

# Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship ~ BUF.org

## *Community, Compassion, Commitment*

June 10, 2020

### Sunday June 21 Flower Communion

To be mindful of this moment, that is, to deeply observe, acknowledge, and live into this moment, requires us to understand that, in material form, everything that once existed is no longer. The flower is closer to blooming, or closer to decay, or its beauty long gone. Our innocence, robust health, those we love ... all is transient.



The flower communion is a powerful ritual through which we practice letting go of beauty, pain, triumphs, and resentment. We do this by creating together a flower mandala. Then, with gratitude for the blessings and losses that these flowers represent, we collapse the mandala into the sheet on which it has been created, bring it to the river, and set it free.

***Pre-Flower Communion – Saturday, June 20:*** *Because we will not be together in person on Sunday to construct the mandala, please stop by BUF on Saturday between 10 am and 2 pm with a flower offering. Paul will be outside of BUF; a canopy will shield a sheet on which to construct the mandala. You can either take some time to place your offering yourself, or drive up to a table and set your flower(s) there for Paul to place for you.*

In any case, and even if you're unable to physically bring something to BUF, please take some time beforehand to deeply observe your flower offering (though it doesn't have to be flowers, just anything safe to place in the river). See its beauty and complexity. Feel each part – smooth, tough, prickly, fragile, resilient. Our mandala will be released in Whatcom Creek, above Marine Heritage Park. Perhaps you can release your own offering in another body of water, or, in pieces, into the wind.

You can also observe first-hand and first-person from the banks of Whatcom Creek if you are present at 11:30 am on Sunday. If you attend at the creek, please remain masked, and well separated. The gradual dispersal of the flowers will be quiet and subtle; this too is part of the power of the ceremony.

***High School Graduates' Bridging Ceremony*** – *The Flower Communion Service will also include a time to recognize our high school graduates and to acknowledge to significance of this moment for them and their parents. Your presence with them for this rite of passage will be a rich and powerful expression of our covenant.*

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### Sunday June 28 – Worship with Thousands for General Assembly

We will live-stream this service for UUs around the world, available on Zoom in lieu of our annual in-person conference Sunday morning service. Speakers will include:

**Rev. Joan Javier-Duval** is worship leader and will deliver the sermon at the 2020 General Assembly Sunday Morning Worship. She serves as Minister of the Unitarian Church of Montpelier, VT. She is the daughter of immigrants from the Philippines, mother of a kindergartener, and spouse of a proud Vermonter. Beauty, gratitude, and love are at the heart of her faithful striving for collective liberation and a thriving planet.



**Rev. Mykal O'Neal Slack** is worship leader at the 2020 General Assembly Sunday Morning Worship. He is currently the Community Minister for Worship and Spiritual Care for Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism, an organization and growing spiritual community committed to supporting Black folx in our faith, and a co-founder of the Transforming Hearts Collective, a ministry that both supports spaces for LGBTQ people to access resilience, healing, and spirituality and resources faith communities and other groups for the work of radical inclusion and culture shift. He is a husband and father from the South, committed to healing and truth-telling, as well as community accountability and care.



**Copies of recent Sunday Services** Audio and text copies of many of our past BUF services can be found in our archives at buf.org: <https://wp.buf.org/worship-programs/past-worship-services/>

Also we have audio and video files below from the service on June 7th. Please note that video files recorded during the zoom service feature only the presenter, for the benefit of privacy for the congregation attending on zoom.

Audio file of 6/7/2020 service: <https://next.buf.org/index.php/s/eTPKQMkcpKF2QP8>

Video file of 6/7/2020 service: <https://next.buf.org/index.php/s/oTRD9iByTJXdKzk>

## Sunday Services Upcoming

**June 14 Choir Finale 2020** On Sunday, June 14, the choir will present the annual “Choir Finale” service, including wonderful hymn singing, live special music and video recordings of choral performances recent and past, of ourselves and of others. The service is shaping up to be inspiring and touching, like a regular “Choir Finale.”

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# Bright Morning Stars Are Rising

## Whatcom County Soloists and Virtual Choir Present a Message of Hope, Healing and Reconciliation

“Bright Morning Stars Are Rising” is a visually stunning and emotionally arresting six-minute film, released just days after more than seven thousand people gathered peacefully on Saturday, June 6 in Bellingham’s Maritime Heritage Park to call for social justice and reform.

The film showcases locally revered singers Ibidunni Ojikutu, JP Falcon Grady, Andy Marshall and Thunderbirds Raised Her, together with a sixty-voice virtual choir.

