



Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

Mid-Week Update: **November 13, 2024**

In this edition of the BUF Mid-Week Update, read about:

1. [Upcoming Services](#) - November 17
2. [Perspective - Words from Paul](#)
3. [Special Collection for Transylvanian Partner Church](#) - through November
4. [Children's Religious Education](#)
5. [Adult Religious Education](#) - December 8
6. [Hosted Events from Auction: Space Still Available](#)
7. [Monday Morning Book Group](#) - second Mondays of the month
8. [Community Night Dinner](#) - Wednesdays
9. [Syrian Dinner](#) - November 16
10. [Safety & Security Training Session - Unsafe Intruders](#) - November 18
11. [Thanksgiving & Christmas Potluck Dinners](#) - November 28, December 25
12. [International Human Rights Day Event](#) - December 10
13. [Lunch with Paul](#) - most Tuesdays
14. [BUF Text to Give](#)

Upcoming Services

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, Nov 17, 10:30am - Looking at Prayer with Fresh Eyes, Tom Nicholas, Alan Friedlob, Paul Beckel

Prayer is not just about speaking and hearing. Recognizing what is before us, seeing what is true, creating visual arts that express our questions, aspirations, regrets ... these too can be forms of prayer.

Perspective

Words from Paul



If you're feeling overwhelmed, or powerless, amidst too much uncertainty, here's something that helps give me perspective.

Picture concentric circles:

- The largest is your circle of concern. It's the full scope of things you care about.
- Inside that is a smaller circle of influence. This covers the parts of your concerns you may be able to have an impact on by enlisting and directing the efforts of others.
- Inside that is a smaller circle of control. This covers the things you have direct control over through your own effort.

The things in my circle of concern are so vast ... it would be impossible to focus on them all. I need to remember that that's OK. Not-focusing on things I cannot control doesn't mean I don't Care.

If you find yourself pulled in so many directions that you can't go in any direction, it might be helpful—as each bit of trouble (or opportunity) comes to mind—to explicitly place it within one of these circles.

This is grief-work, not just a cognitive exercise. We will find ourselves grieving, again and again when we acknowledge that we don't have control, or even influence, over circumstances and people we care about. When others are suffering ... when others are suffering unnecessarily ... it hurts. It's demoralizing.

But there's one more circle that helps me cope—millions of them actually. These are the overlapping circle-sets of allies. Among these Venn diagrams we see there are still many things over which no one has control. But also that we're not alone in our grief and suffering. And our collective influence becomes synergy.

So may we have courage to do the things we can. And deep appreciation for one another.

Peace,
Paul

Special Collection for Transylvanian Partner Church



This month's special collection is for our Unitarian partner church in Magyarszovát, Romania, which BUF has supported for over 30 years. Unitarians in Romania, as ethnic Hungarians, have been systematically marginalized by the Bucharest government for over a century. Just now in America we might understand their feeling of alienation from their own government.

Please send your contribution to the BUF office before the end of November so that the money can be sent to arrive by Christmas.

This prayer by Robert Louis Stevenson prompts us to remain steadfast in our commitments and relationships throughout all changes of fortune. The BUF Partner Church Committee thanks you for your support.

Give Us The Grace
by Robert Louis Stevenson

Give us the grace and strength to forbear and to persevere.
Give us the courage and the gaiety, and the quiet mind.
Spare to us our friends, soften to us our enemies.
Bless us, if it may be, in our innocent endeavours.

If it may not, give us the strength to encounter that which is to come,
That we may be brave in peril, constant in tribulation, temperate in wrath,
And in all changes of fortune, even down to the gates of death,
Loyal and loving to one another.

Köszönöm (Thank You)

Members of the BUF Partner Church Committee, November 2024
Reka Zoltan, Barbara Ellis-Quinn, Jan Krouskop, Carl Nyblade, Ron Quinn, Jane Ronca-Washburn, Bev Smith, Allegra Ziffle, and Kevin Allen-Schmid (chair).

