

THE BFUU COMMUNICATOR

Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists

January 2021

BFUU
zoom
Worship Service

Donate to BFUU

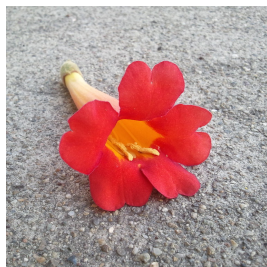


Sundays at 10:30 AM*

offline? email worshiponline@bfuu.org for links

January 3: Now the Work Begins *Melanie DeMore (she/he/they/them)*

Many see the outcome of this election as a battle that's been won, but the war has just begun. A door has opened onto a path that we can choose to walk, every day, on our way to a better world. Right here, right now, we are tasked to keep doing the work of Justice. What does it mean to be a true ally to our fellow people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ+ persons, unhoused, youth, and so many more? Join us as we look at THAT!



January 10: Begin The Year in Forgiveness. Here's Why.

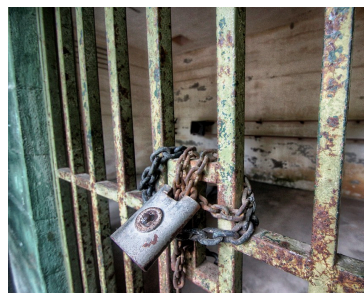
Rev. Marsh Agobert (he/him)

To begin this year (with the blessing of the approaching Metal Ox) I will share one of the lessons I learned from a small snake, with whom I lived for some years.

Forgiveness is a tremendously powerful gesture for ending one year and starting another. He showed me why we'd do well to forgive our loved ones, then ourselves and eventually our enemies. After all, "We're only human."

January 17: Martin and Malcolm Were Both Right *Clovice Lewis (he/him)*

People often tend to compare Martin Luther King, Jr.'s approach towards the Civil Rights movement in the United States with Malcolm X's approach. Some feel our country "dodged a bullet" by taking King's non-violent path. Many of us are aware that both men expressed very nuanced opinions that contradicted the public perceptions of their positions. This sermon examines how those nuances speak powerfully to the historical confluences that shape our racial challenges to this day.



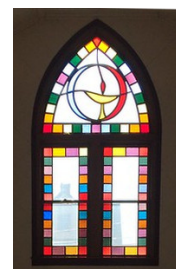
January 24: Deadly Justice: Capital Punishment in the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave

Rev. Dr. Carrie Knowles (she/her)

In its final weeks in office, the Trump administration has resumed federal executions after a 17-year hiatus. Rev. Dr. Carrie Knowles looks back over the history of capital punishment, the structure of our laws, and the arguments for and against the death penalty.

January 31: Tapestry of Faith—Themes in UU History *Worship Service Team*

Though it has roots going back to early Christianity, Unitarian Universalism as an organized movement on this continent comes from two particular religious traditions—Unitarianism and Universalism—which consolidated in 1961 to form the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Though both Unitarians and Universalists have practiced their faith in individual and original ways, certain themes emerge in our story. Four themes we will consider today are freedom of thought, or noncreedalism; on-going revelation; the power of Nature; and building the Beloved Community.





Cleric's Corner

Clergy & Staff

Reverend Marsh Agobert, *Minister*
 Reverend Dr. Carrie Knowles, *Minister*
 Reverend Tom McAninley, *Community Minister*
 Deborah Hamouris, *Event Space Coordinator*
 Susan Macke, *Office Administrator*
 Ed Keating, *Facilities Manager*
 Shae Jewell, *Sexton*

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Michael Gardner, *Vice President*
 Ben Burch, *Treasurer & Secretary*
 Judith Granada-Dewey
 Margaret Hurlbert
 David Makofsky (*Alternate*)
 Phoebe Sorgen (*Alternate*)

