

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship ~ BUF.org
Community, Compassion, Commitment
March 11, 2020

BUF Celebrant Team

It's my pleasure to introduce to you our new BUF Celebrants Team: **Noreen Fujita Sacco, Carrie Koehline, Jeff Copeland, Su Livingston, Rod Haynes, and Sky Hedman.** This group has trained together with me and BUF member Rev Barbara ten Hove. A celebrant will assist me each week in preparation and leadership of Sunday services. Our plan is to introduce a couple of new celebrants into the mix each year.



The Celebrants Team will meet with me each month for ongoing training and planning, and also to reflect on how to ensure that our services succeed on multiple levels, including depth, relevance, balance, accessibility, and graceful presentation.

One challenging dilemma we face has to do with announcements. In the order of service, I use the expression "Our Principles in Action" in lieu of "Announcements," because BUF's activities are terrific examples of how we bring our principles to life. So we want to maximize awareness and participation. At the same time, though, our senses are overloaded, day after day, in the pursuit of our limited attention.

Aiming for simplicity and clarity, then, and brevity, here are our new guidelines and deadlines for Sunday announcements:

Anything you'd like to have shared on a Sunday needs to be emailed to amin@buf.org by noon each Thursday. Announcements to be printed in the order of service should be 50-75 words. Those to be read aloud from the pulpit by the Celebrant should be less than 150 words. Please understand our limits though, both in time and in space. Everything is subject to editing. And we'll have to ask that you direct some proposed announcements to the Midweek Update or the BUF-news list serv.

Thanks for your support of our Sunday Celebrants. I tell them that they are presenting to a congregation who want them to succeed. That's how I experience it myself, and that's my sense of how everyone is received when they go before this congregation: guest speakers, chalice lighters, choirs and musicians, visitors introducing themselves, those who share milestones, and those who share anecdotes at the end of services when we have time for congregational response. With all of our different styles, perspectives, and life experiences, week after week, in words and in quiet, in worship, we bring out our best.

Peace, Paul

Upcoming Sunday Services

March 15 This Sunday service will be live-streamed on YouTube and can be watched from home. Check back later this week on buf.org for more information on how to connect to the event.

Whatcom County Health Department currently recommends, non-essential, large, group gatherings are to be avoided. This live-streamed service will feature a message of reassurance from Rev. Paul Beckel that BUF is still here for folks during these challenging times. Also a practical explanation of

how we will be having services, conducting meetings via zoom, and the many new ways we will connect with each other. With music and song directed by Kevin Allen-Schmid.
The planned service reflecting upon the history of the 19th Amendment has been postponed.

March 22 Women of Vision Our celebration of the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment, today we'll bring attention to Unitarian and Universalist (and UU) women leaders in social reform, health care, science, arts, business, and technology. This will be a multi-generational (birthday cohorts) service.

**Fellowship Fridays at BUF in March-
Cancelled until further notice. This include
Friday, March 13th and Friday, March 20th**

Full List of Cancellations:

Wednesday Choir Rehearsal- March 11

Community Night Dinner- March 11

Friday forum on March 13

Children's Field Trip on March 20

BUF Coffeehouse on March 20

Parents Night Out on March 20

March 28 Spring Potluck



Due to the concerns of exposure to the coronavirus, both the Condor and Eagle Screening and the Netse Mot for Xw'ullemmy events are being postponed. As soon as new dates are set, we will let you all know!

Good Stuff to Know

Teleconferencing with Zoom

Please get familiar with the zoom teleconferencing app proactively, so if you get invited to an online BUF meeting, you'll be able to click just once to join. If you have a microphone on your device, you will have live audio to and from everyone at the meeting. If you have a camera on your device, you'll also have live video

You may already have a Zoom app on your device, if you don't, that's fine too. When you receive an invitation to a zoom meeting (via email) there will be a link to step by step instructions. If you'd like to have a zoom meeting set up for a BUF group, contact Kathy Wahto, admin@buf.org

BUF Online Directory

Many of you have already registered for access, but the more who do, the better we'll be connected. Please watch for an invitation to register, which will be coming to you soon via email.