Children's Religious Education



In November, children in the Religious Exploration program will be focusing on Living Love through the Practice of Repair. Our first lesson this Sunday will be about the UU principle of Democracy. We will be making homemade "I Voted" stickers in the Art Room, among other activities exploring the concept of Democracy.

Children who wish to attend Sunday School start in the Sanctuary with their families, then will go up together to their classes. Caregivers pick them up at 11:45am. Classes are most closely geared to children K-7th grade. Preschool-aged supervised care is also available. Contact Lis at RE@buf.org.

Adult Religious Education

Grief Group, Tom Nicholas

1 session - Sunday, December 8, noon-2:00pm

Tom Nicholas will lead this discussion-format workshop primarily designed for people who have lost a loved one—recently or not. Participants will have opportunities to talk about their own experience of grief and what they found to be helpful in dealing with it.

[Register](#)

Hosted Events from Auction: Space Still Available

Many hosted events from our November 2 Auction still have seats available. Check the [auction website](#) to view the full list and purchase your seats.

- **Cheap Wine, Good Lunch, Great Company** - November 23
- **Sound of Music Sing-along** - December 28
- **Do the Fondue: Party Like it's 1968** - January 18
- **Belly Dancing Class** - January 24
- **Seafood and Game Night** - January 25

[Purchase Seats](#)

Monday Morning Book Group

Second Mondays of the month, 10:00-11:30am, BUF Conference Room

Next Meeting & Book - December 9, "The Boys in the Boat"

The Monday Morning Book Group has **room for a few more book lovers** at our monthly meetings. We meet the second Monday of the month from 10:00 to 11:30 in the BUF Conference room. The Bellingham Public Library has an extensive collection of Book Club Kits with 10 books each, so individuals do not have to purchase the books. In anticipation of a potentially challenging year, our choices for 2025 include humor, books with uplifting themes, and nonfiction.

We'd love to have you join us on December 9 to discuss "The Boys in the Boat." Contact Ellen or Jean if you have any questions or to arrange to pick up a copy of the book.

Ellen - 808-325-1246, ellenberning@gmail.com

Jean - 509-453-3984, hurlburt@aol.com

Community Night Dinner

Wednesday, November 13, 6:00pm

Community Night Dinner will be serving up soup, salad, bread, and a simple dessert at 6:00 pm on Wednesday.

Suggested donation: \$5

Free for children under 12 years old.

Syrian Dinner

Hosted by BUF Syrian Refugee Team

Saturday, November 16, 5:00-8:00 pm

On November 16, the BUF Syrian Refugee team will be hosting a delicious authentic Syrian dinner, cooked by the two hosted Syrian families and others from our team.

Menu:

- Marinated baked fish, Kibbeh (spiced meat), BBQ Meat Kabobs

- Green Salad, Hummus, Dolmas
- Biryani Spiced Rice
- Syrian Red Lentil soup
- Desserts.

Music and dancing. Funds to support refugee needs here and abroad.

Tickets - sliding scale \$30-\$40. Children under 12 years are free. Buy tickets at BUF or online at fundraiser.support/SyrianDinner.

[Buy Tickets](#)

Questions? Email ann.v.stevenson@gmail.com.

Safety & Security Training Session

Unsafe Intruders

Monday, November 18, 4:00-5:15 pm, Sanctuary

Led by Bellingham Police Department Officer Jon Knutsen

BUF's Safety and Security Committee (Elie Steele, Sarah Pearson, Michelle Fox, Jim Reimer, Felice Davis, Paul Beckel, me) continues its work to enhance congregational safety. The specific issue of unsafe intruders is one that has unfortunately hit too many UU congregations. On Monday, November 18 from 4:00 to 5:15 pm in the Sanctuary, we present our next BUF training session on this topic.