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 Joanna Foley, *Chair*
 Building & Grounds Committee
 Abbot Foote, *Co-Chair*
 Ben Burch, *Co-Chair*
 Caring Community
 Kathy Riehle, *Chair*
 Committee on Ministry
 Jinky Gardner, Steve Ogden, Kathy Riehle
 Finance Committee
 Ben Burch, *Co-Chair*
 Abbot Foote, *Co-Chair*
 Hospitality Committee
 Kathy Riehle, *Chair*
 Membership Committee
 Doug Chambers, *Chair*
 Music Committee
 Margaret Hurlbert, *Chair*
 Nominating Committee
 Virginia Hollins-Davidson, *Chair*
 Personnel Committee
 Kathy Riehle, *Chair*
 Poetry Committee
 Frances Hillyard, *Chair*
 Gene Herman, *Poet Laureate*
 Religious Education (RE) Committee
 Sharon Colligan, *Convener*
 Social Justice Committee (SJC)
 Phoebe Sorgen, Cynthia Johnson,
 Gene Herman, and David Makofsky,
Co-Chairs
 SJM Task Force (Subcom of SJC)
 Jeff Palmer, *Convener*
 Worship Services Committee
 Joanna Foley, *Chair*
 Sharon Colligan, *Vice-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.



Dark Forgiveness

This month's Corner will be shorter than usual, and this is partly because this time of year harbors a profound passage. We have just traversed the Winter Solstice. This darkness, represented daily by night, is at its peak. Many cultures and their religions recognize the

ending and beginning of years. We use this to assess the year passed and to plan and project a future.

With the understanding that we, of The BFUU, are flawless beings, the rest of this may or may not pertain to ourselves, yet might we gain some of the wisdom of our 'Primitives,' our early ancestors; our culture's influencers. You can partake of this by sitting quietly with yourself (try it now) and remembering back over this past year, beginning with the previous fall season. What wins have you had since the harvest of last year? Don't settle for, "I can't remember anything about my life before COVID." That would give this plague even more power than it currently has to have eradicated all preceding life from our safekeeping. Watch your memory to catch moments of joy and triumph. Then, strengthened by these higher times, use the next to recall those moments that you'd like to take back. We all have instances when we disappoint ourselves. The pain of those times when we may have disappointed others only hurts in that we've disappointed ourselves.

Next comes a step that is both unnecessary and exceedingly powerful, and that is a request for, and an act of, forgiveness. Whether we notice it or not, those things which bring us anything from deep regret to forgetting 'small' wrongdoings or merely an impure thought can ride us throughout the days of our lives. And this holds, whether clearly remembered or seemingly forgotten. A request to be forgiven or a sense of repentance need not be dramatic or longwinded; it only needs sincerity. You will know your sincerity. An act of forgiveness is a (spiritually) significant act of power, in that when sincerely felt, it can clear your

Cleric's Corner (continued)

slate and result in feeling better. Sometimes this can and may extend to our mental, emotional, and even physical experience.

Such a personal ritual can free you to make better decisions for your future, decisions untainted by vague and unpleasant or even frightening feelings from the past. Taking a moment to acknowledge the reality, the existence of this dark part of ourselves (and the world at large) can prove to be the rich soil from which the future is grown.

Over the decades, I have, via personal experience, grown deeply fond of this moment of darkness. I welcome this moment and invite you to find your version of this same sensibility. Believe it or not, this small gesture can serve as a deeply personal, if esoteric, dissipation of racism as well. Check with me if this doesn't immediately make sense to you. Forgiveness of self and others is an ancient path toward conquering our fear of the dark.

Taking this to heart will emblazon and empower your will to a better year and a brighter life. What have you got to lose?

I look forward to seeing you on the other side.

Rev. Marsh

Social Justice Watch

BFUU's SJC is committed to anti-oppression. Let's all do what we can to eliminate sexism, racism, transphobia, islamophobia, anti-jewishness, ageism, ableism, and other bigotry - unconscious or overt - within ourselves as individuals, within our beloved BFUU community, and in the world at large. We encourage members and friends to take whatever trainings they can and to share info.

In that vein, we recommend this enlightening, free, and easy online self-testing for various implicit biases: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>. As suggested by UUA Pacific Western Region rep Melissa James, we also recommend online pronoun practice sessions to help change hurtful language habits: <https://www.practicewithpronouns.com>.

