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

September 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

September 6: Growing Through Grief

Chaplain Maude Wilson (she/her)

Navigating the various emotions and cycles of grief with self-compassion and self-care



Image by
Kayra on
Unsplash



Image by Daniel Schludi on Unsplash

September 13: Our Stories, Ourselves

Rev. Ron Ahnen (they/he)

In some ways, we are the compilation of our life experiences, and the stories we tell ourselves and others about them. While some of our stories are positive and supporting, others may be harmful and damage us.

Rev. Ron Ahnen invites us to reflect on how our stories can be liberating or oppressive.

September 20: Beginner's Mind: "I Don't Know" Is a Good Place to Start

Rev. Dr. Roger Jones (he/him)

You and I know all that we're ever going to know about ourselves and all that we are capable of. Right? This assumption gets in the way of new insights and growth. The Zen Buddhist concept of Beginner's Mind invites us to a new start, every day and every moment, even if we are doing very familiar activities.



Image by
NHN on
Unsplash

September 27: The Tide is Rising, and So Are We

Kevin Alan Mann (he/him/siyá)

Using new songs from the UUA virtual hymnal *Sing Out Love*, this service draws on the landmark 2020 Widening the Circle of Concern: Report of the UUA Commission on Institutional Change. The report examines structural and systemic racism and white supremacy culture within Unitarian Universalism and offers transformative recommendations for long-term cultural and institutional change. How can we keep widening the circle until no one is left behind?



Image by Camylla Battani
on Unsplash

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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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
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 have 72 days until the November Mid-Term Elections.

Given the extraordinary excesses of the current administration, these will be the most significant elections in the 250 year life of this Democracy. Every value that we cherish as Unitarian Universalists is derided, dismissed and devalued. The very existence of the Elections is under assault, and only the courts stand between the administration and full dictatorship, unless we, as citizens stand together in ways we may never previously have considered.

Below I am posting a link to The Red Line Pledge. If the administration actively interferes with voting, the result of the election or seating of winners we must go into the streets and stay there. As with No Kings marches, we will be peaceful, non-violent. Please open this link, read it, and seriously consider joining. You will not give personal information, you will simply receive a message with details if the day comes.

Please share this widely with family and friends.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zgA1dG5d1Cj-3iq3ifvm11XczHN8_OoCXFsYxo8N5vY/edit?tab=t.o

Justice, Compassion, Wisdom

gillian

September Shared Plate Partner

**Humanist Mutual Aid Network:
Mind2Love Secular Orphanage in Liberia**

Donate here: <https://www.thehuman.team/ourmosturgentneed>

BFUU Member Hank Pellissier's nonprofit Humanist Mutual Aid Network is raising funds for an orphanage in Liberia so that they can start a laundry service to raise money and take care of the 26 children. The "orphans" actually have parents but they were all abandoned due to poverty.

Worship Service Leaders

Maude Wilson (she/her)

Maude Wilson is a chaplain, end-of-life doula, and grief companion. Her life's work is to hold safe and sacred space for people moving through life's most tender, complex, and transformative moments. Whether in the stillness of a grief ritual, the tension of a family discussion, or the sacred hush of an end-of-life blessing, she offers presence, compassion, and deep listening.

Rooted in the wisdom of her African American ancestors, Maude follows the call to tend to what's hurting, unspoken, or in need of healing. That ancestral wisdom guides her—spiritually and practically—as she walks with others through grief, transition, reconciliation, and renewal.

Maude holds a master's degree in religion studies. Her approach to spiritual care is shaped not only by her education, but by a lifelong commitment to self-exploration, traveling, creating, and seeking the sacred in everyday life.

Rev. Ron Ahnen (he/him)

Rev. Ron Ahnen is a recently ordained UU Minister who is beginning his first ministry with the UU Fellowship of Chico on a part-time basis. He is also a semi-retired Politics Professor of Saint Mary's College in Moraga where he teaches courses on human rights, the politics of imprisonment, and the ethics of war of peace.

Rev. Dr. Roger Jones (he/him)

Rev. Dr. Roger Jones is a co-minister at the UU Society of Sacramento, where he began serving in 2008. A native of central Indiana, he attended Indiana University, Meadville Lombard Theological School, and Pacific School of Religion. He previously served in parish ministry in Sunnyvale for 10 years, as an interim minister in Minnesota and as a student minister in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

He is on the immigrant solidarity organizing committee of Sacramento Area Congregations Together and a member of the advisory group for the chaplaincy education program at UC Davis Med Center. He has served on boards of the UUA Pacific Central District, Pacific Western Region, the UU Ministers Association, and the YMCA of Superior California.

Rev. Kevin Alan Mann (he/him/siyá)

REV KEV is a 2016 graduate of Starr King School for the Ministry and was ordained by First Unitarian Church of Oakland in 2023. He serves as a Chaplain at Sequoia Hospice and as a consulting minister with the UU Church of the Philippines where he plans to serve from 2028-2030. He founded the California statewide DRUUMM chapter, which organizes with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color UUs through the virtual 1st Monday In-Gathering and Quarterly Retreats. Support us by becoming a monthly sustainer!

