

# Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship ~ BUF.org

*Community, Compassion, Commitment*

September 15, 2021

## Highlights – In this issue

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*Special Thanks to Barbara Ellis-Quinn for providing photos from our water communion last Sunday!*

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

### When Things are Not Fixed

Fixed can mean repaired. This calls to my mind a Jewish concept of “repairing the world,” which refers to the purpose of human life: finishing the work of creation.

Fixed can also mean set in place. This calls to my mind things that are positive, like balance and security... and also negative, like lethargy, or wilful ignorance.

Having a fixed position, or being stubborn, is a double-edged sword. Stubbornness can be about commitment and loyalty, or it can be self-righteousness, or unwillingness to compromise.

Right now, for the most part, things do not seem fixed as I might like them to be. Reflecting on 9/11—twenty years later—I have a hard time recognizing repaired relationships, or international security. In the rise and fall and rise and fall of covid, and in political polarization, I feel great uncertainty.



In change and uncertainty, we experience the incomprehensibility of time unfolding...and the wonder of life evolving. Perhaps, too, we may be living witnesses to consciousness-of-our-oneness expanding.

In Unitarian tradition, we honor the teaching that “revelation is not sealed.” It’s not only that we don’t yet know everything, but what there is to know is itself expanding. The unfolding of time, the dynamism of human experience, life’s adaptation to new conditions, and our growing openness to truths known through art, intuition, poetry, laughter, nature, and our relationships with each other and with all of the above. Infinitely expanding.

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The United Church of Christ uses the tagline: “God is still speaking.”

Instead of the pretence of certainty, all of this points us toward knowing only that “this is my best understanding with what I know now.”

Imagine yourself as part of an infinite web of being. Do you imagine this web as a fixed state? Do our connections with one another—and with all being—mean permanent stasis? That there is no wiggle room, no repairs possible, no opportunities to change course?

I sometimes wish for more stability, and sometimes feel stuck. How might we find blessing in both change and stillness? This musing, of course, is unfinished.

Wishing you Peace, and Potential,  
**Paul**

The BUF Board of Trustees has decided to keep the building closed for large gatherings, including Sunday services, through the end of October. Sunday services will continue on Zoom during this time at the regular Zoom link.

The Board’s **Covid Task Force** is has distributed a survey via email asking what protocols would need to be in place in order for you to come to indoor Sunday services. Please complete and return the survey ASAP.



## Sunday Services in September

All services will be live-streamed on Zoom

**Sept 19 – “What is mine to do? Creating Beloved Community”** This service will prompt us to explore the role we each play in creating Beloved Community. We all need to feel belonging, to feel valued and included. How do we foster this in ourselves and others? What happens when we consciously offer up small kindnesses and approach one another with open hearts? Come join us and learn **“What is mine to do?”**

## Sept 26 - “When Things are not Fixed”

Rev Paul Beckel

Change means loss, and often grief. Uncertainty may cause anxiety. But change and uncertainty may also remind us that we have the potential to nudge ourselves loveward.

*A Piece of Web Surfing*

Submitted by Becky Pillai

### Inspiration

Le flashmob des Prodiges

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eee4-d7FUis>

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**Religious Education Events this Fall –  
Genia Allen-Schmid RE Director, [genia@buf.org](mailto:genia@buf.org)**

## **CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

We are holding off on our in-person Sunday morning RE programming. Instead, we will be offering weekly zoom options for all ages, along with outdoor games, art projects and family potlucks every few weeks.

This fall's zoom RE classes are part of a collaborative effort with a number of UU congregations in the Pacific Northwest, including BUF. It will be fun and invigorating for children to meet up with other young UU's around the area.

If you would like to have your child join in a zoom RE class, you must register [here](#). Once registered, you will receive a zoom link for the class.

Zoom Schedule, starting Sunday, September 26 is:  
Sundays, 10:00 to 10:30, separate classes for K-2 and 3-4<sup>th</sup> graders

Wednesdays, 6:00 to 7:00, 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders

Wednesdays, 7:00 to 8:00, 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders



## **YRUU**

All 9-12 graders are invited to join our weekly YRUU meetings on Sundays, from 4:00 to 5:30. This coming Sunday we'll meet at BUF for some cupcake baking and board games. Plan on staying until 6:00 this week so we can finish up playing games, along with the cupcakes. If you come late, please knock on the kitchen window downstairs and you'll be let in! As usual our BUF COVID protocols will be followed.

