

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship ~ BUF.org

Community, Compassion, Commitment

August 11, 2021

Highlights – In this issue

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Sunday Service Zoom Link: Meeting ID
738 363 620 Worship starts at 10:20am

<https://zoom.us/j/738363620> Passcode
is **BUF** Phone: (669) 900-6833

Message from Paul

In early July, with immense joy I officiated at the wedding of my son, Rick, and his bride Emma. We were outdoors with sun and clear skies. Guests looked upon the smiling couple making vows with Mount Baker shining in the background.

They had made plans for the ceremony in the midst of lockdown, before vaccines. We weren't sure what sort of restrictions we'd face when the big day came, so we feel fortunate with 100% vaccinated, we could enjoy some long overdue hugs. Rick and Emma's friends collaborated to put together a party for 30 Friday night, made pancakes for 40 Saturday morning, and grilled salmon for 50 after the ceremony. Those still standing the next day went camping at Larrabee park for a couple of evenings.



A special part of the weekend for me and Jane was the contribution of our neighbors. We posted a note on our fence a couple of days in advance, and on the neighborhood email list, and BUF-news,

asking people to share flowers from their gardens. Dozens of overflowing vases appeared on Friday and Saturday to adorn the festivities with not only color and fragrance, but also the sweetness of extended community.

I wish that I could celebrate today continued progress toward the end of covid, and more ordinary gatherings. At this point though, we're back to the stressful uncertainties of major outbreaks, the spread of the delta variant by those who are vaccinated, no known date for vaccination for children, and far too little national community spirit and collaboration toward reducing risk. Kevin and I are preparing for the most "ordinary" in-gathering service possible on the Sunday after Labor Day. But to what extent that will be possible is going to be uncertain for at least a couple more weeks. Genia and

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the Religious Education Committee are also brainstorming how and when we can gather safely. At our covid task force meeting this past week there was an agreement that at this point it's too early to predict what the conditions will be in September. The task force will meet again next week.

We're hungering for personal connection. We're fatigued by uncertainties. I am angry that denial of reality, disinformation, and anti-social ideology are putting so many at risk for their lives. I am grateful to you for your continuing support of BUF, concern for each other's safety, and ongoing willingness to stay-tuned to opportunities to connect.

In ongoing determination and hope,
Paul

New Zoom Link for Black Lives Matter

Please see the Calendar for the Zoom link.

Board Changes

We're grateful to Debbie Boots and Bharti Kirchner for their service to the BUF Board of Trustees over the past two years. Debbie and Bharti have resigned and so the Board, in keeping with our bylaws, has appointed Lew Phinney to fill one of these positions for the remainder of the three-year term. At our August 26th meeting, the Board will decide how to proceed from here.

Upcoming Sunday – August 22

On Dabbling and Dithering – Paul Beckel and Bonnie Phinney
Bertrand Russell asks: can we learn “to live without certainty and yet without being paralyzed by hesitation”? Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn writes: “Hastiness and superficiality are the psychic diseases of the 20th century, and more than anywhere else this disease is reflected in the press.” What do these suggest about the need for focus—or the excess of focus—in our day-to-day life? Paul and Bonnie will dialog about the pros and cons of dabbling and dithering, inviting you into the conversation as well.

Sunday Services in August

On the first Sundays of August and September, we hope to share services outside and on Zoom. All other summer services will be on Zoom only.

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|--------|--|
| Aug 15 | Summer Camp Revisited – Rod Haynes |
| Aug 22 | On Dabbling and Dithering – Paul Beckel and Bonnie Phinney |
| Aug 29 | Love and Unity: The Principles as Pillars of Our UU Faith – Rev Barbara ten Hove |
| Sept 5 | Animal Blessings |

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Summer Taizé in Person and via Zoom

Taizé offers an opportunity for quiet reflection in the midst of our busy lives. It is a service of candlelight, simple music sung in a chant-like manner, readings and silence.

We've been hosting via zoom for over a year but recently BUF's COVID-19 Task Force announced up to 30 people can gather in the sanctuary for the service.



If you feel ready to attend Taizé in person, here are the guidelines:

- > Wear a mask while singing
- > Be fully vaccinated
- > Sign a waiver when you enter the building
- > Call the office (Mon-Friday between 10am and 2pm) to reserve the space OR Email Admin@BUF.org. You will receive an email confirmation about your reservation.

Summer Date for Taize

August 30

(No service on Labor Day 9/6/2021)

In addition to this in-person opportunity, we will continue to offer monthly Taizé service via zoom. Not everyone is ready to return to in-person services and we also

know our Taizé service is international in its scope and not everyone lives in Bellingham, so we want to keep it accessible for all who wish to be part of it.

