

# Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment  
June 5, 2024



## All BUF services are accessible in-person

or on Zoom. Use this link: <https://zoom.us/j/738363620>

Passcode = BUF / Meeting ID 738 363 620

## Sunday June 9

### Choir Finale – Kevin Allen-Schmid

What A Wonderful World!

The BUF Choirs, pianists, and additional instrumental accompanists, directed by Kevin Allen-Schmid, bring their best of 2023-24. Click [HERE](#) for the order of service

## Sunday June 16

### Farewell to Genia and Kevin

With hoopla and gratitude for Genia and Kevin Allen-Schmid, we will honor their ministries to BUF and celebrate their retirements.

Potluck afterward—please bring food to share.

## Sunday June 23

### Livestream from the UUA General Assembly

Join thousands of UUs from around the country gathering to sing and to reflect on our vision for our future.

More here: <https://www.uua.org/ga/program/highlights/sunday-morning-worship>

## Scams and More Scams

Last week many people received texts from a scammer using my name (Rev Paul Beckel). The texts—asking people to buy gift cards—gave plausible explanations for this unusual request. This scam is targeted at people who want to be helpful in congregations of every stripe, all across the country, as described in the recent issue of UU World magazine: <https://www.uuworld.org/articles/gift-card-qr-code-scams-how-to-avoid-tips-it-experts>

Please know this:

*BUF staff and volunteers will never send you an email or text asking you, individually, for money or bank account, or credit card numbers. To make contributions electronically, you have to initiate the contact—either by calling us, or through our website, or in person. If you are ever in doubt about a suspicious call or message, do not respond. Contact us directly to check out anything you're unsure of.*

## OUTDOOR WORK PARTY

Saturday morning June 8, 9 AM - 12:00 AM. There is a particular need for trimming and pruning of almost everything green. As always you may choose your task, and how long to do it. Bring your favorite gardening tools, gloves, and dress for the weather. Thanks!

## To Sing or Not to Sing?

My son and his family attend First Universalist Church of Minneapolis. He sent me their recent newsletter which describes that congregation's deliberations in response to a request made by the composer of a song they sing every Sunday. It wasn't specifically a request to that congregation, but to activists around the world who have been singing her song for decades to promote peace ... but now find themselves on opposing sides.

She asked that no one sing her song unless they have taken a stance in support of a particular political position.

So First Universalist held a congregation-wide conversation about

- respecting a composer's wishes
- political neutrality
- emotional connections to music
- copyright and commodification of music
- the role of ancestors in decision-making
- inclusivity and diversity
- democratic process
- understanding of complex historical and political contexts
- communal and individual rights and responsibilities
- gradual and compassionate transition
- and more....

Here's the initial invitation to that conversation, from Music Director Glen Thomas Rideout

<https://myemail-api.constantcontact.com/10-a-m--Summer-Worship-Begins-.html?soid=1101918402069&aid=N-QBU6mwBM>

And here's the in-depth report following their deliberations and conclusions

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zkiL\\_C50qmQVq-73zSWqmCqBsHQeUUuqbt\\_naqFPpPQ/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zkiL_C50qmQVq-73zSWqmCqBsHQeUUuqbt_naqFPpPQ/edit)

This is a great example of a congregation doing everything it needs to do—even when it seems outrageously complicated—in order to live up to its principles around a) ethical behavior for themselves-as-a-whole, and b) open and honest conversations to support a democratic decision-making process.

Peace (which is rarely simple),  
Paul



### **Humanitas Ministry**

We have a variety of people who come through the doors of Humanitas every week. We try to meet whatever need they have without judgement. This past week a young man named Joe came in. He told us he was looking for work clothes. He'd been sent to us by another agency who knew he could find what he needed with us. Joe was serving time in jail and was in the work release program. He had a certain amount of time to get the things he needed to get done before having to sign back into the jail here in Bellingham. Joe had found a job as a dishwasher and needed the right type of clothes for the job. We were happy to help him meet this need. We didn't ask why he was serving time, but we hope that he's on his way to a new start in life. We never know how our help may change a direction in life, but sometimes it only takes one person offering a hand up.

### CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



The theme this month is *Renewal*, and this week we explore how we renew our spirits by being active out in the natural world. By walking, observing, listening, and playing outside we connect with nature and ourselves. No matter what the weather, we will be going outside, so dress appropriately!

Children will start in the sanctuary 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](mailto:genia@BUF.org).

### COMMUNITY NIGHT DINNER THIS WEDNESDAY JUNE 5, 6:00 PM

Join us at 6:00 in the social hall this Wednesday night for thick and tasty potato and leek soup, along with bread, a green salad, and dessert. It's a bargain at just \$5 per person, and kids under 12 eat for free!



### DEEPEN YOUR ENJOYMENT OF UPCOMING BUF CHOIR SONGS

Music can be so fleeting—we hear it and then it's gone—but here's a chance for BUFsters to maximize their enjoyment. Click on these YouTube links to hear and watch videos of our upcoming choir songs. There is great beauty and inspiration in these songs, which all bear hearing many times over.