Officer Jon Knutsen of the Bellingham Police Department will teach us how we might best deal with a situation if someone enters BUF with an intent to do serious harm—he does the important training for many organizations in Bellingham. This session is part of our overall training package in which we've set up: fire drills, first-aid/CPR training; de-escalation strategies for community members with acting-out mental health concerns; and other areas. While we're fortunate to be close to police headquarters, there are still some things that we can do in those few interim moments before police support arrives—Officer Knutsen will help us learn those things.

Please contact Michael Berres by calling 360-393-6802 or emailing ammab81@gmail.com if you plan to attend.

[RSVP via Email](#)

Congregation Potluck Dinner

November 24, after the service

The Hospitality Team has coordinated this month's congregation potluck for the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Here's your opportunity to try out a new dish before your gathering with friends/family! We hope you will join the congregation in the Social Hall for a pre-Thanksgiving gathering to spend time with all those we are thankful for and maybe share recipes or traditions with your BUF family.

Please remember to take home your leftovers and dishes, as we will not be storing the leftover food.

Thanksgiving & Christmas Potluck Dinners

November 28, 2:00pm

December 25, 2:00pm

Mark Allyn will be hosting Thanksgiving and Christmas potluck dinners at BUF. On November 28, turkey will be provided, with potluck for the remaining dishes. There will be an at-will donation for the Thanksgiving turkey. The Christmas Day dinner will be entirely potluck.

If you plan to come, please email Mark Allyn at allyn@well.com with how many are coming and what you plan to bring.

[RSVP via Email](#)

International Human Rights Day Event

Living in Palestine: A Personal Experience

Thursday, December 10, 6:30-8:00pm

BUF's [Social and Environmental Justice Committee](#) and [Write for Rights](#) has invited a man from the West Bank in Palestine to speak with us in honor of International Human Rights Day.

There may also be other speakers from Gaza participating. Opportunities to sign Write for Rights petitions will be available, and all information shared will be about the most effective organizations helping people in Gaza right now.

No charge, but a free will offering will be accepted during the talk to benefit one of these organizations. All who come in the spirit of goodwill are welcome.

About the Speaker:

Adam (no last name for his family's safety) is a 26-year-old from the Palestinian village of Wadi Foquin located in the Bethlehem District of the West Bank. He is currently in the U.S. and speaking on behalf of the Friends of Wadi Foquin to educate audiences on the Palestinian reality now. Growing up under the Israeli military occupation, Adam also shares his personal experiences of West Bank life prior to the events of October 7, 2023. [Friends of Wadi Foquin](#) is an interfaith partnership created in 2009 between United Methodists in California and the Palestinian Muslim village of Wadi Foquin which supports community development projects in the village, organizes annual trips to the West Bank, and provides advocacy for the village against illegal settlement expansion and land confiscation. Adam holds a B.A. in Engineering from Polytechnic University in Hebron.

Lunch with Paul

Tuesdays, noon

Every Tuesday we gather at noon in the social hall to share about what's going on in our lives, questions on our minds, etc. We steer clear of politics for as long as we can. Drop in anytime; bring your own lunch.

BUF Text to Give

Contribute to BUF with Text to Give

You can donate to BUF from your phone by sending a text message to 360-345-3933.



If you want to donate \$5 to the collection basket, just text "\$5".

Or you can text "\$5 SEJC" to send your contribution to this month's SEJC recipient, or "\$5 Taize" to support BUF's Taizé ministry. You'll need to do a little setup and provide your credit card information the first time you do this, but after that, it's just a text message. You can even scan the QR code to access the phone number.

How To Submit Content For The Mid-Week Update

Content must be received by *10:00am on the Monday before the distribution date*. Submit via an email single spaced. Avoid any formatting, including bullets. Limit: 200 words. Submissions may be edited for space and clarity. Submit your content to MWU@buf.org

Find the BUF Calendar Online

Visit buf.org for the [complete calendar of BUF events](#) (found on our website under the News tab).

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Office phone: 360-733-3887

buf.org | admin@buf.org

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