Director Kevin Allen-Schmid says “Bright Morning Stars” is a gorgeous, heart-felt and inspiring song. It is imbued with hope, inspiration and caring for our community.”

The idea for the virtual choir sprang from the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. “Choirs were left stranded,” explains Allen-Schmid. “It became impossible to sing together in person while maintaining a safe social distance, so we put out an appeal for singers all over our county to learn the song at home, and to email us a video of themselves performing it.”

Sixty singers responded, and the resulting film, which can be accessed with this link on Choir of the Salish Sea’s Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2543925072491759> or on [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WoFFN-peLmt7MoGp1e86kN\\_McocuJmWz/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WoFFN-peLmt7MoGp1e86kN_McocuJmWz/view?usp=sharing) shows thumbnail videos of each participating singer mixed with iconic mountain, forest and sea imagery from Whatcom County, together with scenes of recent local social justice action, including the June 6 rally.

The film project is in support of the Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County, which provides services for local residents experiencing homelessness. Viewers are encouraged to make a donation to Interfaith Coalition via their website

<https://www.interfaith-coalition.org>

Allen-Schmid explains “The pandemic restrictions were stifling us musically when cries for social justice demanded a communal response. The voices of Black, Indigenous and People of Color must be heard. The needs of people experiencing homelessness must be addressed. We are thrilled to be a part of creating something beautiful while calling for justice and help for our neighbors in need.”



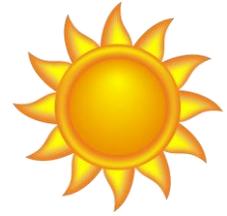
For more information <https://www.choirofthesalishsea.com/> or <https://www.facebook.com/choirofthesalishsea/>

Contact

Kevin Allen-Schmid, Whatcom Sings! Virtual Choir Project

kevin@buf.org

## Coming this summer: The BUF Music and Poetry HAPPY HOUR



On ten Wednesdays over the summer, from 5pm to 6pm, June 24 through August 26, we are offering a new weekly BUF gathering called “The BUF Music sharing, this gathering will carry us through a summer of inspiration while staying apart. HAPPY HOUR and Poetry HAPPY HOUR.” Hosted by rotating music leaders, with opportunities for individual is not for choir, it’s for *ALL* BUFsters and friends - no musical skills necessary. You may share and sing along, or just listen.

## **Board Posts Official Results from Congregational Meeting**

As current BUF Board Secretary, I am pleased to announce (and certify) the following ballot results from our Congregational Meeting held on May 31, 2020.

Ballots were counted independently (and cross-referenced with meeting attendance and membership status) by both Rory McLeod (Board President) and myself.



### Minutes 2019 Congregational Meeting

- **Approve: 106**
- Disapprove: 0
- Abstain: 3

### Bylaws Amendments (Article VIII, Section 4)

- **Approve: 109**
- Disapprove: 0
- Abstain: 0

### Proposed Budget for 2020/2021

- **Approve: 109**
- Disapprove: 0
- Abstain: 0

### Board of Trustees

- Sarah Pearson, 109
- John Stewart, 108
- Henry Ohana, 109

### Bylaws Amendments (Article VI, Section 5)

- **Approve: 108**
- Disapprove: 0
- Abstain: 1

### Nominating Committee

- Barbara Gilday, 109
- Amy Van Auken, 109
- Clair Lending, 109
- Jeff Copeland, 109
- Ann Lackland, 109

Congratulations to our three new Board members (look forward to working with you!) I will publish draft Minutes from the Congregational Meeting soon (most likely this weekend), which will be presented for approval at our next Congregational Meeting.

Thank you all for making this democratic process work so smoothly.

Sincerely,  
Melissa Swift, Board Secretary

## Erascism Minute from June 7 Service by Henry Ohana:



"Today I want to talk about why we have an eracism minute every week. Some people are under the impression that we want all of the white folks out there feeling bad. Some have asked why they aren't more positive. Some feel talking about race makes it more divisive. Some have wondered why we don't talk about other issues or types of oppressions. I hope this will help.

First off, it is never our goal to make you feel bad. We may want you to feel uncomfortable because talking about race is uncomfortable. But the only way we can become more aware is to be uncomfortable and learn.

There are many kinds of oppressions – sexism, classism, heterosexism, religious bigotry, etc. What is unique about racism is the 'institutionality' and visibility of it. The entire structure of society - from economic justice to police justice and mass incarceration to health justice - is stacked against black people and there is no way for them to hide who they are. Race is the first thing people see.

We will need to flesh out all the ways black people have been specifically targeted from accumulating wealth and have been prevented from having access to "The American Dream". We will need to analyze the dynamics at play that adversely impact the health of black people. We will need to talk about why we have such an enormous prison population and why is disproportionately people of color.