## **Family Picnic**

This Sunday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, we'll have a family potluck picnic at the Barkley Haggen pavilion\*, from 12:00 to 1:30. We will provide chicken, rolls, lemonade, plates, cups and table ware. Please bring something to contribute. Parents will have an opportunity to meet other parents and relax, while Marissa and Amaya lead the children in outdoor games or art, depending on the weather.

\*The Pavilion is at 2900 Woburn, 100 feet East of the Haggen grocery store in Barkley Village.

## **ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Chalice Circles are starting up again this month! If you aren't already in a Chalice Circle and long for regular, more intimate interaction with other BUFsters and develop deeper relationships, we invite you to join a group. Let me know if you wish to participate, or want more information, and we'll get you placed in a Circle as soon as possible.

Later in September we will be offering some adult RE classes – stay tuned!

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## BUF Choir Rehearsals Resume – Where the Spirit Sings

Kevin Allen-Schmid, BUF Music Director      kevin@buf.org

We had 37 enthusiastic singers at our Wednesday choir rehearsal and 27 die hards on Sunday for our service in the rain, a true Water Communion for rubber duckies.



With input from the group, our choir committee has decided to announce our ongoing rehearsal plans one week at a time, so:

This coming **Wednesday, Sept 15**, we will meet outside in front of the fellowship, like last week

and this morning, from 6:45 to 8pm, where masks are optional, or, if it is raining, we'll move into the sanctuary, where masks will be required.

Everyone will be given a folder and we'll start learning this semester's exhilarating music. I can't wait - I have missed singing with y'all so much!



**NEW BUF DIRECTORY** Judy Kasper,  
Hospitality Team [kasper.jm828@gmail.com](mailto:kasper.jm828@gmail.com)

Plans are afoot to update of our Members and Friends photo directory! This year we're going to do our own production! We will be converting our online directory into a book format including color photos.

Seeing photos along with names helps to make connections. Searching pictures to recall a name and looking up names to recall a face, as well as finding phone numbers, addresses. All from the Directory! BUF has several new members and friends whose interactions have been limited to virtual meetings and the new directory will help us connect with them when we are finally able to gather in person.

Like so many things, putting an update together will be a team effort that includes everyone! If you don't already have a photo in the Directory you will be asked to upload one. The goal is 100% photo participation. The Hospitality Team will be the point of contact for folks who need help getting their photos and information online. Brian Quick will be the contact to set up Profiles for those that don't have one.. Kathy Wahto and Sue Sayegh will handle the data update and will soon be emailing people to check their listing for accuracy .

The target date for completion of the data gathering and photo uploads is **early November**. Target date for publication and distribution is mid-December. Please help make the best and most inclusive directory possible! Details coming!

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## **Eracism Minute - Cat McIntyre, Black Lives Matter Ministry Action Team**

For over a year, I have been working with Black Lives Matter and many others in the congregation on anti-racism and anti-oppression training to continue the learnings from the Beloved Conversations program two years ago.

We organized in-person workshops led by black women professionals experienced in working with groups to achieve goals like ours. We invited other UU congregations in Blaine and Mt. Vernon to join us. We contracted for the first series of workshops.

*Our goal is for the entire BUF congregation to learn how to live its commitment toward Beloved Community.*

However, because of the current upsurge in COVID in our community, we considered holding the workshops on zoom instead of in person. Now, with input from experienced educators, we realize that this training will lose its impact on zoom. So, we have decided to **postpone** the workshops until later in the year when, hopefully, we can meet safely in person.

I want to add a second, very important, reason to postpone: **the recent resignation of yet another BUF Board president requires serious reflection NOW for all of us.** We must work on BUF governance, policies and procedures, and how we deal with conflict within our congregation.

Our Healthy Relationships Covenant is designed for one-on-one problems, not systemic dysfunction. When we have resolved this important issue in a way that is consistent with a Beloved Community, BUF will be more likely to benefit from anti-racism/anti-oppression workshops.

*A Piece of Web Surfing*

**Just for Fun** – Submitted by Patricia,

Do You Love Me

<https://youtu.be/fn3KWM1kuAw>

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## **BUF SEJC Special Collection – September 2021: Humanitas Ministry – Jane Ronca Washburn**

The mission of the Humanitas Ministry is to provide support to people in need, in a safe, warm and non-judgmental atmosphere. Since 2013, we have listened carefully to their stories, and offered financial assistance and referrals to other churches and community agencies as needed. In addition to BUF, as part of a faith community we work in partnership with St. Paul's Episcopal Church Alms Ministry, Assumption Catholic Church (Hope House), the Ministry of St. Vincent de Paul and Hillcrest Church. We are an integral part of Bellingham's Community Resource Network.