We look forward to being with you in the ways you're most comfortable being with us.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email Rev. Tessie at Tessie@BUF.org

A Piece of Web Surfing

INSPIRATION –

We Are The World sung by Clarksville Elementary School - Submitted by Becky Pillai

<https://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=8836>

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Anti-Racism Training Coming Soon

BUF is delighted to announce that we received a grant which partially pays for anti-racism training this fall. Participants from the UU congregations in Blaine and Skagit County are joining us—their support was important to our winning the grant. We are contracting with two professional trainers, both women of color.

Training will be held on Saturdays beginning mid-September at BUF. Courtney Wooten of Suburbia Rising begins with three introductory/overview sessions highlighting anti-racism and anti-oppressions issues. Kimberly Harris of Distinctive Voice Consulting will provide advanced allyship training on three Saturdays in October. This training will help support and expand existing and potential relationships with Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) communities and organizations. Both these learning events will help move BUF and the other congregations closer to becoming an anti-racist, multicultural organizations.

We need to raise additional money to hold these events, but we will keep you informed about how to donate and sign up soon. Watch this space for registration information.



Flower Communion of Prague, a joyous event – Sunday August 8

A brilliant morning of music, poetry, rain showers and flowers, at Whatcom Falls Park! Thank you to all who joined in to make the Flower Communion service with Lucie and Jim Carlson a heartfelt gathering. It was so wonderful to be together!

If You Listen, by John Squadra, from his book of poetry “This Ecstasy” was shared on Sunday:

If you listen,
not to the pages or preachers
but to the smallest flower
growing from a crack
in your heart,
you will hear a great song
moving across a wide ocean
whose water is the music
connecting all the islands
of the universe together,

and touching all
you will feel it
touching you
around you . . .
embracing you
with light.

It is in that light
that everything lives
and will always be alive.

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Why Racism Minutes? – Henry Ohana

People have sometimes questioned the point of the anti-racism minutes we offer each Sunday. Sometimes folks have felt they were academic, preachy, blamed or shamed. Often the question is, “But what can we DO?”

As a primarily white congregation, it can be easy to never talk about race. We don't feel it effects our everyday life. When we start waking up to the variety of ways racism exists, we feel the need to “do” something.

The good news is, once you start seeing the racism in society and within yourself, you start asking, “How did I not see this before?” That is where change happens.

However, taking action without understanding some of the deep seated issues related to racism, has at times, caused us to repeat the same types of harm that have happened in the past. So learning and talking ARE important - and ACTIVE - anti-racist work!

Recently a white friend who has been actively engaged in anti-racism work was talking to me about the Olympics and some “ah ha” moments she had. when the US was in a competition, she said, it was clear who to root for. But what about when our country wasn't a contender? What if the competition was between say the UK and China? Who then? She realized her own internalized racism would have led her to (perhaps unconsciously) root for a European team/individual over an Asian or African one.

I am proud to be part of a congregation that has declared that we want to be explicitly anti-racist. It can be a bumpy journey, hurt feelings can happen, unpleasant internal biases and feelings can crop up, but we have committed to stay the course. I want to thank all of you for being on this journey.

A Piece of Web Surfing

Just for Laughs - Submitted by Pam Ives

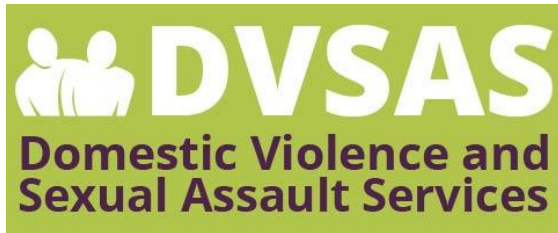
<https://www.facebook.com/NTDTelevision/videos/2728433277377405>

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BUF SEJC Special Collection – August 2021: Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services – Jane Ronca Washburn



The Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services (DVSAS) advocates for, educates and assists victims. Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior used by an individual to establish and maintain control over an intimate partner. Is the victim at fault? No. Because some victims are unsure about what qualifies as domestic violence, the DVSAS website -

DVSAS.org - gives many scenarios that help to define it.

Some DVSAS Programming includes Preventive Education for high school students, Shelter and Rehabilitation for singles, families and pets and support groups for women, men, LGBTQ+ survivors, incarcerated survivors and teens.

DVSAS wishes to make their staff, board and leadership more reflective of the varied composition of the clients that they serve, they ask for funds from BUF for equity training.

"I came to the shelter feeling broken and afraid. I leave knowing how capable and strong I am. I will be forever grateful."