Regular Committee Meetings (via Zoom through Shelter In Place)

Aesthetics (subcom. of B&G)

Meets as needed
contact [Joanna Foley](#)

Buildings & Grounds (B&G)

Meets once per month,
contact [Ben and Abbot](#)

Caring

4th Sunday at 12:30 PM
contact [Kathy Riehle](#)

Committee on Ministry

meets as needed
contact [Kathy, Jinky, and Steve](#)

Finance

Meets as needed
contact [Ben and Abbot](#)

Hospitality

4th Sunday at 12:30 PM
contact [Kathy Riehle](#)

Membership

4th Sunday at 12:30 PM
contact [Doug Chambers](#)

Music

2nd Monday 2:00 PM
contact [Margaret Hurlbert](#)

Nominating

meets as needed
contact [Virginia Hollins-Davidson](#)

Personnel

3rd Thursdays 2:30 PM
Contact [Kathy Riehle](#)

Poetry

Meets as needed
contact [Frances Hillyard](#)

Religious Education

Meets as needed
contact [Sharon Colligan](#)

Social Justice Ministry

1st Sunday 12:30 PM
contact [Jeff Palmer](#)

Social Justice (SJC)

3rd Sunday noonish - after service
contact [Phoebe, Gene, and David](#)

Worship Services

2nd Tuesday at 10:00 AM
contact [Joanna and Sharon](#)

Board Report

Dear congregants and BFUU friends,

We are grateful that BFUU's beloved Ira X Armstrong is a longtime BFUU member. Most of us have fond memories of their wisdom and myriad contributions to our community.

Ira has resigned from the Board effective Dec. 31, when the current vice-chair, Mike Gardner, will become chair after Board approval. In their resignation letter, Ira wrote that "the board has been struggling to identify their own patterns of racism, sexism, transphobia, ..." Indeed, we fervently hope, and are taking concrete steps, to become a more Welcoming Congregation. We are striving harder to change language habits and other hurtful patterns. We very much value racial and other diversity on the Board and in the congregation and community!

We consulted Melissa James, who is with the Pacific Western Region of the UUA and is working with the Board to identify our errors and help us move us forward. For instance, did you know that you can get free online pronoun practice sessions from the UUA? These courses are especially useful for those who do not always remember to use the correct pronouns for trans and non-binary people. Misgendering and dead-naming are not only offensive, but can be deeply hurtful.

Practice with pronouns: <https://www.practicewithpronouns.com>

We have begun to evaluate and choose professionals for anti-oppression training that we hope to schedule early next year. Our goal is to make them available to the entire Congregation. Stay tuned!

Ira wrote, "May you be safe. May you be well. May you know joy. May you be free. May you shift and start to see it as your job to heal anti-Blackness and transphobia, and begin to practice reparation..." Yes, may it be so! We agree, that is a critical part of our job. We appreciate Ira's patience in correcting us, and we apologize that it has taken us so long to change bad habits. We are truly sorry for the pain this has caused. We pledge to do much better. BFUU needs to be a safe and loving spiritual home and community.

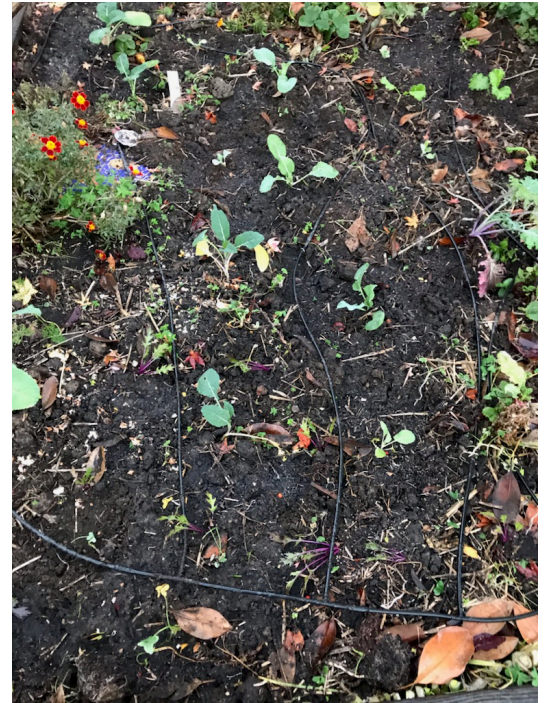
From the bottoms of our hearts, we thank Ira for their years of service to BFUU and for the many gifts they have generously shared.

