

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

January 31, 2024

Sunday, February 4

Rhythms of Community

On appreciating the rhythms of repeating cycles in our lives, while remaining open to freshness and change.



SUNDAY SERVICE ZOOM LINK

<https://zoom.us/j/73836362>

Meeting ID 738 363 620

Passcode BUF

Worship starts at 10:25 AM

A Soft Landing

Demographic and behavioral trends nationwide, and across all denominations—liberal thru conservative—show that congregations are having a rough time coming back from the pandemic, which never quite seems “over.” BUF has fared well over the past few years, but we have grown increasingly dependent on federal grants that will no longer continue.

One result of this will be changes to our upcoming budget. In order to include everyone in the conversation about what changes are *most fitting to who we are and who we want to be*, we’re conducting a series of three Listening Sessions—in each of these we’ll hone in closer to our final 2024-25 budget.

We had good turnout at Session 1 in December, where people shared general thoughts about their priorities. In Session 2, we’ll be looking at specific ways to overcome a projected \$50,000 deficit. That is: some combination of reduced staffing or significant increases to fundraising and pledging.

In addition to responsible stewardship of your contributions, and BUF’s mission and heritage, our goals in this process include

- A soft landing: making smart decisions that will shape a sustainable trajectory through the coming years.
- Collaboration and unity thru a decision making process where everyone understands our situation and ultimately respects and supports our shared decisions.

One thing we’ve never done before: the Board would like to present a complete draft budget for your consideration at a ‘Listening Session 3’ six weeks before the Annual Meeting on May 19 (at which our Bylaws specify we need to pass a balanced budget). How close to reality this draft budget can be will depend on whether we’ve received pledges quickly enough, and how pragmatic we choose to be in Listening Sessions 2. Our hiring timeline for new staff will depend on these same factors.

To maximize participation, we will hold listening sessions

- in person, Sunday, February 11 at noon in the social hall. Please bring snacks.
- on Zoom, Tuesday, February 13 at 7pm.

*Non-members as well as members are welcome to attend listening sessions
(just as all are to welcome at Congregational Meetings).*

Making hard choices about our collective priorities takes a great deal of trust and collaboration. Thank you for being part of the conversation.

Peace,
Paul

What I appreciate about BUF

Hi, I'm Kjerstie Nelson, and my path to BUF has had a few twists and turns. I became a UU in the 1990s and moved to Bellingham in 1998. I came to BUF for a time and sang in the choir. Then my daughter was born, and my life took another direction. Over twenty years later, a devastating personal loss led me back to BUF.



I came for spiritual comfort, connection, and community. I found comfort through Sunday services. I rediscovered my commitment to our Principles through adult RE classes. And I joined a Chalice Circle and found a community where I could freely share my concerns and experiences.

Now I've come to the part where I am supposed to recognize someone I appreciate at BUF, and it's just too hard to pick only one person. I appreciate Genia and Jennifer for Wednesday-night dinners. And Kevin, who leads the choir in making our ideals manifest through music. And I appreciate Ann Stevenson and Jim Reimer for their unflinching service, Mark Allyn for his enthusiasm, and Rev. Paul for always giving me something to ponder. It took me awhile, but now I am here for good.

BECOME A CANVASSER

Hear ye, Hear ye! Last call for you to sign up as a canvasser for our annual pledge drive, which kicks off on February 11th! If you haven't volunteered yet, please seriously consider doing so as your canvassing will help us reach all people who are involved with BUF. And if you have volunteered—Bless you! We will have in-person training on Saturday, February 10, at 10:00 AM and alternatively, a Zoom training on Tuesday, February 6, at 7:00 PM. And please reach out to your significant other and/or BUF friends to see if they can help canvass as well. As more of us are reaching out, the more fun it is and the better connections we will support. As always, you can call or text Rick Steele at 360-319-7759 or email rickvladsteele@icloud.com.

DOOR CODE CHANGES

Entryway door codes have changed. If you have been assigned a code, please contact Michelle at the office (admin@buf.org) to get a new one.

CHILDREN’S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Our theme this month is Justice and Equity. This Sunday we will learn about the difference between equality and equity. We’ll read a story reminding us that people are different. Instead of treating others the way you would like to be treated, it suggests thinking about how that other person is different from you and how they would like to be treated. This is the foundation for equity. We’ll also play some games to experience *inequity*. Join us for a provocative lesson!

Children will start in the Sanctuary, as usual, where we have a child-friendly space with pillows, drawing supplies, fidget boxes, and a front-row seat for the Story of All Ages or interactive song. After the Children’s Focus, we will head upstairs where we will explore our theme through stories, activities, games, and art.

If you have any questions or concerns about our children’s programming or want to volunteer, please contact me at genia@BUF.org.



COMMUNITY NIGHT DINNER

Join us this Wednesday at 6:00 in the social hall for spinach tortellini soup, along with a green salad, garlic bread (gluten-free bread as well) and dessert. The cost is just \$5 per adult and children under 12 are free!

RAISING CHILDREN IN A RACE CONSCIOUS SOCIETY

February 11 and 25, 0:30-11:45 AM



This class is designed for parents, guardians, and grandparents who want to be prepared for The Talk that every family needs to have about race. This will be an opportunity to share learnings and insights, as well as gain new tools for talking in healthy ways about race. The class will be led by James Addington, author, antiracism training consultant, and part of a multiracial family. James and his wife, Cheryl, are currently parenting a five-year-old granddaughter of color. “She is a daily source of insights, questions and new puzzles”, according to James. Space is limited, so we encourage early

registration [here](#), or go to the BUF website. Contact Genia for questions or help with registration.