Texts of Sunday Services

These are available at <https://wp.buf.org/worship-programs/past-worship-services/> Or, from the center of our homepage (buf.org) click on the "Service Archive" icon.

Hearing Assistance – 2 Options

For hearing assistance when you're in the sanctuary, you can (1) use your own phone and earbuds using the Listen Everywhere app (download from your app store). Or (2) pick up one of BUF's hearing assistance devices from an usher.

No matter how much technology we have, of course, it's useless without people of goodwill. And when it is useful for us at BUF, it is just a means toward the end of Community, Compassion, and Commitment.

Music at BUF in March

The choir and congregation will not be gathering in person in the sanctuary this Sunday morning, March 15, but a complete service will still be recorded and broadcast, including music to be performed by Melanie Rieck, Andrew Schoneberg and Kevin Allen-Schmid.



Until further notice, singers will be rehearsing individually or with one another using the online rehearsal tracks created by Al Heezen: <http://bufchoir.org/>

Singers may also sing along with YouTube for some of these songs (some links are listed below).

Notice will be sent out when our beloved Wednesday evening rehearsals and Saturday morning sectionals are to resume. Chalice Choir and Phoenix Ensemble are now preparing songs as follows:

Chalice Choir

I Love You/What A Wonderful World for Easter Sunday, April 12

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_qfeEOTjyY

When You Believe for May 31

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcQZpsCgEZO>

Desiderata for the Choir Finale on June 14

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6X8YnCq6UME&t=76s>

Phoenix Ensemble

May It Be So for March 22

An Irish Blessing for April 26

Rocket Man Medley for MayFaire on May 2

May Night for May 17

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5RlLodJ2zQ>

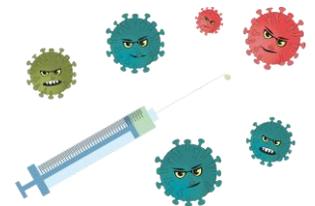
Pilgrimage for the Choir Finale on June 14

Fondly,

Kevin Allen-Schmid, BUF Music Director

Taking Care at BUF

We want to reassure people (adults and children) attending Sunday Services at BUF that we are following guidelines published by the County Health Department regarding COVID-19. We are sanitizing commonly used surfaces, including chairs, tables and pews, before functions; we are also encouraging safe and regular hand washing and avoiding touching.



If you are not feeling well, please consider staying at home.

We are taking these same precautions at BUF events and activities during the week and requesting our renters to do the same. We will post new updates as when/if necessary, otherwise our programming will continue as normal. We hope to see you here at BUF!

~ Genia Allen-Schmid, Director of Religious Education and Kathy Wahto, Administrator

BUF Flu Buddies

In this time of caution and preparation, our expression of Community, Compassion, and Commitment extends beyond our walls...and especially to those we don't often see here on Sundays because they need to lay low, or their mobility is limited.

Preparation is essential for ALL of us though: preparation for conditions that might require us to stay home for an extended period. So we're initiating a BUF Flu Buddies program to offer two things:

- ⑩ Help with running errands, now, to ensure that you and your household are prepared with food and medications. (We can't anticipate that we'll have the capacity for running such errands indefinitely, so please understand that this offer is about initial preparedness.)
- ⑩ Daily phone calls to check in on you in the event you do get stuck at home.

Please contact us *now* if you would like help of this sort. If you don't yet want the daily calls, that's OK. But this won't work well if, in the event of a crisis, we get our first contact from everyone at the same time, or if stores are closed. Having said this, WE DO WANT YOU to sign up for a flu buddy. Please do not let pride get in the way. The flu might reach any of us, so if you're alone and don't have anyone checking on you, we'd like to do so. If for any other reason you feel like this might help you...then why not make a new connection with someone at BUF?

