

## Listening Forward

Just what is “Listening Forward”?

We are all familiar with Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr’s “I Have a Dream” sermon. He had a vision of where we could collectively mold our society into embracing equality, respect and collective goodwill for all. We feel he was “listening forward” to a time of equal rights and peace. He then inspired and continues to inspire so many of us to work towards the arch of justice in achieving that dream.



We at BUF find ourselves in a moment of great change. How do we decide what to do now in the face of these challenges? Our theme this year is “Listening Forward”. By that, we mean let’s envision where we want to be as a congregation five, ten and more years in the future. Some of us will have transitioned into the next life, but we will have new members and friends. If we could ask them and our future selves what they/we are glad that we did at this time, what would that be? How can we have a growing, sustainable, vibrant congregation that resonates with us spiritually as well as striving for social justice?

## Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship *Community, Compassion, Commitment*



*An inclusive religious community  
encouraging lives of  
purpose, service, and joy*

In a culture of gratitude, everyone knows that gifts will follow the circle of reciprocity and flow back to you again. This time you give and next time you receive. Both the honor of giving and the humility of receiving are necessary halves of the equation. The grass in the ring is trodden down in a path from gratitude to reciprocity. We dance in a circle, not in a line.

<mark>Braiding Sweetgrass</mark>: I...  
Robin Wall Kimmerer



## Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

1207 Ellsworth Street!  
Bellingham, WA 98225

360-733-3837  
admin@buf.org  
www.buf.org



# Listening Forward

**Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship**

Spring 2024

## Welcoming New Members



In the heart of our beloved community, the winds of change blow through demographics and inflationary costs, urging us to strengthen our stewardship. As the faces in our congregation evolve, let's celebrate the diversity that enriches our community. Stewardship means fostering inclusivity, ensuring each member feels valued in our tapestry of unity.

Simultaneously, rising inflation tests our commitment. Financial contributions become investments, and stewardship demands a wise allocation of resources. Let's view these challenges not as obstacles but as opportunities to prioritize our shared values. Stewardship in the face of inflation requires collective responsibility, with each member contributing to sustain our church vibrantly.

Unity becomes our greatest ally. Stewardship is a shared responsibility, requiring open conversations to navigate demographic shifts and rising costs. Through transparent communication, we can inspire creative solutions, emerging from these challenges more connected and resilient.

Amidst these considerations, legacy concerns come to the forefront. Our stewardship extends beyond the present, reaching into the future of our BUF community. Let us be mindful of the legacy we leave, ensuring that the flame of love, justice, and compassion continues to illuminate the path for generations to come.



As stewards of BUF, our duty is to nurture, preserve, and pass on the torch of our shared faith. In the face of changing demographics, inflationary costs, and the concern for our legacy, our commitment to unity and stewardship becomes the guiding force. May we rise to the occasion, reaffirming our dedication to this sacred community, and ensure that our legacy is one of resilience, unity, and enduring love.

## Children's Story Time



HOW STRANGE THAT THE NATURE OF LIFE IS CHANGE, yet the nature of human beings is to resist change. And how ironic that the difficult times we fear might ruin us are the very ones that can break us open and help us blossom into who we were meant to be.

Broken Open  
Elizabeth Lesser

## Singing Joyfully

