



Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

Mid-Week Update: **December 11, 2024**

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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, December 15, 10:30am - Books That Have Impacted Our Lives

Rev. Paul Beckel, Steffany Raynes, Claire Lending, Gayle Tillis, Lin Skavdahl, Beth Nyblade, and Jim Reimer will each share briefly about how the experience of reading particular books in particular circumstances has changed the way they see the world.

Sunday, December 22, 10:30am - The Rituals of Our Lives

Rev. Paul Beckel and Tom Nicholas

Consciously or unconsciously, rituals shape our lives. Today we'll consider how to make (the ones we want to continue) more meaningful. We'll also have a ceremony to welcome four new BUF members!

Tuesday, December 24, 7:00pm
CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Carol singing starting at 6:50pm

Rev. Paul Beckel and Rev. Barbara Wells ten Hove

Our annual Christmas Eve service includes seasonal music and stories; a short homily; a wonderful piece by the choir; and, of course, the candle-lighting ceremony with candle dancers.

Bring your family and friends for a time for reflection and renewal.



Sunday, December 29, 10:30am - Release: Making Room for Transformation

Rev. Paul Beckel and Carrie Koehline

If we try to bring everything with us from the old year into the new, things that are unnecessary and unhelpful accumulate. During this service, we invite you to consider 1) what to release, 2) what to keep, 3) what to make space for.

Sunday, January 5, 10:30am - The Transformational Power of Loss and Grief

Su Livingston, Steffany Raynes and mostly *you*

We'll share together, in music, art, and poetry, expressions of how moving through grief and loss has brought us renewal and new ways of seeing. Su and Steffany will facilitate.

We welcome your presentations of art, poetry, music, short essays, sculpture, etc. We want a variety of art forms and perspectives. Please contact us at jan5@buf.org soon if you want to contribute, and plan for a 2-3 minute time frame. **Final deadline for submissions is January 1.**

[Email a Submission](#)

Children's Religious Education



This week, children will be learning about "The Divine" from a UU perspective and making pine cone ornaments for the BUF tree. Thanks to so many generous teachers and volunteers, we offer a younger class (grades K-3) and an older class (grades 4-8) that meets during the service each Sunday, and child care in the Pre-K room. Please reach out if you would like to get involved!

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

Our Encounters with Aging: Hindsight, Insight, Humor and Hope, Kathryn Allen

4 sessions - Sundays, January 5–26, 12:15–2:00pm, BUF Flex Room (top floor)

The sessions on aging will focus on a variety of topics related to living the last chapters of life, such as definitions of aging, tasks of aging, how to deal with challenges such as loss and loneliness, and how to embrace the gifts of aging such as wisdom, courage, and authenticity. The main thrust will be the inner lived experiences of the participants, but not on personal illnesses. Bits of humor and poetry will be woven in along the way.

[Register](#)

Unitarian Universalist Theology II, Natalie Johnson

5 sessions - Sundays, March 2–30, 12:15–1:45 pm, BUF Flex Room (top floor)

UU Theology II examines the development of Unitarian Universalism during the late 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. Among other topics, we will explore the move away from Christianity and toward humanism, the merger of the two denominations, and such UU theologies as earth-centered, humanist, process, and social gospel. While picking up where UU Theology I ended, the course is stand-alone and intended for anyone interested in understanding our Unitarian Universalist dynamic, ever-developing beliefs.

[Register](#)

Before the Scramble: A Scottish Missionary's Story, Rod Haynes

4 sessions - Sundays, April 6–27, 12:15–1:15 pm, BUF Flex Room (top floor)

Before the Scramble: A Scottish Missionary's Story by Rod Haynes tells the untold tale of James Sutherland, an ordinary man in the late 19th century, caught between two

worlds, who was dedicated to serving God in a time and place rife with danger. Contemporary Unitarian theology will be presented to compare and contrast the evangelistic efforts of missionaries like Sutherland. Participants will receive a copy of the book free of charge before the first class.

[Register](#)

Weekly Choir Update

We've added a link to the weekly Choir Gazette in the footer of the MWU. This week you can also find it by following the link below.

[Read Choir Gazette](#)

Community Night Dinner

Wednesdays, 6:00pm

Menu for Wednesday, December 11

This week's menu is soup, salad, and dessert. Suggested donation is \$5.00 per/person; children 12 and under are free. Come and enjoy!

More Volunteers Needed

In order to maintain weekly dinners, volunteers are needed, cooks, set-up crews, and clean-up crews. You can sign up for a single night or all of them, depending on what your schedule will allow. You can [sign up for a role using Sign-Up Genius](#).

[Sign Up for a Role](#)

Any questions regarding volunteering can be sent to Jennifer Villalva at jennifermvillalva@hotmail.com.

You can now pay with Text to Give through Breeze (see instructions below). Simply text to the number **360-345-3933** the amount you'd like to donate along with the keyword "CND" (e.g. - \$5 CND) - remember to put the "space" between the dollar amount and the keyword.

Men's Group

2nd and 4th Sundays, noon-1:30pm

You may not know it, but BUF has a men's group. We meet after the service on the 2nd and 4th Sundays in the BUF conference room from about noon to about 1:30pm. (Like good UUs we have principles, but not dogma, about the time.) We're young and old and in-between, members and guests and in-between, gay and straight and in-between. We share our concerns and worries, have a broad discussion topic, and sometimes manage to learn something about the world and each other. And we usually do it without ranting about sports or politics. We would be happy to welcome you, too.