Sincerely,
The Board of Trustees

Community Voices



Elinor Roberts
Shirley Taylor
Marg Turngren



New plants for BFUU's winter garden—collards, cauliflower, mizuna, mustard greens, kale. And for beautiful flowers, paper whites, columbines and violas. A round of applause for Christine Driftwood who shopped and planted!

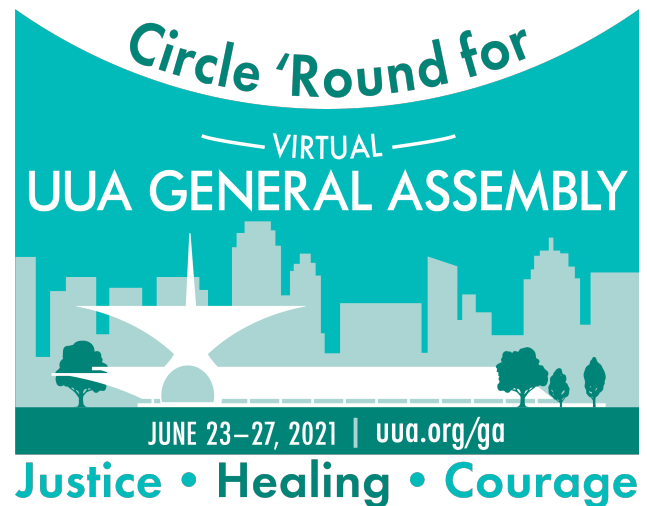
General Assembly (GA)

100% Virtual Event!

June 23-27, 2021

Open to the public: General Sessions, Service of the Living Tradition, Synergy Bridging Worship and Sunday Morning Worship will be streamed live and publicly accessible; no registration is required to view.

Registered Attendees: Access to all workshops, performances, lectures, and events listed in the GA Program. Registrants will have exclusive access to a chatroom, recordings of previous streams, and dedicated support.



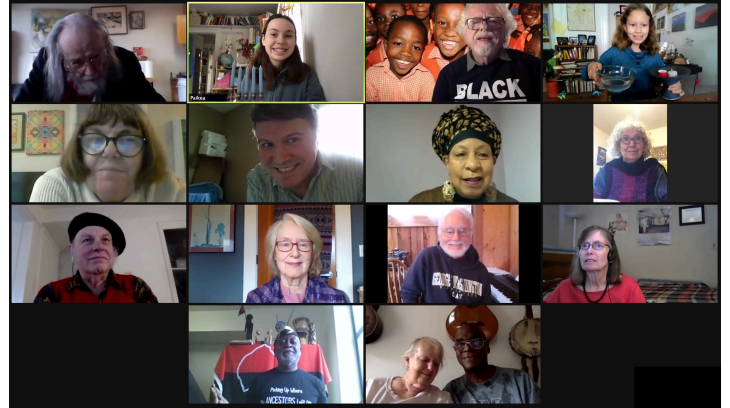
BFUU can have **two** delegates to GA and can usually sponsor those delegates' registration for GA - please let a Board member know if you'd like to be a delegate!

Worship Service Teams!



Worship Service Team December 20

top: Elinor & Steve, Paikea, Maxina Ventura, Arlo June; 2nd row: Sharon, Frances, Judith, Eva; 3rd row: Kathy & Doug, Virginia, Mike



Worship Service Team December 13:

top: Lawrance, Paikea, Tom, Eva; 2nd row: Maureen, James, Virginia, Margaret; 3rd row: Ben, Joanna, Andy, Marge; 4th row: Baba Jahahara Amen-RA Alkebulan-Ma'at, Kathy & Doug

Poetry Corner

The Breath of Night

The breath of night
covers the ground with hoary frost
and caresses your neck
with lilac kisses.
The breath of night
swirls through moon beams
lands gently in a poet's pad
puffs his pillow
pausing before a restless dream.
The breath of night
skips across cement sidewalks
slips under bolted doors
and whispers brazen messages
to breath less lovers.