But I think we need to start with the most basic aspect of all: the constant risk black people face for their safety. For all you white people: do you ever worry that you might get pulled over for a broken tail light and end up dead? Do you ever worry if you pull out a cell phone a police officer might think it's a gun and shoot you? Do you ever think that sometime in the middle of the night the police will barge into your apartment and kill you? I know I don't.

I think at least 1/2 of the room can understand and relate to this fear. Women: I'm sure there has been some point in each of your lives where you have been alone, at night, in an area that feels deserted or otherwise unsafe. What do you do? What do you think about? You stand straight and walk briskly – maybe holding your keys between your fingers in case of attack and keep your ears and eyes peeled. And the whole time you are terrified. Terrified! Imagine feeling this way, every day for your whole life! Think about what a toll that would take on your psyche.

I know every person in here has a good heart and wants the best for everybody. That's why we invite you to the struggle. We don't want to call you out – we want to call you in. Because just as women had to convince enough men to give them the vote – they could not do it for themselves, likewise white people have to be the ones to deconstruct racism, black people cannot do it. So please, welcome the discomfort - lean into it and use it as an opportunity to learn. We are all in the same boat and it is a life long journey. And unless white people talk about it regularly, it won't change.

### **Step 1 – learn, Step 2 – act.**

In that vein, you are all invited to the Black Lives Matter zoom meetings, held on the first and second Monday evenings monthly. ~Henry Ohana

**Be On the Look-Out! There's a BUF short survey coming out in the next few days**---asking a few questions about what is working for the Fellowship, and what you might like to see more of.

The electronic survey will be emailed to BUF members and friends, using the Breeze email database. We would also like to hear from BUFsters who don't use the internet. A paper version of the survey is available by calling the BUF office, 360 733-3837



## Community Connections at BUF—June 10, 2020

### CHILDREN'S and YOUTH PROGRAMMING

#### Talking about Racism with your Child

This is a good time to have an explicit conversation with your child centering on racism and what's going on in the streets. Many liberal parents assume our children naturally pick up what they need to know about combating racism and being an ally for people of color, but we now know this is not the case. It is our role, in fighting the culture of white supremacy, to take the time to sit down and have those hard conversations with our children, and there is no better time than today.



There are many good resources out there, but here are a few to get you started. Feel free to contact me, at [genia@buf.org](mailto:genia@buf.org), if you want further readings or video recommendations for you or your child.

This is a great **Children's book** read aloud on video. It discusses the shooting of a black man by the police and is a good conversation starter.

A story: Something Happened in Our Town:

<https://youtu.be/lcOhOFGcWm8><https://youtu.be/lcOhOFGcWm8>

This is a video featuring a group of mental health experts coaching parents on how they can broach these difficult topics with their children

[YouTube from Common Sense Media](#): Helping Kids Process Violence, Trauma and Race in a World of Nonstop News

Whatcom County Library System's lists of books available to download:

[Books on Racism and Diversity](#) for adults and kids

[BIPOC Experiences](#) (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) Resources for Kids



**Rooted, Inspired, & Ready!**

Fellow GA Fans,

This GA will be different in many ways. In years past, the Webinars conducted by the UUA Board have been extremely helpful, particularly for first time attendees. However, because this year's GA will definitely be different, I recommend that everyone participating sign up for one of the Webinars. I've been to many Gas and I plan to attend a Webinar.

If you have general questions about GA, I'll be glad to help ([lew@usa.net](mailto:lew@usa.net)); however, I'll be learning about this *Virtual* GA along with you.

**Lew**

## what does our faith ask of us?

At this year's fully virtual General Assembly (GA), we will explore the power, possibility, purpose, struggle, and joy of finding the path forward together as Unitarian Universalists. During this time of rapid change, the collective practice of our faith evolves and adapts to follow that path. Whether you're a first-time delegate or a long-time attendee, please join us at a pre-GA webinar to learn about some of these changes. Members of the Board of Trustees will provide an overview of some of the changes, along with information for delegates regarding the business sessions.

Eight 75-minute webinars are offered between June 5 and June 18. We look forward to talking with you! [Registration](#) for a specific date is required to attend a webinar.

[Register for a Webinar](#)

## Hymnbooks for All and Upcoming Music at BUF

----- HYMNBOOKS FOR ALL -----

As we continue to meet and sing via Zoom, the BUF staff would like members of the congregation to have the grey and teal hymnbooks at home. The books are on a table just inside the BUF front door for you to come and check out, like library books. You sign for them now, and return them later once we resume in-person singing.