Poetry Corner

MAPLE LEAF RAGS

(To my father)

Forgiveness? Maples clutch their
Impatient leaves.

I have almost forgotten how
small I felt when you looked at me
with eyes that said “ Stupid! “

Maple leaves stir, blessing the wind.

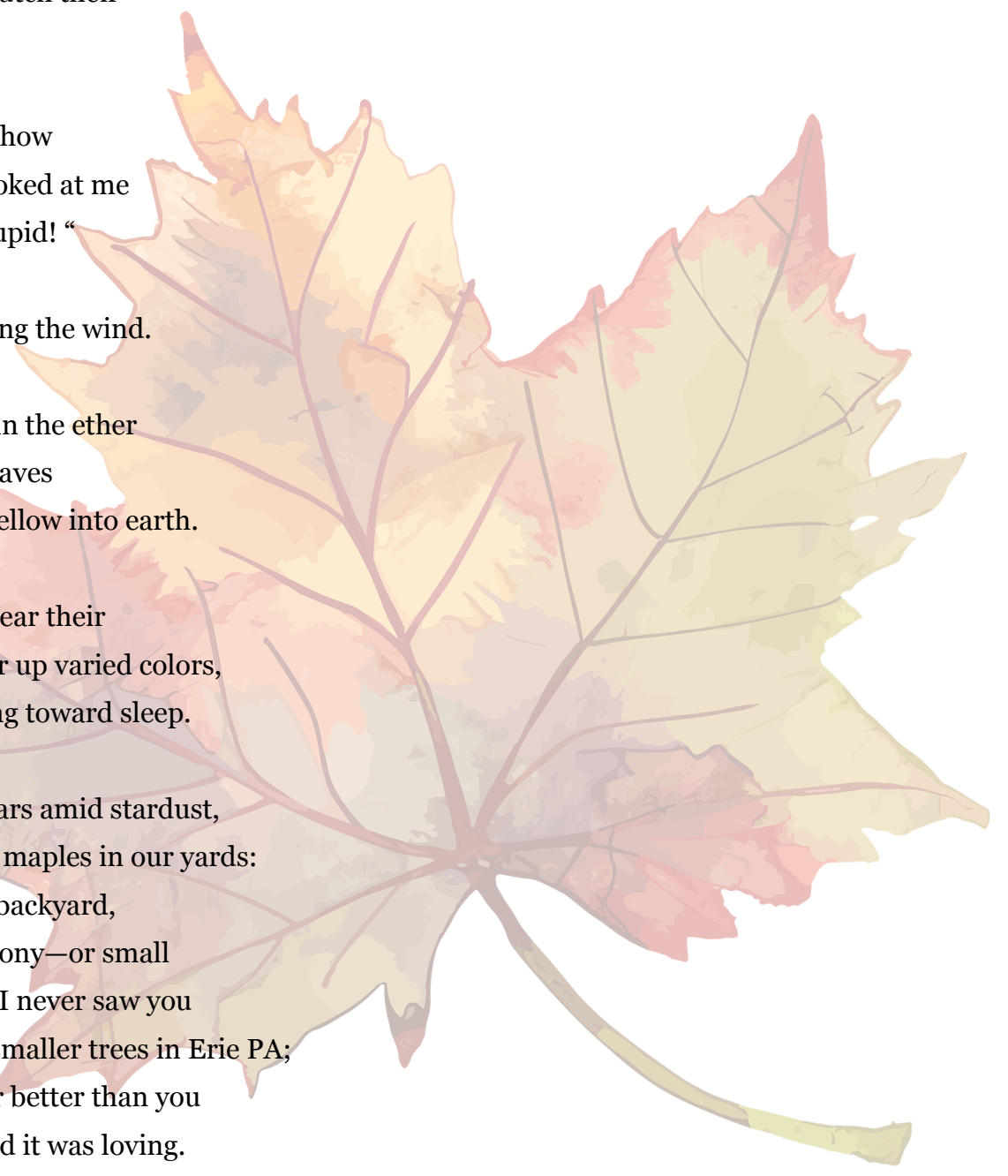
You have been floating in the ether
decades now. Sodden leaves
caress the pavement, mellow into earth.

I scuff among them to hear their
chuckle-whispers, to stir up varied colors,
to whiff the earth turning toward sleep.

You have slept many years amid stardust,
lawn sprinklers and the maples in our yards:
One shading the whole backyard,
brushed a spacious balcony—or small
patio off the bathroom. I never saw you
admire that or the two smaller trees in Erie PA;
Maple trees I remember better than you
for I heard them talk and it was loving.
I embraced them and they did not walk away.

I have walked away from you, finally
encountering maple leaf colors with joy.