Gene Herman
BFUU Poet Laureate



Though words
like birds
flit in and out

I don't prize talk
as much as
one bent stalk

Frances Hillyard
BFUU Poet Laureate Emerita

Worship Service Teams!



Worship Service Team December 6 top:
Andy, Paiketa, Melissa, Rev. Marsh; 2nd row: Doug, Margaret, Lawrance, Joanna; 3rd row: Eva, Steve & Elinor



Worship Service Team November 15 top:
Rev. Marsh, Paiketa, James, Sharon; 2nd row: Kathy & Doug, Andy, Lawrance, Margaret; 3rd row: Eva, Elinor & Steve, Melissa, Frances



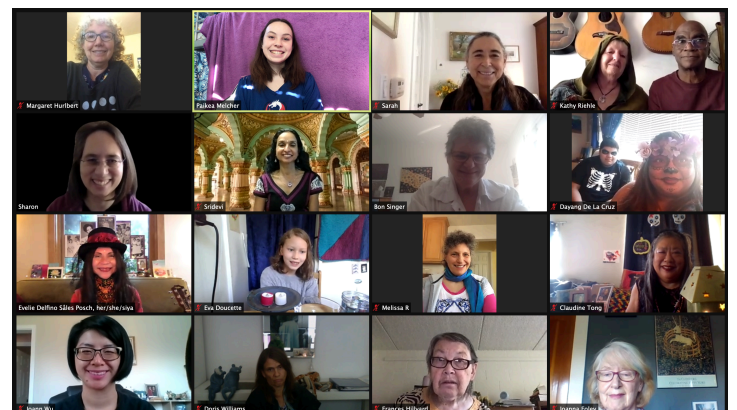
Worship Service Team November 29 top:
Eva, Paiketa, Kathy & Doug, Sharon; 2nd row: Arlo June, Frances, Elinor & Steve, Andy; 3rd row: Joanna, Margaret & Jeff, Virginia, Mike; 4th row: James, Rev. Marsh, Dawn & Yoichi & Doertlis



Worship Service Team November 8
top: Ira, Paiketa & Eva, Pastor Jacqueline, Joanna; 2nd row: Virginia, Lawrance, Andy, Steve; 3rd row: Kathy & Doug, Ed, Margaret, Melissa, Sharon



Worship Service Team November 22 top:
Andy, Paiketa, Lawrance, Sharon; 2nd row: Elinor & Steve, Rev. Dr. Carrie, Eva, James; 3rd row: Doug, Margaret, Melissa



Worship Service Team November 1
top: Margaret, Paiketa, Sarah, Kathy & Doug; 2nd row: Sharon, Sridevi, Bon, Dayang; 3rd row: Evelie, Eva, Melissa, Claudine; 4th row: Joann, Doris, Frances, Joanna

BFUU Online Meetings List January 2021

Weekly Meetings

Think Tank *will return in February!*

T4 (or T3 #2) will require a capacity to question anything and everything, which may include some sacred cows. Participation will be limited and will seek individuals from various vocational backgrounds. Please contact Rev. Marsh Agobert by **text to 707-557-5707** (preferred) or email revmarsh@bfuu.org.

Reflection and Connection on Tuesday afternoons

Rev. Dr. Carrie Knowles invites BFUU members and friends to join her in a series of small meetings on zoom. Participation is limited. Please email Rev. Dr. Carrie Knowles at revcarrie@bfuu.org and let her know of your interest.

BFUU Choir Practice on Wednesdays at 3:15 PM

Choir members practice songs for worship service and fun!

Please contact Margaret at muscom@bfuu.org

Worship Servicer Rehearsal on Saturdays at 1:00 PM

The worship team for each service meets on the Saturday before to run through the script.

Please contact Sharon and Joanna at worshipservices@bfuu.org

Worship Service on Sundays at 10:30 AM

All are welcome to attend Worship Service!

