

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

March 27, 2024

This Sunday, March 31

Transformation

Talia Dienes, Tom Nicholas, Rev Paul Beckel



Easter story's power is that each of us has some personal experience involving:

- Finding ourselves exiled, or having a big blow to our circumstances or expectations
- Being in-between—a time of retreat or fear
- Hopefully, finding a way to endure by inner-strength, hope, and/or support from others
- Re-entering the world—not because circumstances have changed, or uncertainties have been resolved, but by some sort of personal transformation thru which we become willing to say “yes,” anyway.

Tom will have some personal reflections on this, and Talia too—in observance of Trans Day of Visibility.

SUNDAY SERVICE ZOOM LINK

Meeting ID 738 363 620

Worship starts at 10:20 AM

<https://zoom.us/j/73836362> Passcode is BUF

Phone: (669)900-6833

MONDAY TAIZE SERVICE ZOOM LINK

Monday, April 1

Meeting ID 738 363 620

Worship starts at 10:20 AM

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

Passcode is BUF

THE MIDWEEK UPDATE WILL CONTINUE WEEKLY FOR NOW

A group of volunteers is working hard to streamline this process and reduce the heavy time commitment required from our staff. Continue to submit content by 10:00 AM Monday before the Wednesday distribution date. 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

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID AND DE-ESCALATION WORKSHOP

APRIL 7, 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Local National Association on Mental Illness (NAMI) educators will address what you can do when a loved one, friend, or BUF congregant experiences a mental health crisis. You will learn how to recognize when someone is exhibiting troubled or disruptive behavior, what to do to assess risks, and how to apply de-escalation strategies including when to call for assistance while maintaining safety for the person and yourself. Contact Elie Friedlob for more information: Eliana.steele@gmail.com 360-510-0843

SPRING CANVASS PROGRESS

As of this past weekend, with 90% of pledges received, we are exceeding last year's pledge total by about \$20,000. Help push that higher! If you haven't pledged yet, please contact admin@buf.org or rickvladsteele@icloud.com

BUDGET LISTENING SESSION 3

On Zoom April 9 at 7pm

<https://zoom.us/j/73836362> (this is the regular Sunday Zoom link)

In-person on Sunday, April 14 at noon

The Board of Trustees will prepare a draft budget for 2024-25 at the end of March and distribute this to all BUF members and friends. This will not be the Board's final budget proposal. Rather, this draft will be the basis for an open conversation about our realities and visions for the coming years—an opportunity for all of us to consider, together, some significant changes to our programs and staffing. Please attend either session, or both, to stay informed and to help guide the Board in their development of a final budget—which they will distribute by May 5 for your vote at the Congregational Meeting on May 19.

CHILDRENS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Our theme for March is *Transformation*. On Easter Sunday we will discuss the symbolism of Jesus' death and resurrection, and as UUs be reminded that after sad and hard times, we can still find good times again. We will take some old, "sad" hats and make them into beautiful creations we can wear and, of course, have our traditional Easter egg hunt!

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.

BUFSTERS TRIP TO VANCOUVER, BC SUNDAY, MARCH

24 Thirty-eight BUFsters attended the morning service at Unitarian Church Vancouver. Twenty-six were BUF choir members, and joined the UVC choir to sing “I Dreamed of Rain” and “Dream Keeper.” The BUF choir also shared the hymn “No Longer Forward Nor Behind” written by Rev Andy Backus. Rev Backus served the UCV congregation in the late 1990s before retiring to Bellingham and joining BUF with his wife Christine. Andy passed away in 2020, just weeks after BUF held a service featuring him and his original music.



Meena, a UCV member, Kevin and UCV choir director Donna Brown

In the service we also recognized Rev Steven Epperson, now retired, who served the UCV congregation for many years. Steven’s son Gabe and his family now attend BUF and Gabe sings in our choir. As the postlude, the BUF choir sang the ebullient 1975 pop song, “Canada in Springtime,” which, to our delight, was unknown to the UCVers.



Carrie Koehnline, Rod Haynes and 2 UCV members at lunch

After the service, 45 Bellinghamsters and Vancouverites enjoyed a dim sum lunch together at the acclaimed Sun Sui Wah restaurant, delighting in a dishes from steamed prawn dumplings with asparagus to baked BBQ pork buns. As they say, “a great time was had by all!”

