

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship
Community, Compassion, Commitment
December 6, 2023

BUF's Holiday Music Service this Sunday, December 10

The Angels Sing Glory

Songs along the arc of justice

Three BUF choirs with special soloists and instrumentalists will present a family-friendly service of mostly music, ranging from that magical moment in Bethlehem up to the current day.

BUF music director Kevin Allen-Schmid explains:

“Choirs have been embraced by European culture ever since the central story in Christianity included a choir of angels. No other world religion gives such importance to multitudes of people singing in harmony together. Thus, we in the West have come to enjoy choral music, especially at Christmastime, from plainchant, through the renaissance and Baroque, to the modern day.

We even know the words the angels sang: ‘Gloria in excelsis Deo’ (Glory to God in the highest, but in Latin, of course). Thus, we are following a heavenly mandate when we sing the word GLORY at Christmastime.

The word Glory, though, has taken on new connotations since the time of the King James Bible, and can now be sung as a prayer for social and racial justice.

It is the choir’s goal that our holiday service take us on a musical journey from Bethlehem to Selma.”



Look for this painting in the narthex depicting a choir attended by angels. It was painted in 2012 by Susan Supola, a member of the Crown of the Continent Choir in Kalispell, Montana, and it shows director Kevin Allen-Schmid and accompanist Marlene Anderson.



Soloists Walt Ellis and Joel Johnson

Perennial Scams – A Note from Rev Paul

I've heard from two people this morning about scam emails from an address that looks very much like mine. Sadly this happens routinely—both via email and text—as if from me and other BUF staff. As these messages use language that sounds more and more human, if in doubt, do not reply but start a new text or email to us at a known address. *We will never send generic 'I need your help' type-messages. And we will never send an individual email or text asking for money. Simply ignore either of these.*

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This Sunday we encourage children to stay in the sanctuary during the service for our Music Sunday! It's going to be lively and captivating. We'll have a table of quiet activities for kiddos in the back of the sanctuary, and the nursery set up with childcare providers as well.

If you have any questions or concerns about our children's programming or want to volunteer, please contact Genia at genia@Buf.org



CHRISTMAS CAROLING, Holiday STORIES and COOKIES!!

Help spread the joy of Christmas by Caroling with BUFsters of all ages on Wednesday, December 20. We'll start at 5:15 at Columbia Place Assisted Living on 2315 Williams Street, and then return to BUF by 6:00 for our usual Wednesday Night Community dinner of soup and salad.



After supper we invite children to stay for our Christmas party from 6:45-7:30. We'll have people read their favorite seasonal stories while enjoying home-made cookies and hot chocolate! Please contact Genia if you can bring a plate of cookies to share.

COMMUNITY NIGHT DINNER

Join us this Wednesday at 6:00 in the Social Hall for hearty Chicken and Quinoa soup (with a vegan option), green salad, garlic bread and dessert. Cost is just \$5 for adults and children under 12 are free!

Stay after dinner to play card-oriented games – Fluxx, Sea Salt & Paper, or Gubs. Or bring your own card game or board game to play!



INTRODUCING SECOND FRIDAY FUN (SFF) NITE!!

Starting Friday, January 12, BUF will host a variety of fun activities every second Friday of the month from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. Activities will rotate each month between a game night, movie night, and a TEDTalk with discussion. Our goal is to connect people through fun!



Our first SFF Nite, on January 12, will be a game night. A variety of adult board and card games will be provided, and we'll have a couple of childcare providers hosting a childrens' table so parents can play an adult game should they wish. Please bring a snack to share. People are invited to start socializing in the Social Hall at 6:30; games will start in earnest at 7:00.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP WITH PLEDGE DRIVE

Thanks to all who came to the budget meeting during and after the potluck on Sunday, December 3. We need your help! Here are some opportunities:

Activity	Estimated Time	Time Span	Total Needed
Canvass 3 to 5 households	2 hrs/week	2/11/24 to 3/15/24	40 to 50
Recruit Canvassers	1 hour/week	11/15/23 to 2/1/24	10
Spreadsheet Analysis	5 hrs total	Mid-April	1
Write Inspiring Article for Brochure	5 to 10 hours total	12/1/23 to 1/15/24	1
Desktop Publish Brochure	5 to 10 hours total	1/15/24 to 2/1/24	1
Oversee Kickoff Breakfast	5 hours total	1/15/24 to 2/10/24	1
Cook for Breakfast	3 hours total	2/11/24	3 or 4
Setup for Breakfast	1 hour	2/11/24	2
Cleanup/Breakdown Breakfast	2 hours total	2/11/24	2
Stuff Envelopes for Mailing	2 hours total	2/1/24	2

Call or text Rick Steele (Vlad) at 360-319-7759 to volunteer or with any questions.