OUR WHOLE LIVES – Comprehensive Sexuality Education



There is still time to register for our 9- to 11-year-old Our Whole Lives (OWL), sexuality education class! Classes start Sunday mornings on February 25, and the mandatory parent/child orientation is Thursday, February 22. OWL is based on the philosophy that parents or guardians hold primary responsibility for the sexuality education of their children. Our Whole Lives is a positive, comprehensive, and age-appropriate educational program that supports those beliefs. For more information on OWL, please visit the UUA website to learn more:

<https://www.uua.org/re/owl>

Class sizes are limited, and registration ends February 22. Register now to guarantee a spot for your child. To register, you can copy and paste the following into your browser <https://buf.breezechms.com/form/15156a1852> . Contact Genia for questions or help with registration. Scholarships are available!!

SECOND FRIDAY FUN NITE

February 9, 7:00-9:00 PM

This month our Second Friday Fun Nite will feature TEDTalk films in the flex room at BUF. We'll be open for ingathering at 6:30 and the films start at 7:00. Joan MacKay is our host, and she'll have two or three short, interesting, and provocative TEDTalk films to share, along with a chance for discussion afterwards. Please bring a snack to share as well as some comfy pillows and blankets for viewing comfort. What a perfect way to spend a chilly winter's evening—with friends and a film!



FEBRUARY TAIZE SERVICE

This month's Taize Service is Monday, February 5, 2024, at 7:00 PM PST in person or on Zoom. The theme is Fellowship.

If you are joining us on Zoom for Taize, we've moved to the same Zoom link as BUF's regular Sunday services:

<https://zoom.us/j/738363620?pwd=TmdwVjYyOXMrNU4ydFhaZXpEV1Urdz09>

Meeting ID: 974 5697 4163

Passcode: BUF

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 11, 25 10:30-11:45 Facilitator: James Addington	Raising Children in a Race Conscious Society This class is designed for parents/guardians who want to be prepared for The Talk that every family needs about race. We will learn some new tools to help navigate this challenging topic. The class is led by James Addington, author, antiracism training consultant, and part of a multiracial family.
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. Includes Lunch.
March 3, 10, 17, 24 12:00-1:30 Facilitator: 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 \(with lunch!\)](#)
 UU Theology: [UU Theology](#)
 Raising Children in a Race Conscious Society: [Raising Children](#)

Register here
<https://wp.buf.org/learning/adult-programs/>
 Register early! Space is limited.
 Questions, please contact
 Director of Life Long Learning,
 Genia Allen-Schmid. email: Genia@buf.org

BUF-SEJC COLLECTIONS RECIPIENT FOR FEBRUARY: CAST

CAST (Coffee and Sandwiches Together) is a nondenominational all-volunteer service organization under the umbrella of the Interfaith Coalition. CAST is united by the common belief that NO ONE should go hungry. CAST has been providing free meals in Bellingham since 1999. A number of BUF members volunteer regularly, making sandwiches, serving, and packing/delivering the supplies. In addition to sandwiches, other items are distributed: water, granola bars, hot-cocoa and apple-drink packets, cup of soup packs, basic toiletries, and hats/scarves/socks when available. The guests at CAST are always so thankful!

CAST serves more than 11,000 meals annually at the city-sanctioned downtown serving site by the Arch of Reconciliation behind the Bellingham library. Meals are served four nights each week. George Mustoe, CAST volunteer and newsletter editor and Blaine Unitarian member will speak at BUF services on February 11 to share the work of CAST. This organization is in need of our support, and any amount you contribute will go directly to purchasing needed supplies for the guests. Your contributions can be given at BUF throughout February. And you can volunteer or donate to CAST through the Interfaith Coalition at interfaith-coalition.org. Also, we have a collection box in the BUF coat closet labeled CAST, where you can donate new hats, socks, razors, soap, and shampoo. You can talk with BUF volunteers if interested in more info: Beth Fuller, Hank Ohana, Connie Ohana, or Ann Stevenson

SNEAK PREVIEWS OF UPCOMING CHOIR SONGS



Aren't the BUF choirs sounding wonderful lately? Do you sometimes wish you could hear the songs a few more times, just to be able to enjoy them more fully?

Well, this is your lucky day! Click on the following YouTube links to catch the vibe of these upcoming choir songs, so that when you hear them live in the service, you'll be ready to enjoy them even more:



SOON I WILL BE DONE, a beloved African American Spiritual, for February 11

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHrm8HMDFTA>

CANADA IN SPRINGTIME, a pop hit from 1972, for March 10 and the choir's trip to Vancouver

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tdU84_Qiqjk

MAN IN THE MIRROR, good advice from the "King of Pop," for March 10

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VDKRYkTDwg>

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



INTERWEAVE TO MEET FEBRUARY 4

On Sunday, February 4, 12:00-1:30 PM, there will be a meeting for Interweave, the UU program to fight the oppression of LGBTQIA2S+ people. We will be brainstorming in five areas (social programs, worship services, days of observance, youth activities, and community advocacy) to determine which activities to pursue. 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 library, off the social hall.



REGIONAL ASSEMBLY 2024

Registration is open for our Pacific Western Regional Assembly this April 19-20.

Stay up to date on all the [PWR RA Plans here.](#)

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 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/>

FIND THE BUF CALENDAR ONLINE

The complete calendar of BUF events and building uses is available on our website under the News tab or by following this link

<https://73940468.view-events.com/calendar/73940468/month>