Contact Jeff Copeland (jeff.copeland@gmail.com) for more information.

Christmas Potluck Dinner

Wednesday, December 25, 2:00pm

Mark Allyn will be hosting a Christmas potluck dinner at BUF. 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](#)

Sunday Potlucks

There will **not** be a Sunday Potluck in December. But there will be a Potluck on Christmas Day! Consider joining in for a generous serving of holiday food, fun and fellowship at BUF. If coming, please email Mark Allyn at allyn@well.com.

In 2025 the Sunday Potlucks will be on the third Sunday of the month. **The next Sunday Potluck will be on January 19** in the Social Hall following the service.

Setting up and taking down all those tables and chairs in addition to dishwashing keeps our Building Stewards at work long after the meal is finished. If you are able, please pitch in by coming early to help set up the room, or staying for a while after

eating to put away tables and chairs. With help from many hands, the work will get done quickly and your help will be greatly appreciated!

SEJC's December Special Collections Recipient *IRIS (Immigrant Resources and Immediate Support)*

This month's special collection is for [IRIS \(Immigrant Resources and Immediate Support\)](#).

So, what will your support of IRIS do? One example is IRIS received a call from a single Indigenous mom of five asking for help paying her electricity bill. Her husband was deported to Mexico, so their two-income farmworker household became a single-income household. IRIS was able to assist this mom with much-needed groceries and pay a portion of her utility bills. The mom is now connected to an Energy Assistance Program and PSE's discount program, which is lowering her utilities bill.

IRIS communicates with this mom via WhatsApp voice messages since she cannot read and her work schedule varies, making it hard to reach her. Offering families the option to communicate via WhatsApp is one way IRIS is trying to provide more equitable access to services. Please be generous.

SEJC Seeks Input for Special Collections

Each spring, the SEJC (Social and Environmental Justice Committee) meets to interview all the applicants for a monthly Sunday Justice Collection for the coming church year. This meeting typically lasts around 3.5 hours and all attending are required to read all the applications in advance of the meeting. After the meeting we vote on which applicants should be selected for a Sunday collection. Some Sunday collections, such as Humanitas and our Transylvania partnership, are automatic recipients.

SEJC is considering opening up this meeting to participation and voting by all congregants. If you are not part of SEJC but think you would be interested in participating, please email Kara Black and kara.black525@gmail.com by December 17, so we can get a better idea of when during the week most congregants would be available for this meeting. The meeting will probably be in person, with likely a virtual

attendance option via Zoom. Or, depending on circumstances and logistics, the meeting may be held entirely via Zoom.

Please reply with your general availability during the week. Here are some possible timeframes to guide your response:

- Weekday mornings (like 9:00am-12:30pm)
- Weekday early afternoons (like 12:30-4:00pm)
- Weekday late afternoons (like 3:00-6:30pm or 3:30-7:00pm)
- Weekday evenings (like 6:00-9:30pm)
- Saturday mornings (like 9:00am-12:30pm)
- Weekend early afternoons (like 12:30-4:00pm)
- Weekend later afternoons (like 3:00-6:30pm)

Please send your replies by December 17 at the latest to Kara Black kara.black525@gmail.com.

[Email to Participate](#)

Safety Committee Seeking Members

Our BUF Safety Committee (Felice Davis, Jim Reimer, Sarah Pearson, Elie Steele, Michelle Fox, Paul Beckel, Michael Berres) seeks two or three more members to help us continue addressing safety issues.

Over the last six years, we have made lots of progress on generally behind-the-scenes improvements, but we still have many things that need to be addressed. The scope of our work has ranged from earthquake safety to AEDs to dangerous intruders to First-Aid kits. The Committee meets approximately every six weeks, though that can change as the need arises.

If interested, please call Michael at 360-393-6802.

Humanitas Update



We collaborate with various agencies that assist the same individuals we serve, pooling our resources to create a stronger support system for those in need. Recently, a case manager visited our office seeking assistance for a client who was unable to attend in person due to his circumstances. This

situation highlighted the importance of collaboration and finding creative solutions to meet the needs of those we help.

The client in question had come across a supply of free liquid nutrition, which is essential for maintaining his health, but he faced a significant hurdle: he could not afford the shipping costs required to receive these vital supplies. Our network was able to step in and cover the shipping costs, ensuring that he would receive the nutrition he desperately needed without further delay.

At the same time, the case manager worked diligently to advocate for the client with the insurance company. Their goal was to secure coverage for the shipping costs, arguing the necessity of this service to the client's health and well-being. This experience underscored the collaborative efforts required in our work, demonstrating how teamwork and resourcefulness can lead to impactful solutions for those relying on our support. Thank you for your continued support which allows us to continue helping those in need.

Shop for CAST

When you shop for yourself, can you add something for the unhoused? The BUF [Coffee and Sandwiches Together \(CAST\)](#) crew serves sandwiches and needed supplies to many unhoused people and we are asking for more donations to the box in the coat closet at BUF.

We need:

- Warm socks
- Razors
- Soap bars
- Toothbrushes
- Small shampoos

Those of us on the CAST crew know how important these small donations can be to our neighbors. They are always so appreciative!

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

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

Handy Links: [Calendar](#) | [Choir Updates](#)

[Sign up for the Mid-Week Update and/or the BUF News Digest.](#)