DVSAS is proud that 88.05% of expenses go to their programming and services.

Information and Support is through the website and 24-hour help line, 1-360-715-1563.

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Painters needed to repaint and freshen up the BUF conference room, to make it more inviting. The room is pre-prepped, paint and equipment provided, well-ventilated, air conditioned space. Probably 4-hour job for two or even three people. Call Jim Reimer at 360 927-3836 or email at jdreimer@comcast.net.

Volunteers needed for Religious Education to help with pre-school, K-4 grade, and 5th-8th classes. If you enjoy children, being a part of a dedicated team, learning and teaching about what makes us Unitarian Universalists, art, drama or storytelling, then this is the place for you! Curriculum will be provided. Contact me at genia@BUF.org

MUSIC VOLUNTEERS - Sunday Service

Sunday services from **now through September 5** will originate from presenters' homes and will be broadcast over Zoom. **If you have something to offer for a summer service, musical or otherwise, that you can deliver in a pre-recorded format, or that you are able to perform live from your home over Zoom, please email your offering to Rev. Paul.**

Bring your Tool Belt

We are transforming a storage space into a meeting space! Having finally gotten the space cleaned out it is ready for a make over. Looking for handy types to wield a hammer, cut and fit baseboards, cut and fit plywood window covers and install white boards. One -day job, bring you own tools, though we can provide some. Call Jim Reimer at 360 927-3836 or leave a message at BUF 360 733-3837.

Summer Publishing Schedule for MWU

Content must be received by 10:00 a.m. Monday before publication day.

Publish on

Submit Content by 10 a.m.

Aug 25

Aug 22

Sept 8, resuming weekly publication thereafter. Content due as described below.

Modifications to Mid-Week Update

We are remodeling . . . the MWU. Our goal is to increase readability and simplify the process so volunteers can easily step in as needed. Please take a moment to read our guidelines for submitting content:

Word document, single space, Georgia 12 font. Please avoid extra formatting, bullets, etc. Limit 200 words. If you have an item for the calendar please put "Calendar" in the subject line of your email; if you are seeking Volunteers, please put "Volunteer" in the subject line. Submittals may be edited for space and clarity. Submit your content to MWU@buf.org You may still submit your "Surfing the Web for Music and Inspiration" as before. You will find selections sprinkled throughout the MWU. Happy Reading!

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UPCOMING EVENTS / CALENDAR		
DATE	TIME	EVENT
Aug 9		Family Promise -Week of Service contact: ann.v.stevenson@gmail.com
Aug 9	7:00 p.m.	Black Lives Matter – Program Meeting Join Zoom Meeting https://zoom.us/j/96917727292?pwd=TWViVldQNDBnLzVwLldlNWUZDckFHZzo9 Meeting ID: 969 1772 7292 Passcode: BUF
Aug 10	Noon	Understanding Buddhism Study Group – contact Debu at Debumeister@gmail.com .
Aug 14-18		Creative Arts Eliot Contact: Barbara Ten Hove: revbabs10@gmail.com
Aug 22	8:30 a.m.	Widening the Circle via Zoom Contact Genia at genia@buf.org
Aug 30	7:00 p.m.	Taize – In Person or Zoom Call Admin at BUF to reserve a seat.
Sep 6	6:00 – 7:00 p.m.	BUF Black Lives Matters Monthly Business Meeting Join Zoom Meeting https://zoom.us/j/96292952504
Oct 4	6:00 – 7:00 p.m.	BUF Black Lives Matters Monthly Business Meeting https://zoom.us/j/96292952504 Meeting ID: 962 9295 2504 Passcode: BUF

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BUF Mission

We the members of the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship (BUF) are a liberal religious community which values the diversity of individuals and affirms Unitarian Universalist principles. As a community we aspire to provide a creative and nurturing environment where social, spiritual and personal development are encouraged and acknowledged. Therefore, we celebrate in ritual, music, art literature and humor; and we endeavor to teach, to learn, and to serve both our community and the world.



BUF's website is BUF.org. Contact us by email at admin@buf.org Phone 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)

BUF Board of Trustees and Officers

Open, President - John Stewart, Secretary - Sky Hedman, Treasurer, ex officio, - Melissa E. Swift, Trustee - Daria Haynes, Trustee - Drew Betz, Vice President - Alex Gilman, Trustee - Sarah Pearson, Trustee - Lew Phinney, Trustee - Henry Ohana, Trustee - Rev. Paul Beckel, ex officio

Spring Office Hours at BUF

Building Closed till further notice due to Covid-19 Emergency

Phone messages and emails checked regularly

Minister's Schedule
Tuesday through Friday