When BUF closed its building in March 2020 because of Covid, Humanitas needed to think outside the box to keep the ministry functioning. We took a couple of weeks to organize to provide a telephone hotline, a specifically-designed website for aid applications, text/email for additional information, and distribution of vouchers/checks via the US mail. We were hoping that on Wednesday, September 15, 2021, the entire masked ministry team would be able to return to BUF to welcome people in need, in person, once more, but the increase in Covid infections, among those vaccinated as well as those unvaccinated, has postponed our in-person opening. We will describe more of our journey at the **BUF Special Collection for the Humanitas Ministry on Sunday, September 19, 2021.**

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Request for a one-time volunteer mental health professional – Sept 29**

Whatcom Family and Community Network has a community-wide showing of a documentary on suicide attempt survivors on September 29th. The organization is one of our special collection recipients for the current year. They requested a volunteer mental health professional be on hand that day. If interested please contact Danielle Humphreys at: [madhope@wfcn.org](mailto:madhope@wfcn.org) phone no.: 360-738-1196. You may also contact Sita [Ambarao25@gmail.com](mailto:Ambarao25@gmail.com) or Kara at [karab@treefrognight.com](mailto:karab@treefrognight.com)

### **Interfaith Coalition Representative**

The role of Interfaith Coalition Representative is very important. It is the communications and connection to our Congregation about Interfaith Coalition and it's work. It is often about fundraising for Interfaith: promoting events, supporting their

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## Volunteer Opportunities (continued)

auction, helping with the coat drive, passing the word on volunteer opportunities, and reports to SEJC. Please contact Ann Stevenson. [ann.v.stevenson@gmail.com](mailto:ann.v.stevenson@gmail.com)

## Volunteers Wanted as Livestreaming Continues

We have a strong (mostly volunteer) crew working each week to ensure that BUF services are accessible to all regardless of their location and mobility. Some work on site at BUF, others far away. It's a rewarding opportunity to assist in BUF outreach from behind the scenes. To keep these volunteers' schedules manageable, we would be very grateful for more people to join us. Some of the work is technical and fast paced, but some is relatively straightforward and can be done in advance. In all cases, thorough training will be provided. Please contact [minister@buf.org](mailto:minister@buf.org) if you'd like to help.

## BUF Caring Team (formerly Pastoral Care Team)

We need caring volunteers! Each of us will need support at some time and each of us can offer support. Training will be provided, expertise not required. You can designate what kind of assistance you wish to provide. Our main areas of service include: a) providing a listening presence: one to one conversations - in person, on the phone, and/or on zoom/FT. (examples: personal support in time of loss or times of family, health, or spiritual crisis) b) responding to needs: short term assistance (examples: meals during illness or during recovery after surgery, assistance finding community resources). c) organizing memorial service receptions. Email [caring@buf.org](mailto:caring@buf.org) or call Steffany Raynes (206-465-6149) to volunteer.

## Welcome Culture – Barbara Ellis-Quinn

As the new church year begins we will be working toward creating a congregation-wide culture of welcoming and hospitality. We want everyone to join this effort. Please join us by registering for the Sunday Hospitality Sign-up Genius volunteer list. If you are already registered you don't need to do anything. However, if you want to be a part of helping to strengthen BUF's welcoming culture please email me at [Dr E Q@me.com](mailto:Dr_E_Q@me.com). I will send you an invitation to create an account and join our hospitality group.

## Volunteers Appreciated – Workers and Painters Needed

We are **currently seeking volunteers to help paint** the conference room. As with any facility, there are also ongoing tasks like tidying and organizing storage areas. There are many other opportunities and projects that volunteers can help. E-mail Jim Reimer at [jd.reimer@comcast.net](mailto:jd.reimer@comcast.net) for more information.