Please knock on the BUF front door between 10am and 2pm any Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, and Kathy Wahto will let you in.



----- UPCOMING MUSIC AT BUF -----

We are following our regular spring calendar for choir and music at BUF.

### **One more week of regular Wednesday evening choir rehearsals then a party**

Tonight the BUF Chalice Choir will meet from 6:45 to 8pm via this Zoom link <https://zoom.us/j/203732613> to share poetry, to learn and master the Sunday hymns, and to check in with each other personally. On Wednesday evening June 17, the choir is hosting an end-of-year Zoom "Aloha Party."

## **SURFING THE WEB WITH KEVIN FOR INSPIRATION AND LAUGHS – June 10, 2020**

We're sharing our favorite YouTube videos. Send me links, and I'll consider them for inclusion soon, as guided by UU Principles of course . . .

A Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship Mid-Week Update feature curated by Kevin Allen-Schmid

### **INSPIRATION FOR THESE DAYS**

Bright Morning Stars, Whatcom Sings! Virtual Choir, including 26 members of the BUF Choir!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3HHy53V-P8>

I Just Wanna Live, Keedron Bryant, a twelve-year-old's *a cappella* plea

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHaGXwOz8xE>



How It Would Feel to Be Free, Nina Simone, Montreux 1976 (shared by Patricia Conover)

<https://youtu.be/5dlrXCyrNYI>

I Know This Rose Will Open, Dr. Glenn Rideout, 1st UU Congregation Ann Arbor Music Director

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xB62-Hjh1VI>

Start All Over, Tracy Chapman (shared by Barbara Gilday)

<https://youtu.be/72PkUgZ651k>

Flood Story, Bill James, Chief Tsilixw of Lummi Nation (shared by Beth Brownfield)

Chief Tsilixw died on June 1, 2020. He was a keeper of the language, stories, knowledge and history of his people. We honor his memory and Lummi Nation. This is his telling of "We are the survivors of the great flood."

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U7ysJ7cfqpk&feature=share&fbclid=IwARoYTxbcioBoLwgoqzIWjsCmRcmrtwCKhQNAOy\\_vaaJwqunWqW-7Vr4Qs2U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U7ysJ7cfqpk&feature=share&fbclid=IwARoYTxbcioBoLwgoqzIWjsCmRcmrtwCKhQNAOy_vaaJwqunWqW-7Vr4Qs2U)

## National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is the June Special Collection Recipient

### Religious and Faith-Based Covid-19 Requirements For Re-opening'

Governor Inslee recently released the [Washington Safe Start phased plan](#) for reopening businesses across the state. As we prepare to move into Phase 2 of the response to COVID-19, it is important that faith communities get the guidance they need about how to operate safely (click [here](#) for a chart of Washington's phased approach to reopening businesses).

[Fr. Jeffrey Moore](#) (Assumption Parish, Bellingham) and [Brian Nelson](#) (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints), are serving on Whatcom County's COVID Employer Support Task Force as liaisons to the Faith Communities sector. The Task Force recently convened so that businesses and organizations can work together to share procedures, identify challenges in implementation, and compile information about best practices to ensure healthy and safe operations. Review the "[Religious and Faith-based Organization COVID-19 Requirements](#)" which the Governor issued on May 27.

**Zoom Volunteer Opportunities--** Sunday services held via Zoom broadcasts require a technical support team working behind the scenes to ensure the broadcast functions smoothly. Volunteers are needed to learn how to host the Zoom Sunday morning services, and/or for learning how to monitor the Zoom chat room that accompanies these services. These are two distinctly different responsibilities. Volunteers can choose either role or both. Being a Zoom host—overseeing the entire Zoom operation of the Sunday service—Is more complex than being a Chat Room host—being present in the Chat Room and releasing informational messages on cue. We are requesting volunteer support from the BUF congregation to give those now performing these functions occasional breaks.

The commitment is minimal and will be warmly appreciated. Friendly training with hand-written instructions is available for both roles. For more information, please contact: Jeff Copeland (Zoom Sunday Services hosting), [Jeff.Copeland@gmail.com](mailto:Jeff.Copeland@gmail.com), and Rod Haynes (Zoom Chat Room hosting), [Limerocker1@yahoo.com](mailto:Limerocker1@yahoo.com).

**Summer Publication Schedule for BUF MidWeek Update:** June 3, June 17, July 1, July 15, July 29, August 12 and August 26. Then we will revert back to once weekly, as of Sept 2. Deadline for publication in MWU is the Tuesday before publication date.

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

Contact us by email at [admin@buf.org](mailto: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/>

(photo by Carol Sheppard Photography)