WINTER QUARTER ADULT RE PROGRAMS

DATE/TIME	COURSE TITLE / DESCRIPTION
January 21, 28, February 4 12:00-1:30 Facilitators: Tom Nicholas Patricia Conover	GRATITUDE Recall those moments when you may have said, “Thanks to the universe, I got a parking place right in front.” This facilitated conversation will explore the role of gratitude not just when life “goes our way,” but for those inevitable times when it does not. We’ll explore to whom and for what we’re grateful. (3 sessions)
February	BLACK LIVES MATTER SPECIAL PROGRAMMING
March 2 10:00— 2:00 Facilitator: Felice Davis	*NEWCOMERS PATHWAYS: Pathway sessions welcome new members, visitors, or anyone interested in knowing more about the UU tradition and BUF. These fun and informative sessions introduce participants to each other and to Unitarian Universalism.
March 3, 10, 17, 24 12:00-1:30 Facilitators: Natalie Johnson	UU THEOLOGY: How did Unitarian Universalism evolve into the liberal faith we know? What fundamental issues and individuals shaped our understanding of UUism from our earliest beginnings onward? Why do we not have a creed or dogma, but instead embrace our Principles and Sources? These and other questions are explored in this course. (4 sessions)

We ask that folks register at the links below. A maximum \$10 donation is suggested towards the cost of materials each semester, but Pathways classes are free. If you need help registering, contact Genia and she will happily register for you!

Pathways: [Pathways](#)
Gratitude: [Gratitude](#)
UU Theology: [UU Theology](#)

Interweave Meeting, December 10, 12:00-1:30

On Sunday, December 10, 12:00-1:30, there will be a meeting for Interweave, the UU program to fight the oppression of LGBTQIA2S+ people. At the meeting, we will determine which actions and events to pursue during the remainder of the 2023-2024 church year. All those interested are encouraged to attend. You do not need to be LGBTQIA2S+ to participate. Allies are welcome! The meeting will be in the flex room in the RE space upstairs.

SUNDAY LOOK AHEAD

December 17

Solstice – Rev Paul Beckel

December 24

Christmas Eve – Revs Barbara ten Hove and Paul Beckel

NOTE, we will not have a Sunday morning service this weekend. Our Christmas Eve service will be held at 7:00 SUNDAY NIGHT

December 31

What Tends Your Wholeness in These Divisive Times? –

For the last few years BUF's Sunday Service near the beginning of the new year has featured original works of art, music, poetry and short essay by members of this congregation. It has been a heart-warming service with many participants who don't usually come to the front of the sanctuary. Su Livingston and Steffany Raynes want to continue that tradition and we invite you to participate. The topic is "wholeness in divisive times." You could be commenting on your own personal experience or what you observe in the culture. You could share your own work or a favorite from someone you want to introduce to us. You can share yourself or ask one of us to share it for you. Please contact Su Livingston via email sulivingston@gmail.com describing your contribution. Written and musical pieces need to be in the 3- to 5-minute range. Please help us welcome the new year by contributing your gifts to this service.

Taize

Taize is an evening of candlelight, prayer, meditation, and singing. Walt Ellis is taking the leadership for Taize services starting in January. **The January date for Taize has been changed to January 8.** Please join us at 7:00 PM in the sanctuary or on Zoom.

Join by Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/97456974163?pwd=WkdHQ3UzRlNyYzFBMGRwQTJsY0lZdz09>

Meeting ID: 974 5697 4163

Passcode: BUF

Christmas Day Potluck

Mark Allyn will be hosting a Christmas Day Potluck Dinner on Christmas Day at 1:00 PM in the Social Hall. This will be a potluck (everyone brings a dish; we will not be cooking turkey as we did for Thanksgiving). Mark also plans to invite folks from the local LGBTQ community in addition to the BUF community. He is usually at coffee hour after the services.

RSVP Mark Allyn allyn@well.com. Please indicate how many people will be in your group and what you plan to bring.

Men's Group

The Men's Group will meet in the Conference Room from noon to 1:30 PM on December 10. (We won't meet on Christmas Eve.) Contact jeff.copeland@gmail.com with questions.

Fair Trade

Fair Trade is excited to announce that we have a seasonal product of recently harvested pecan halves from Cypress Pond, a black owned former plantation in southern Georgia. They will be available for purchase along with our coffees and teas and would make a great gift this holiday season!