Please contact Sharon and Joanna at worshipservices@bfuu.org

Monthly Meetings

Social Justice Ministry Meeting 1st Sundays 1/3 at 12:30 PM

Music Committee Meeting 1st Monday 1/4 at 2:00 PM

Questions? Please contact Margaret at muscom@bfuu.org

Elders Circle 1st Tuesdays 1/5 at 11:00 AM

Come one, come all who are young at heart! Age does not matter! Join us for snacks and lively conversation. We may even solve some of the worlds problems... or not. We'll have fun trying. Please contact Rev. Marsh by text to 707-557-5707 (preferred) or email revmarsh@bfuu.org.

Committee on Ministry Meeting 1st Thursdays 1/7 at 2:00 PM

This committee is a communication channel between the ministers and the community.

Please contact Kathy, Jinky, and Steve at COM@bfuu.org

Worship Service Committee Meeting 1st Fridays 1/8 at 1:30 PM (note 2nd Fri in Jan due to Holiday)

Please contact Joanna and Sharon at worshipservices@bfuu.org

BFUU Men's Group 2nd Thursdays 1/14 at 7:00 PM

We invite all men to this group. Our goal is to encourage each other as we build community.

Please contact [Jeff Palmer](#).

Social Justice Committee Meeting 3rd Sundays 1/17 after service (noonish)

Please contact Phoebe at sjc@bfuu.org

Personnel Committee Meeting 3rd Thursdays 1/21 at 2:30 PM

Please contact Kathy at personnel@bfuu.org

Hospitality, Membership, and Caring Committees Meetings 4th Sundays 1/24 at 12:30 PM

Please contact Kathy at caring@bfuu.org

Board of Trustees Meeting 4th Thursdays 1/28 at 7:00 PM

BFUU BOT meetings are open to all!

some committees meet as needed - please see committee meeting list on page 3

Fellowship Calendar January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Please Plan Ahead: Some of the links here send an email to the meeting organizer. The direct links have ¹ after the link. If you send an email, please allow a few days for them to reply. If you have questions, please email office@bfuu.org or call the office at 510-841-4824 ext. 1.					1 New Years Day BFUU Staff Holiday	2 1 pm Worship Service Rehearsal [*]
3 10:30 am Worship Service ^{*1} 12:30 pm SJM Mtg ^{*1}	4 2:00 pm MusCom Meeting [*]	5 11:00 am Elders Circle ^{*1} Reflection & Connection [*]	6 3:15 pm Choir Practice ^{*1}	7 2:00 pm COM Meeting [*]	8 10 am Worship Svcs Committee Mtg [*]	9 1 pm Worship Service Rehearsal [*]
10 10:30 am Worship Service ^{*1}	11	12 Reflection & Connection [*]	13 3:15 pm Choir Practice ^{*1}	14 7 pm BFUU Men's Group [*]	22	16 1 pm Worship Service Rehearsal [*]
17 10:30 am Worship Service ^{*1} Noonish - after service SJC Meeting ^{*1}	18 MLK Jr. Day BFUU Staff Holiday	19 Reflection & Connection [*]	20 3:15 pm Choir Practice ^{*1} Communicator Deadline	21 2:30 pm Personnel Committee [*]	15	23 1 pm Worship Service Rehearsal [*]
24 10:30 am Worship Service ^{*1} 12:30 pm HMC-Hospitality, Membership and Caring-Cttees Mtgs ^{*1}	25	26 Reflection & Connection [*]	27 3:15 pm Choir Practice ^{*1}	28 7 pm BFUU Board of Trustees Mtg ^{*1}	30	29 1 pm Worship Service Rehearsal [*]
31 10:30 am Worship Service ^{*1}						

* denotes Fellowship event

¹ denotes meeting link

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 CLOSED - We are working from home

BFUU OFFICE STAFF

Deborah Hamouris - Event Space Coordinator

Phone: 510-841-4824, ext. 3

Working Days: Tue, Wed & Fri

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Susan Macke - Office Coordinator

Phone: 510-841-4824, ext. 1

Working Days: Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri

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SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR February *COMMUNICATOR*: January 20

Please email newsletter@bfuu.org with submissions.

Address Correction Requested

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Berkeley, CA 94709

Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists

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