



Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

Mid-Week Update: **December 4, 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 8, 10:30am - All Music Sunday: Lullabies

BUF Choir, Directed by Ben Workman Smith

We'll listen to...and learn about...and share in the creation of lullaby blessings.

Tuesday, December 24, 7:00pm - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service - carol singing starting at 6:45pm

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!

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

Su Livingston and Steffany Raynes

Su and Steffany will facilitate a Sunday Service on January 5, 2025 featuring original work by YOU (members and friends of BUF) on the topic of “How has loss and grief changed you?” We welcome your presentations of art, poetry, music, short essays, sculpture, etc. We want a variety of art forms and perspectives. Plan for a 2-3 minute time frame. Please contact us at jan5@buf.org soon if you want to contribute. Final deadline for submissions is January 1.

[Email a Submission](#)

Children’s Religious Education



December 8 is a special Music Sunday! The theme is around "Lullaby" and the songs we sing to children as they fall asleep. Children are invited to attend in their pajamas and can bring a stuffy/blanket/pillow from home and enjoy the music.

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](#)

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.

Community Night Dinner

Wednesdays, 6:00pm

Menu for Wednesday, December 4

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.

Weekly Choir Update

Hello all!

To the choir, thank you for a wonderful summit this past weekend. The party was full of laughs, the sanctuary was filled with musical progress, and my heart was filled with joy by the end! Second note to the choir: Basses are on deck for BATS sectionals this week. See as many of you as I can at 5:00pm! Tenors, you are more than welcome to join in, as we will mostly be focusing on Dreams of Thee, where you sing the same part.

Lastly, to the choir and everyone else: [here's where our Choir Gazettes now get posted!](#) If you're interested in joining but not quite sure what to expect, this will be a great resource for you. This has all the news and relevant info for the choir this week!

Any questions, please email me at choir@buf.org.

Best to all,
Ben

[Read Choir Gazette](#)

Funds and Fun Happy Hour

Wednesday, December 4, 4:00pm

Saturday, January 11, 4:00pm

Consider joining the BUF Community Fund Raising Committee for an engaging happy hour to learn about how BUF raises all the funds necessary to run the congregation, share your ideas about fundraising events, and learn how and when you can be part of our efforts.

We will serve wine, nonalcoholic beverages, cheese, and crackers. We will also provide childcare if requested. We would love to have up to 10 folks join us at each of our happy hours. Happy hours will take place Wednesday, December 4 and Saturday, January 11. Both will take place in the library at BUF at 4:00pm.

We request that people sign up ahead of time so we can plan for food and beverages and childcare. We will send a reminder to everyone who registers! Please email your interest to Drew Betz at drewlenore@me.com with your name, email, and/or text number and the date you wish to attend. Let's make fundraising fun!

[RSVP via Email](#)

International Human Rights Day Event

Living in Palestine: A Personal Experience

Tuesday, 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.

Free to attend, but a freewill 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.

Christmas Potluck Dinner

Wednesday, December 25, 2:00pm

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

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. In January the gathering will be on Sunday, 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!

Transitions Ministry Update

In late October, the BUF Board authorized their board president to form the Transition Prep Team. That team—consisting of Claire Lending, board secretary; Henry Ohana, BUF member; and Lin Skavdahl, board president—is charged with ushering us through the process of selecting a two-year interim minister. Here is a rough timeline:

- **November 2024:**
 - Create plan for ongoing communication/input with BUF Congregation
- **Jan./Feb. 2025:**
 - Ensure we have sufficient funds to hire a two-year interim minister.
 - Meet with the UUA Transitions Office to communicate BUF's needs.
- **April 2025:**
 - BUF submits to UUA a description of BUF needs (called a search profile).
 - Perspective Interim Ministers submit to UUA their portfolios.
- **May 2025:**
 - Claire, Henry and I receive names of prospective interims interested in BUF.
 - We study applicants and, working with UUA, make a recommendation to the board.
 - Board votes to approve the applicant.
- **August 2025:**
 - Interim Minister begins their two-year term running from August 2025 to July 1, 2027.

NOTE: This is a relatively quick and uncomplicated process not at all like the process we will use to call a Settled (long-term) Minister. That process involves a Search Team voted into service by the BUF Congregation. That process begins in January of 2026. Stay tuned.

Respectfully,
Lin Skavdahl

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

This month's special collection is for [IRIS \(Immigrant Resources and Immediate Support\)](#). The organization's mission is to connect immigrants with existing resources in the community, and to provide immediate assistance to those experiencing a temporary period of crisis.

IRIS strives to respond very quickly to urgent situations with low-barrier access to support services. There is a detailed intake to determine first if connections can be made to other organizations that might offer assistance. We also identify resources that IRIS can provide quickly.

IRIS is committed to meeting the basic human needs of immigrant community members in crisis. Funds are used to provide food, hygiene items, clothing, baby supplies, and help with other critical needs. A portion of the funds can be used to assist with emergency medical expenses.

IRIS is committed to supporting immigrant community members with vulnerable immigration status who are in urgent need. Funds are used to provide essential resources such as food, emergency housing, and rental assistance to prevent evictions. We also offer hygiene products, clothing, baby supplies, and help with other critical needs. A portion of the funds can be used to assist with emergency medical expenses.

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.

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](#)

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