All Too Soon, by Stephen Hatfield

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8b1-lhOvffe>

Canada In Springtime, by Chris Dedrick of the 1970s band "Free Design"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tdU84\\_Qiqjk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tdU84_Qiqjk)

For the Beauty of the Earth, by John Rutter <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1bDoMflYErE>

I Dreamed of Rain, by Garrett, arranged by Nickels

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APvcIaw-sr8>

I Love You/What A Wonderful World, arranged by Craig Hella Johnson

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y\\_qfeE0TjyY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_qfeE0TjyY)

Make Me Cry, by Jacob Collier (to be presented June 2 by kids and parents)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ra77qWfXv1c>

May Night (Mainacht), by Johannes Brahms

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7M69CRPZEdE>

Pilgrim Spring, by Reginald Unterseher

<https://reginaldunterseher.com/pilgrim-spring/>

Soon Ah Will Be Done, Spiritual arranged by William Dawson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHrn8HMDFTA>

Kevin Allen-Schmid

BUF Music Director, 2015-2024

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE COLLECTION FOR JUNE 2024: UNBRIDLED SPIRIT**

Mission statement: To empower the social-emotional wellness and human connection through equine experiential learning and innovative methods.

Families who face challenges, such as long-term toxic stress and threats to their personal safety and well-being, are invited to the animal farm. Family Respite and Empowerment Events offer an opportunity for the families to relax, for parents to watch their children play and enjoy the animals, to create art and, to share a meal. Parents and children leave the events feeling empowered and hopeful, with stronger connections as a family, with their peers and with nature. It is a model of community care, bridging differences and celebrating life together.

Up to seven families at a time are benefited by three weeks of sessions. Contribution by BUF members will supplement the costs of this service, and evaluation of its outcomes. The organization is prepared to give presentations of their work and a tour of their farm. Volunteers are invited.

Please attend BUF's service on June, 9, 2024 to hear Unbridled Spirit's representative speak about their program and outcomes. Your generous donations to this community well being program can be made throughout June.

## **ELECTION RESULTS**

Thanks to all who participated in the election. There were 44 ballots that were counted for those attending the meeting at BUF. Three were disqualified because there was no name on the ballot. Seventeen (17) ballots were counted from the on-line voting.

The following were elected to the Board:  
Claire Lending, Gayle Tillis and Jan Cavitt

The following were elected to the Nominating Committee:  
Annie Sorich, David Curley, Rod Haynes and Steffany Raines

The budget for 2024-25 was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Drew Betz,  
Board Secretary

## **BUF SAFETY COMMITTEE UPDATE**

For the last five years, BUF has had a Safety Committee working to improve our congregational safety regarding health emergencies, evacuation procedures, intruder issues, natural disasters, and more. Current members of the committee are: Ellie Steele, Sarah Pearson, Michelle Fox, Jim Reimer, Felice Davis, Paul Beckel, and Michael Berres. Approximately 20 behind-the-scenes safety improvements have been implemented at BUF (e.g., coded-door entry systems, door monitors during services, exterior doors armed with 24 hr/day alarm systems, child safety procedures and policies implemented, improved phone systems; data-protection systems, AEDs operationalized, air quality improvements,...).

We have consulted with local agencies/groups (Bellingham Police and Fire Departments) and national groups such as the UUA's departments dealing with safety and individual UU congregations who have expertise to share. While we have made significant improvements, we know that we have a long way to go. One difficulty in doing this work—as affirmed by at least a dozen other UU Congregations—is that churches are essentially volunteer associations and people bring their own druthers as to what to do during emergency situations—very different than public schools and industry, for example, where everyone is mandated to follow specific safety procedures.

Some of our current efforts include:

- 1) Analyzing what worked and what didn't work during BUF's first-ever fire drill practice held on October 15, 2023. Improvements will be incorporated into our next evacuation drill in October 2024.
- 2) Local NAMI experts conducted an April 7, 2024 training for 18 BUF members on mental health concerns that might impact people-in-crisis at BUF—the training focused on ways to deescalate challenging behavior situations.
- 3) Raven CPA delivered a half-day CPR/AED/Scene Assessment training on May 11 to 12 BUF members.
- 4) The Bellingham Police Department will provide training in Nov 2024 or Jan 2025 on dealing with unsafe intruders—an issue faced by too many UU congregations. These four examples are good starts, but will need to be repeated and made available to many more of our congregants. Soon we will disseminate this information through the congregation. For questions, please call Michael at 360 393-6802.

## **THE NEXT BUF AUCTION**

You may be reading this in shock - what do you mean NEXT? The newly formed BUF Community Fundraising Committee has set its first task at setting a calendar for fundraising events that support BUF in the coming fiscal year. To that end, the Stewardship Campaign anchors the calendar as always. Planning other events that will support BUF and allow for some breathing space in budget development is an important role of this committee. We have decided to hold the Auction for the coming fiscal year on the first Saturday in November. **Mark your calendars now for November 2nd.** Think of the fun we will have celebrating the fall season with color, costumes, and great items that can be purchased as gifts for the winter holidays!

We will need new volunteers to help with this year's planning and preparations. The biggest need will be come early for volunteers on the donations team. Several of the long-time members are stepping away. Our initial structure will be a planning team, a donations team, a decorations team, a communications team and a silent auction team. If you are interested in helping out in any of these key roles, please let me know ASAP. We will begin early planning over the summer and be up to full speed at the beginning of September.

I look forward to making this event fun and successful. Drew Betz, Incoming Auction Chair

### **MIDWEEK UPDATE BEGINS SUMMER SCHEDULE**

Over the summer, the MWU will be published and distributed every other week: June 19, July 3, 17, and 31, and August 14 and 28. We will return to weekly issues on September 4.

### **HOW TO SUBMIT CONTENT FOR THE MID-WEEK UPDATE**

Content must be received by 10:00 AM on the Monday before the 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. Submittals may be edited for space and clarity. Submit your content to [MWU@buf.org](mailto:MWU@buf.org)

### **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**

Office phone:360-733-3887, [buf.org](http://buf.org) or [admin@buf.org](mailto: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/>