Auction Donations Keep Pouring In And We Need More!

*Parties, Movie tickets, Hikes,
Handyperson skills, Fine Jewelry,
Gift Certificates - Ask where you shop!*



We need of High-End Items for the Live Auction

Vacation Getaways, Theatre Tickets with Dinner, Framed Local Art

It’s easy to donate through the Auctria website, and it’s not too early to start browsing the catalog at <https://fundraiser.bid/BUF>

\$25 tickets On Sale Starting April 7at BUF (or buy online now)

We need volunteers! To learn more or to offer to help - email Auction@buf.org.

CHILDREN OF THE SETTING SUN PRODUCTIONS- April SEJC Collection Recipient

Children of the Setting Sun Productions creates and shares Indigenous stories of gratitude, generosity, respect, and responsibility. We seek to empower the minds and hearts of future generations. **SALMON PEOPLE PROJECT:** We are embarking on a journey to tell the story of the ancient bond between the Native people and salmon. The research, gatherings and documentary series will help magnify Indigenous voices in the fight to reverse the devastating loss of salmon and protect Mother. **INDIGENOUS LED THINK TANK:** The mission of Setting Sun Institute is to put things back together. We endeavor to resolve human conflict and protect the natural environment by using the traditional wisdom of the Salish people in a new way: through a Native-led think tank grown in the home region of the Pacific salmon. **YOUNG TRIBAL LEADERSHIP:** This program creates opportunities for young people to embrace their culture and strengthen professional skills. **COMMUNITY PROJECTS:** We partner with community organizations and help capture meaningful moments through gatherings and interviews transformed into beautiful videos. Working together, we help shine the light on important work that is happening and messages that need to be heard. **BUF INVOLVEMENT:** Can provide handouts, links to videos, and invites to local events. The April 14 collection will go to **Children of the Setting Sun Productions.**

GIVE A YOUNG TRANSGENDER WOMAN WHO HAS ESCAPED OKLAHOMA SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT!

Several BUFsters have supported Nora as she settled here in Bellingham. Now she needs help to regain her health! **If you are wondering how, you can make a difference in the lives of transgender individuals who are being threatened in many states, here's your opportunity.**

Please help 26-year-old Nora pay for emergency dental surgery. Due to years of parental neglect, she has lost most of her teeth, suffered severe jawbone degenerations, and chronic pain and infection. These dental issues have led to an eating disorder as well as a speech impediment, and social isolation and malnutrition. Her doctors have said that the only way forward is complete tooth removal, multiple implants, and full mouth bridges.

Nora's dental surgery will cost \$37,000. She can get a personal loan for \$15,000, leaving \$22,000 to be raised so that she may have the surgery on April 24th as scheduled. The dental surgeon is donating his labor, but needs payment upfront.

Go here to donate: gofund.me/34d50f2f

Your tax-deductible donations will go to a special bank account of PFLAG WHATCOM which is a 501 (c) 3. Please read, donate and share. THANK YOU! Francie and Ken Gass

INVITE ORGANIZATION TO APPLY BY APRIL 12 FOR NEXT YEAR'S SUNDAY SOCIAL JUSTICE COLLECTIONS

You all have a role to play in helping the Collections Team follow our beloved community covenant. We ask BUF congregants to help undo racism by promoting inclusiveness in our collections process. We seek inclusion of community groups to which we are accountable, representing diverse ethnic, racial, national origin, and BIPOC (Black Indigenous people of color) backgrounds. Newly-established groups in the community are welcome to apply. The Team improved on this goal in 2023-24 thanks to your help in attracting a diverse pool of applicants.

The Collections Team is looking to you, BUF congregants, to join our journey towards becoming an equitable/inclusive institution. We urge you to invite any not-for-profit organization in Whatcom County that meet our criteria to apply for a collection next year. The deadline for applications is earlier this year--April 12th. Please share this application link:
<https://wp.buf.org/justice/social-environmental-justice-committee/sejc-collection-guidelines-and-application/>

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>

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/>