To reach us, email flubuddies@buf.org. Or call the BUF office (Administrator Kathy Wahto) at (360) 733-3837, or Ginny Baker (360) 752-1550.

Please note that flu buddies are not able to offer medical advice, and will strictly limit direct interpersonal contact, such as entering homes or hands-on care.

Please look to cdc.gov for specific preparedness advice, and updates.

RE Schedule for MARCH Theme: JOURNEY

The Children's Chalice

We Unitarian Universalists love our rituals. Raising our children as UUs means teaching them about these rituals and the meaning behind them. Of all our rituals the lighting of the Chalice is perhaps the most important and beloved; it creates a holy space and is a symbol of our commitment to justice and the search for truth.

This year, as we work on changing how our children engage in our congregation, we have included the lighting of the chalice during the service. Each Sunday two chalices are lit and as the children are sung upstairs one of them carries the children's chalice upstairs where we use it as a centerpiece for our candles of joys and concerns. Already the children feel ownership of this weekly ritual and understand the symbolism. This is one way we help ensure the flame continues to light our future.



MARCH 2020 Religious Education Schedule – JOURNEY

~~March 15 FIELD TRIP to Mindport Exhibits~~ **CANCELLED**

~~K-8 will take a journey to Mindport. Docents will take us through the museum's latest interactive exhibits, exploring the wonder of the physical world. We'll leave promptly at 10:30 and return by 12:15. A signed permission slip is required.~~

March 22 Multi-gen Service

Children from 3rd grade on up are encouraged to remain in the service for an engaging, interactive service on Women's Rights and voting. Preschool and playtime will be offered upstairs for younger children.

March 29 Kitchen Orientation and COOKING

We'll have preschool as usual and K-2 will have an art project. 3-8th graders are downstairs for a BUF kitchen orientation and cooking lesson with Judy Fruhbauer in preparation for our Teacher Appreciation breakfast on June 7. Flipping and eating pancakes may be involved, as well as menu planning!

BUF's (SEJC) Social and Environmental Justice Committee Collection recipient for the month of March is Our Tree House.

Grief can be an intensely isolating experience and Our TreeHouse strives to ensure that no child, teen, young adult, or family in Whatcom County grieves alone. To this end, we offer a loving, healing community to support the grieving process.

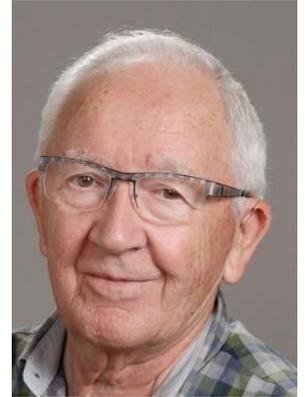
Through the provision of no-cost, innovative grief support services for the entire family unit, we aspire to impact bereaved youths' behavioral and emotional adjustment to loss, ultimately promoting health and healing in our community. Financial support from



Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship will allow Our TreeHouse to 1) continue to inspire resilience in bereaved children, teens, and young adults through our Family Night, Teen Night, and Young Adult Night programs; 2) reach currently unserved families through the implementation of an Anticipatory Grief Night for families facing an advanced serious illness, and 3) expand our provision of free school-based support to districts throughout the county.

For more information check their website at: <https://www.our-treehouse.org>

CALL OF THE VIRTUOUS SIREN---A Journey by Ralph Wenning



My pilgrimage began with a silent call, a nagging thought, an urge. A pilgrimage is commonly thought to be a journey or search of moral or spiritual significance. It could also be thought of as the course of life on earth. My call to the pilgrimage of the Camino de Santiago in Spain was less esoteric on its surface. I simply wanted to go on a challenging, long walk because it was there. (like a mountain)

It turned out to be far more significant and thought provoking than just climbing a mountain. According to Robert Mullen in “The Call of the Camino,” the pilgrim just by setting off, initiates a change. Even more important than what the pilgrim carries is what is left behind. I carried a very light pack and wished I carried less. But also left behind were worldly matters such as bills, cell phones, and routine concerns.