New Look for the Mid-Week Update

We're in the process of simplifying the Mid-Week Update (MWU). Over the next few months, you'll see some changes to our format and distribution. The MWU will be on holiday, along with staff, **the last week of December**. Continue to send content to mwu@buf.org, knowing that buf-news@buf.org may be a better choice to spread your message.

SEJC Collections Recipient for December: Restorative Community Coalition

The mission of the Restorative Community Coalition (RCC) is to provide restorative justice, rather than punitive measures, to reclaim the lives of people who enter and leave the jail system. Respecting their worth and dignity, RCC emphasizes public health and safety needs through three different approaches: (1) Meeting immediate needs of the people directly involved, and their families and support networks, to navigate the legal system; for those who are homeless, providing basic needs of shelter, personal items and transportation. (2) Educating and advocating alternatives to the current criminal justice system, build support for alternatives, advocate mental health services, and, enable successful re-entry by training for employability and independent living. (3) Building connections for community education and engagement. You have generously supported RCC in the past, for these action-oriented programs. Several BUF members have volunteered or supported RCC by other means of advocacy. Please consider giving as much as possible to this organization to restore the lives of incarcerated people. The President of RCC, Debbie David, will speak at the BUF service on Sunday, December 10. Please attend to learn first-hand about this organization. Contact: 360-354-3653. Web site: impeace2@whatcomrec.org

Humanitas Ministry

An older man came in this past week looking for help with his rent of \$1200. Raised in an orphanage in Africa, he came to America as a young adult to find the American dream. He went to school, got a job and found an apartment where he built a family among his neighbors. Having been at the same job and in the same apartment for 16 years, life was going well until 6 months ago when he got sick. His shortness of breath was apparent, he paused after every few words to catch his breath. He explained that the doctor wrote a note saying he couldn't work

until his health improved. Because of this he was laid off with the promise his job would be waiting for him once he was well. Not having citizenship papers, he is not able to collect disability and has no income. Opportunity Council has been paying his rent for the past 6 months but is temporarily out of funding. They've assured him they'll continue helping once the funding comes in. The neighbors rallied around him and came up with October's rent. The landlord gave him until the end of the month to pay November's but without help it won't happen. His is a temporary problem that will likely change the course of his life. He'll have lost his apartment and community and become another homeless person in our town. As much as we wish we could have done something to prevent that from happening it was beyond our ability to do so. There were other needs we were able to help with. His is a story that will linger in our minds for a long time.

BUF Calendar

Date and Event	Time	Location
Thursday, December 7, 2023		
<u>Mindfulness Meditation Group</u>	9:45am	Library
<u>Flowering Cherry Meditation</u>	12:30pm	Sanctuary
Sunday, December 10, 2023		
<u>Children's Religious Education</u>	10:00am	contact genia@buf.org
<u>Sunday Service, in person and zoom</u>	10:20am	Sanctuary/Zoom
<u>Coffee Hour after Service</u>	11:30am	Social Hall
<u>Interweave Subcommittee Meeting</u>	12:00pm	Flex Room
<u>Men's Group</u>	12:00pm	Conference
<u>YRUU</u>	4:00pm	Social Hall, back patio
<u>Safe Space Game Night for HS School Teens</u>	6:00pm	Social Hall, Library
Monday, December 11, 2023		
<u>BUF Book Club 3</u>	9:30am	conference
<u>2nd Monday Chalice Circle</u>	2:00pm	Conference
<u>Black Lives Matter Business Meeting</u>	7:00pm	via zoom
Tuesday, December 12, 2023		
<u>Buddhist study group via zoom</u>	12:00pm	via zoom
<u>Lunch with Paul</u>	12:00pm	Social Hall
Continued on next page		
Wednesday, December 13, 2023		
<u>Humanitas In Person</u>	9:30am	Sanctuary
<u>Hospitality Meeting</u>	11:00am	Conference/library
<u>BUF Writers Group</u>	12:00pm	Conference
<u>BUF Night In/Community Night Dinner</u>	6:00pm	social hall
<u>Choir Rehearsals</u>	6:45pm	Sanctuary

How to Submit Content for the Mid-Week Update

Content must be received on Monday by 10:00 AM. Submit via email and include an attached Word doc, single spaced, Times New Roman 12 font. Avoid any formatting, including bullets. Limit 200 words. If you have an item for the calendar, please put “Calendar”; 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

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

360-733-3887 / wp.buf.org / admin@buf.org

Sign up for the Mid-Week Update and/or the BUF News Digest at

<https://wp.buf.org/news/communication-sign-ups/>