



# Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

Mid-Week Update: **December 18, 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

### Special Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

**Tuesday, December 24, 6:50pm**

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.

The annual offering received at the Christmas Eve service is your gift to the [Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County](#). We BUFsters join with other faith groups to do more than one congregation can do alone to improve the quality of life for our neighbors in need. Thank you for your generosity.

### **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!

### **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](mailto: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](#)

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## Holiday Hiatuses

The **BUF Office** will be closed December 23, 2024-January 2, 2025.

The following programs on hiatus for the next couple of weeks:

- **Community Night Dinner** - The final CND of the year is tonight, December 18. There will be no CND on December 25 or January 1.
- **Choir** - There will be no choir on December 25 or January 1.

- **Lunch with Paul** - Tuesday lunches with Paul are on pause until the new year (no lunch on December 24 or 31).
- **Mid-Week Update** - Your trusty MWU editors are taking a break, and there will be no MWU for the next two weeks (December 25, January 1). The next MWU will be released on Wednesday, January 8.

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## Children's Religious Education



This Sunday, the children will be discussing our first principle as UU's, through the lens of the Divine. Our Christian cousins see Jesus, a human incarnation of God, as Divine; as UU's, the story of Jesus reminds us to practice looking for the divine in others and in ourselves.

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.

### Youth Group

What's happening in the Youth Group this year, led by Jen Villalva, Gabe Epperson, Noreen Fujita-Sacco, and her poodle Paris? Popcorn Theology is happening! Twice a month on Sunday afternoons, Middle and High Schoolers at BUF watch a (award-winning) movie and discuss the themes and messages from a UU perspective. If you have a middle or high school youth interested in joining, contact Lis at [RE@buf.org](mailto:RE@buf.org).

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## 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](#)

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## Weekly Choir Update

Each week, a link to the weekly Choir Gazette can be found here as well as in the footer of this email.

Note - There will be a short-but-essential practice of the Christmas Eve service **tonight**, working with candle dancers starting promptly at 6:30pm and then rehearsal in the dark starting at 6:45pm.

[Read Choir Gazette](#)

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# Community Night Dinner

**Wednesdays, 6:00pm**

## **Menu for Wednesday, December 18**

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!

**Please note: There will be no dinner on December 25 or January 1.**

## **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](mailto: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.

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# BUF Children / Youth Education Winter Solstice Party

**Friday, December 20, 6:00-8:00pm**



[RSVP via Email](#)

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## 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](mailto:allyn@well.com) with how many are coming and what you plan to bring.

[RSVP via Email](#)

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## Thank You to BUF Building & Grounds Volunteers

### ***A note of thanks from Ahwren Ayers:***

BUF Painting Party a Success! And WOW does it look great!!!!

It lifts the spirit to walk through those freshly painted areas.

There is always more that can be done. This time we focused on the areas that needed the most attention and to accomplish it in a 'doable' amount of time. It was about two and a half to three hours of painting and everyone pretty much was able to go home around 12N to enjoy the rest of the day. Everyone helped with some form of clean up, that helped me immensely.

Peter Luton, Ann Stevenson, Lin Scavdhal, Rod Haynes, Brian, Heather Higgins, Michelle Fox, Noah, Noah's dad Ted,

Thank you for all your good work and Thank you for the gift you gave BUF.

To those who participated in trimming and outside cleaning up of the BUF grounds in 2024. Ron Quinn, Peter Luton, Robin Brown, Beth Brownfield, Ann Stevenson, Jim Reimer, Michelle Fox and All the volunteers that were out in the fresh air, and maybe even in the rain, trimming and raking or mowing. Thank you.

Thank you Jim Reimer for your good work and being able to go from one BUF Building and Grounds need to the next.

I want to acknowledge all BUF Volunteers.

All who work on a committee and all that involves. Plus Teachers, Celebrants, Choir members, Musicians, Soloists, Sound technicians, Cleaning, Laundry, Vacuuming, and More. Those who consistently do more than one task at BUF. Those who are willing to lend a hand in the moment.



I've been working with Paul and Michelle decluttering and organizing the BUF building into 'Present Time'. I've been awakened to all that Michelle and Paul do. I'm so grateful for their support and their patience with all my questions while I've been on a learning curve to support BUF. I've enjoyed being part of the BUF community. Thank you Barbara Ten Hove, Mark Allyn, Jeff Copeland and Doug for helping in the decluttering process.

To All of You who come, as a heartbeat keeping BUF going. Your presence is valued, your work is noticed and appreciated.

It Takes a Village. Thank You.

– Ahwren

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

This month's special collection is for [IRIS \(Immigrant Resources and Immediate Support\)](#). **All donations will be matched up to \$10,000.**

What are the sort of things IRIS does? IRIS received a call from an Indigenous mother of two young children who fled Oaxaca seeking asylum in the United States due to extreme intimate violence. We were able to provide her with essential groceries, a car seat for her baby, clothing, and crucial referrals to medical providers, WIC, and food banks. Currently, we are working on getting her connected with an immigration lawyer. The mother told us: "At times, I feel very alone and invisible, and then you (IRIS) show up, you see me."

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## 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!

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## 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](mailto:MWU@buf.org)

### Find the BUF Calendar Online

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

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#### **Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship**

Office phone: 360-733-3887

[buf.org](http://buf.org) | [admin@buf.org](mailto:admin@buf.org)

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

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