The usual first question a Camino walker hears is “why are you here?” Referring to the purpose of your journey; not the meaning of life. The second is “who are you?”

The answer to the first question is easy but varied: Many are there for religious or spiritual reasons. Others to start over after retirement, a divorce, a loss, to find new meaning in life, to support a friend, recover from something, to see historical and religious sites, etc. What is discovered along the way may be different than expected.

The second answer is not as easy because it requires one to ask himself (herself) Who am I? Knowing that may be the real underlying siren call for embarking on the journey.

Along the way I met people from over twenty countries. They were of many races, ethnic groups, religions, languages, genders and beliefs. After a few days of walking side by side, eating together, sleeping in the same rooms, commiserating about blisters, and finding common languages, we were all as one. A large family like group of humanity. Truly an unusual experience.

The sights and scenery were memorable and incredible. Giant cathedrals in the larger cities, charming small churches in the villages, historic monuments such that of El Cid, roman roads and bridges, giant windmills on the hills, endless vineyards, numerous crops and farms, the desolate and boring Meseta, wide trails and rocky trails, pelota courts—I could go on and on.

In retrospect, the most meaningful experiences of my Camino journey were the encounters with people.

Eating the first “Pilgrims” dinner at a round table filled with excited first day beginners. The kindness of the hostess who let us sleep in the laundry room as the beds were all taken. The young Spaniard who was there because he decided to accompany his friend two days before departure. The British writer at the town square every evening writing in his journal. The Des Moines couple of street medics who had worked with Mother Teresa. The store owner who made sure I bought one his best apples. The farmer who showed us his wine stash. The Vancouver B.C. Man who was walking 40 miles a day.

(who later showed up with a strained knee) The young guy who painfully limped in last every day and was first on the road the next morning. The monks who fed us dinner and then led vespers in the chapel in four different languages. The Japanese man who was so happy to meet someone his age and thereafter greeted me as a long lost friend. The people soaking their feet in the fountain. The Hungarian with a home-made cart who spoke no other languages except for a little German. The Swedish lady who walked an alternate less used but more scenic route with me for a day. The lady who

gave us information about where to stay next.

These encounters with people were what I remember most. In answering their question, "who are you?" (who am I?) as well as having hours of silent walking to cogitate the matter, some of my unknown self was revealed. This is the change, if only slight, that was initiated by starting the journey. I have read to beware of the pilgrim who returns fatter than when he set off. Physically this means maybe you did not work hard enough. A pilgrimage is not supposed to be easy. Psychologically the same may be true; the experience should be enriching and enlightening.

I have been referring to a singular pilgrimage with spiritual connotations. The journey of life is continuous and we may think of our various pilgrimages as illustrations of the longer one. If you are thinking of doing a pilgrimage, I would highly recommend it. The siren call still beckons strongly for me. But beware of the unanticipated turns in the road! You may even meet yourself. That would indeed be a ruby of great price.* Worth the journey.

* Why ruby? See: Job 28:12; Prov. 3:16; Prov. 8:11; Prov. 31:10



Traditional Charities at BUF

Traditional charities are an important contribution in meeting the economic justice challenges of our time and place here in Whatcom County. They also offer BUF the opportunity to participate in meeting these needs as a member in the Whatcom interfaith community. Local charities like Humanitas offers financial support for immediate needs, Lummi Food Bank provides food and personal items and Family Promise works to meet housing needs. Consider contributing today. Monthly donations can be set up automatically by EFT. Contact BUF's administrator for more info.

Humanitas: A recent client, Sam, camps with other homeless folks near a swampy pond. "We call ourselves the mud people," he told us. His coat, jeans, and hands were grimy. He spoke of his lifelong mental illness and the trouble it has caused him, including prison time for assaulting a police officer. Sam tries to work, but it's been harder since his prescriptions lapsed. The car repairs he'd hoped to fund were too expensive for Humanitas, so we gently asked about other needs. Glancing down at himself, he said, "Clothes?" As we prepared paperwork for him to shop at a used-clothing store, Sam thanked us profusely, then began to weep. He accepted the Kleenex we handed him. But when we offered a granola bar, he pointed out that he had no teeth, and his gums were sore. He smiled anyway as he departed, again thanking us all—the people of BUF—for allowing him to feel that someone cared.