Frances Hillyard



Social Justice Watch

Photos taken by Phoebe during the Social Justice Committee's August activities



Above L to R: J Cabasso, P Ellsberg, Phoebe, Betsy, Marjorie, J Ehrlich, C Greensfelder gathered at the East Bay Activists potluck and "Ordinary Insanity" film screening on August 10th



Above: "Ordinary Insanity" filmmaker Judith Ehrlich speaking at BFUU



Above: Patricia Ellsberg speaking at BFUU about Daniel Ellsberg's posthumous book "Truth and Consequence"



Right: Tom Luce, Betsy Nachman, Phoebe Thomas Sorgen, Virginia Hollins-Davidson, Michael Kerr, Marjorie Mikels at Livermore nuke weapons Lab on Hiroshima Day

BFUU Sponsored Events



BFUU OPEN MIC



Berkeley Fellowship Monthly Open Mic 3rd Fridays

Friday September 18th 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: Marcie Boyd (she/her) is a Berkeley-based singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, social justice activist, and ESL teacher. She's a member of La Peña chorus, Occupella, Vox Mamas and several other vocal groups. She loves learning and teaching songs in different languages.

Featured Artist: Hali Hammer (she/her) Award-winning singer/songwriter. A founding member of Occupella which plays at political rallies/causes. Bass player and vocalist in Jump-In which performs “folk & oldies.” The ReSisters, trio performing political parodies. The Hali Hammer Band performs her originals, plus those of Randy Berge (guitar) and Paul Herzoff (harmonica.) <http://www.halihammer.com/wp/>



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

Wednesday September 9th 6:30 PM in Fellowship Hall

This program is meant to recognize the events of September 11, 2001 and honor 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. 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.

Freestyle Dance

September 4th, 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!**



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 Voices

Dear BFUU
Members and friends,

September always feels like a time of new beginnings to me, and this year is no different. Starting next month, I'll be seeing you a little more often, and I'll be available for pastoral care and support. That could look like a phone call, a zoom call, or even a visit in case you experience a hospitalization.

I'm mostly retired now, so I'm spending a lot of time visiting with family and traveling, but I miss being a part of a church community. I look forward to getting to know you better! In the meantime, feel free to shoot me an email should you like to be in touch about anything that is on your mind. I'm traveling most of September but will get back to you as soon as I can. Until then, here is a poem by Sean Parker Dennison that appeals to me in these times.

Faithfully, Rev. Bonnie Dlott
revbonnie@bfuu.org

How To Survive the Apocalypse

Sean Parker Dennison

First, learn to listen.
Not only for enemies around
corners in hidden places,
but for the faint footsteps
of hope and the whisper of resistance.
Hone your skills, aim your
heart toward kindness and
stockpile second chances.
Under the weight of destruction,
we will need the strong shelter
of forgiveness and the deeper wells
that give the sweet water of welcome:
"We have a place for you."
When the world ends, we must not
add destruction to destruction,
not accept a beggar's bargain,
to fight death with more death.
In order to survive the apocalypse—
any apocalypse at all—
we have to give up
the counterfeit currency of self-
sufficiency, the mistaken addiction
to competition, the lie that the last
to die has somehow survived.

Request from Jeff:

BFUU's TV has broken and we need a replacement!

If anyone would like to donate a flatscreen (about 75 inches long) we could really use one, especially for Congressional meetings.

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 9/24 at 3:00pm on Zoom

Social Justice Committee Meeting 3rd Sunday 9/20 after service (noonish)

Please contact Phoebe at sjc@bfuu.org

Sunday Service Committee Meeting 1st Thursday 9/3 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](#)



*Barbara Myers
Betsy Nachman
Cheryl White
Phoebe Thomas Sorgen*

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

Fellowship Calendar September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7:00 pm Choir Practice * ¹	2	3 7:00 PM - Z SSC Meeting 7:00 pm - BR Gurdjieff Group	4 7:30pm Freestyle Friday	5
6 11:00 am - FH+Z Sunday Service * ¹	7 LABOR DAY Office Closed	8 6:30 pm - FH Improper English Dance 7:00 pm Choir Practice * ¹	9 6:00 pm - FH Operation Terror Film Screening	10 7:00 pm - BR Gurdjieff Group	11 7:30pm Freestyle Friday	12
13 11:00 am - FH+Z Sunday Service * ¹	14 5:00 pm - FH Joy of Singing	15 7:00 pm Choir Practice * ¹	16	17 7:00 pm - BR Gurdjieff Group	18 7 pm - FH Open Mic Night	19
20 11:00 am - FH+Z Sunday Service * ¹ 12:30 pm - FH Social Justice Committee	21 5:00 pm - FH Joy of Singing	22 7:00 pm Choir Practice * ¹	23	24 3:00 pm - Z Board Meeting 7:00 pm - BR Gurdjieff Group	25 7:30pm Freestyle Friday	26
27 11:00 am - FH+Z Sunday Service * ¹	28 5:00 pm - FH Joy of Singing	29 7:00 pm Choir Practice * ¹	30			

“Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower.”

- Albert Camus

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, Tuesday, 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 OCTOBER COMMUNICATOR:

September 21, 2026 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