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UPCOMING EVENTS / CALENDAR		
DATE	TIME	EVENT
Sep 15	6:45-8:00p.m.	Chalice Choir Rehearsal - Questions? Kevin@buf.org
Sep 15	8:15 - 9:00 pm	Phoenix Ensemble Rehearsal – Questions? Kevin@buf.org
Sep 19	12:00-1:30 pm	Family Picnic Barkley Haggen pavilion 2900 Woburn, 100 feet East of the Haggen grocery store in Barkley Village
Sep 20	7:00 pm	BUF Black Lives Matters – Program Meeting <a href="https://zoom.us/j/96292952504">https://zoom.us/j/96292952504</a>
Sep 26	1:00-2:00 pm	Social & Environmental Justice Business Meeting Contact Kara Black <a href="mailto:karab@treefrognight.com">karab@treefrognight.com</a> 360-676-2300
Sep 26	10:00-10:30 am	Childrens Religious Education resumes. Contact <a href="mailto:genia@buf.org">genia@buf.org</a> for registration and zoom link.
Sep 29	6:00-7:00p.m.	RE 5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> . grade. Contact <a href="mailto:genia@buf.org">genia@buf.org</a> for registration and zoom link
Sep 29	7:00-8:00pm	RE 9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> . grade. Contact <a href="mailto:genia@buf.org">genia@buf.org</a> for registration and zoom link.
Oct 4	6:00 – 7:00 pm	BUF Black Lives Matters Monthly Business Meeting <a href="https://zoom.us/j/96292952504">https://zoom.us/j/96292952504</a>  Meeting ID: 962 9295 2504 Passcode: BUF

## Community Events and Happenings

On Friday September 11 an arsonist set fire to the Ukrainian Evangelical Church on Cornwall Ave. The building sustained heavy damage and will be expensive to repair. A Go-Fund-Me has been set up if you are able to assist.  
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/rebuild-the-ukrainian-evangelical-church-of-bham>

To cheer on and show our love to the local hospital workers who have been nonstop during this pandemic, musicians have begun signing up to play outside the employee entrance at shift changes. The hospital is exploring adding radiant heat to an existing gazebo for the musicians to stand under. We've now had three sets of musicians, and it's gone very well for everyone so far. Ladies Loe cello duo, a classical violinist, the principal harpist for the Whatcom Symphony Orchestra and more. Let me know if you'd like to play. No wind instruments or voices . . . contact Flip Breskin: [zeke@openaccess.org](mailto:zeke@openaccess.org)

A new play by BUF member and Sylvia Center for the Arts **Playwright-in-Residence Rosalind Reynolds** opens **Sept. 16** -- to a (vaccinated) live audience! "**The Wing Maker**" is a magical riff on the early life of Ada Byron Lovelace, daughter of notorious poet Lord Byron, and the world's first computer programmer. All audience members must wear masks and show proof of vaccination to attend. Hopefully there will be a livestream option as well, for those who prefer not to attend in person (details TBA). For dates, details, and tickets, go to <https://sylviacenterforthearts.org/event/the-wingmaker/2021-09-16/>

The Whatcom Peace & Justice Center (WPJC) will host "**Rad & Real: Turning Imagination into Action,**" Bellingham's 18th annual International Day of Peace celebration, happening in-person (following COVID safety protocols) on **Sunday, September 19, 2021 2:00 – 7:00 pm**, at Maritime Heritage Park, followed by a virtual community event on **Tuesday, September 21 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.** This year features the presentation of our annual Lifetime Peacemaker Award, a chance to meet and learn about various local organizations helping to imagine a compelling future, inspiring performances by local artists, and a keynote speech by Swinomish and Visayan elder Shelly Vendiola. Shelly Vendiola has



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served as an educator, facilitator, activist, and mediator for over 30 years and co-founded the Native Community Engagement and Peacemaking Project. Register early on-line with sliding scale donation at [whatcompjc.org/idp2021](http://whatcompjc.org/idp2021).

**Greening with Integrity September 24 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. MOVED TO ZOOM - Register to Attend**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZItduCoqD4tEtP3\\_xPsm-viV2APCOj8W5s4](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join?from=addon&url=https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join?from=addon&url=https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZItduCoqD4tEtP3_xPsm-viV2APCOj8W5s4)

Join the Multi-faith Network for Climate Justice as we host **Greening with Integrity**. In-Person & Live Streaming. Reverend Dr. Andrea Asebedo, Center for Spiritual Living - has led her congregation in lowering their carbon footprint. I imagine many others of you have taken similar steps; we would love to hear your stories as well, if you have.

Please join Dr. Asebedo as she shares her story of love and grief with the Bellingham community, as part of the City's *ALL IN for Climate Action* week. In person and live stream available. <https://cob.org/services/environment/climate/all-in-for-climate-action/climate-action-week> <https://cob.org/event/greening-with-integrity-2021>

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

### **Fall/Winter hours at BUF**

Building closed for services, due to Covid-19  
Small group meetings are being held, under Covid guidelines.

Office Hours: Mon - Friday 10am to 3pm

Minister's Schedule: Tues through Fri