~ Humanitas Team

Lummi Food Bank: Lummi Food Bank is operated and staffed by members of Lummi Nation's Commod Squad. It is a commodity food program for low income Tribal and non-Tribal people who live on the reservation. BUF collects both financial and material donations (see the red shopping cart in the foyer); however, a financial donation allows the Commod Squad to purchase needed food items in bulk, like beans. They also provide food stuffs like milk, cheese, peanut butter and vegetables. When available, it also provides food for pets. The Commod Squad also provides nutrition educational activities for LFB clients; including gardening for fruits and vegetables. Each Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday season it provide food baskets to the Lummi Community.

~ Native American Connections Committee

Family Promise: People at BUF continue to contact me about joining our amazing Family Promise Team. Our next week of service is May 2 though 9. We are most in need of hospitality folks and overnight volunteers. We have cots in the quilt room for volunteers, and the bathroom is right next door!!!! Thanks to Michael Berres, Troy Dillard and Henry Ohana who regularly spend the night! There are ongoing volunteer training opportunities. To volunteer, contact Ann at ann.v.stevenson@gmail.com Also, consider attending the Interfaith Coalition's upcoming auction on March 28th.

~ Family Promise Team

Interfaith Coalition HOPE action is coming up on Saturday, March 28th at 5:30 at the 4 Points Sheraton. This year, we are SO proud that BUF is offering a special Orcas Island GETAWAY weekend at Doe Bay Resort, thanks to the generous donations from our BUF community. \$665.00 was collected. I am excited to see what this resort trip will generate in the live auction. To order tickets, go to their website at interfaith-coalition.org. Interfaith Coalition is the umbrella organization that manages the Family Promise program. Our very own Greg Aanes has also made a very SPECIAL donation: a cove bench made of maple with turquoise insets.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Winter & Spring Office Hours at BUF

Monday through Thursday, 9am-3pm

Minister's Schedule
Tuesday through Friday

BUF Board of Trustees and Officers
Rory McLeod, President • Murray Bennett,
Vice President • Melissa E. Swift, Secretary •
Sky Hedman, Treasurer • Angie Lindquist,
Trustee • David Curley, Trustee Rod Haynes,
Trustee • Debbie Boots, Trustee Bharti
Kirchner, Trustee
• Rev. Paul Beckel, ex officio

AT A GLANCE: BUF WEEK ACTIVITIES AND MEETINGS

Wednesday, March 11

- 10:00 am Humanitas
- 10:00 am Staff Meeting
- 12:00 pm Writers Group
- ~~6:00 pm Community Night Dinner~~
- ~~6:45 pm Chalice Choir~~
- ~~8:10 pm Phoenix Ensemble & Treble Voices~~

Thursday, March 12

- 12:00 pm Gabriel's Art Kids-After School Program
- 2:00 pm Flowering Cherry Sangha Mindfulness Meditation Group

Friday, March 13

- ~~7:00 pm Friday Forum on Ranked Voting~~

Saturday, March 14:

- 9:00 am 12 Step Group-A

Sunday, March 15

- 10:30 am Worship Service Live Streamed on Youtube
- ~~11:30 am Post-Service Reflection Discussion~~
- ~~11:30 am Coffee Hour~~
- ~~12:00 pm Third Sunday Chalice Circle~~
- ~~12:15 pm Celebrant Team~~
- ~~12:30 pm Dungeons and Dragons~~
- ~~12:45 pm The Ramayana Reading Group~~
- 4:00 pm YRUU
- 6:00 pm ASL Women's Support Group

Monday, March 16

- 4:30 pm Life Exercise
- 6:00 pm Indivisible Bellingham
- 7:00 pm Refuge Recovery Group

Tuesday, March 17

- 12:00 pm Lunch with Paul
- 7:00 pm 12 Step Group – B

BUF's website is [BUF.org](http://buf.org).

Contact us by email at admin@buf.org.

Contact us by phone at 360-733-3837.

Sign up for our online newsletter, the Midweek Update at <https://wp.buf.org/news/communication-sign-ups/> Sign up for BUF News Digest at <https://wp.buf.org/news/communication-sign-ups/>

SUNDAYS, SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Sunday, March 15

This Sunday service will be live-streamed on YouTube and can be watched from home. Check back later on buf.org for more information on how to connect to the event.

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Other Sunday activities are suspended. Check the BUF calendar for more information and updates.

Read an Indian epic . . . The Ramayana Beginning Sunday, March 22

Two Indian epics guide the life of all Hindus. In 2016 we read the Indian epic, The Mahabharata. Now let's read the Ramayana, a much simpler story. In the Hindu worldview, there have been four stages of evolution, known as yugas, during which humans



gradually lost awareness of their inner selves and morality. In the first epoch humans possessed true knowledge and wisdom, and everyone knew right from wrong. The events of the Ramayana happened at the end of the 2nd epoch, when humans were somewhat corrupted (had lost a quarter of the awareness of righteousness). The events of the Mahabharata occurred at the end of the 3rd epoch when half of righteousness was lost and the world was far grimmer and more corrupt than in Rama's time. It ushered in the worst epoch, the Kali yuga (the current time), where only 1/4th of righteousness is left. Evil and dishonesty have now replaced truth and righteousness.

Ramayana dwells in detail on the complex relationship of truth and dharma. The epic revolves around Rama, the embodiment of dharma, who faces challenges in behaving as dharma because of his many roles and circumstances in life. Rama has become the Indian ideal of virtues, and Sita, its heroine, is considered an ideal of Indian womanhood.

Diwali, the festival of light, comes from the Ramayana. It symbolizes the spiritual "victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance" and is celebrated by Hindus, Jains and Sikhs.

The reading is expected to be completed in six weeks. However, since this epic strongly influences the lives of Hindus even now, we will have lots of discussions of its significance. So the pace will depend on the group. And we will end our reading program with a movie of the Ramayana. If you are interested in reading this epic, please contact Debu Majumdar at debumeister@gmail.com. **We will have weekly meetings via zoom and in person on Sundays at 12:45 pm, starting on March 22.** If you have a copy of the Ramayana, great; otherwise I recommend *Srimad Ramayana: The Prince of Ayodhya* by D.S. Sarma."

UN World Water Day – March 22nd



World Water Day, on 22 March every year, is about focusing attention on the importance of water. The idea for this international day goes back to 1992, the year in which the United Nations Conference on

Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro took place. That same year, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution by which 22 March of each year was declared World Day for Water, to be observed starting in 1993.

This year's theme, **'Water and Climate Change'**, explores how water and climate change are inextricably linked.

As the global population grows, so does the demand for water, which depletes natural resources and damages the environment in many places. Solutions include protecting carbon sinks such as oceans and wetlands, adopting climate-smart agricultural techniques, and increasing the safe reuse of wastewater.

Water is our most precious resource – we must use it more responsibly. We must balance all of society's water needs while ensuring the poorest people don't get left behind.

The World Water Day 2020 campaign explains statements such as:

- We cannot afford to wait. Climate policy makers must put water at the heart of action plans.
- Water can help fight climate change. There are sustainable, affordable and scalable water and sanitation solutions.
- Everyone has a role to play. In our daily lives, there are surprisingly easy steps we can all take to address climate change.

World Water Day celebrates water and raises awareness of the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water. It is about taking action to tackle the global water crisis. A core focus of World Water Day is to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030.

Explore this year's theme and browse our collection of stories to find out more: www.worldwaterday.org and <https://www.un.org/en/observances/water-day> and <https://www.unwater.org/world-water-day-2020-water-and-climate-change/>