



Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

Mid-Week Update: **January 8, 2025**

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

1. [Upcoming Services](#)
2. [Children's Religious Education](#)
3. [Ah, Now I Remember... - Words from Rev. Paul](#)
4. [Adult Religious Education](#)
5. [Weekly Choir Update](#)
6. [Community Night Dinner](#) - January 8
7. [Sunday Potluck News](#) - January 19
8. [SEJC Special Collections Recipient for January](#) - Bellingham Food Bank
9. [Upcoming Sunday Justice Groupthinks](#) - Starting January 12
10. [Shop for CAST](#)
11. [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, January 12, 10:30am - In Tribute - Rev. Paul Beckel

2024 brought the deaths of Jimmy Carter, Quincy Jones, and other iconic and world-shaping individuals (and Richard Simmons). And in recognizing both the famous and infamous, we'll have to consider whether we can appreciate the good works of people who did bad things.

Sunday, January 19, 10:30am - Toward Justice: A Reflection on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and Inauguration Day - Rupert Ayton and Rev. Paul Beckel

How is recognizing MLK Day different from national holidays honoring other people and events? What values, and what other people, can inspire us to nudge the arc of the moral universe toward justice?

Children's Religious Education



This Sunday, 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.

Ah, Now I Remember...

At the end of the Sunday service on December 22, I was feeling the rush (which I often do) about the unexpected convergence of related images, stories, and feelings over the past hour—things which had been prepared by musicians, AV Techs, Celebrants... reminders of things I could have known but wasn't paying attention to... things people tell me afterward... and so much that arises spontaneously. Anyway, in my closing words on December 22, I marveled at this. Then, wanting to give examples, I found my mind blank.

The theme for that day was "The Rituals of our Lives," along with Solstice. So it was an unexpected pleasure to find that our Religious Education Coordinator, Lis, had held an event the previous evening which involved—she told us and showed us in a photo—a glowing spiral labyrinth through which children were invited to walk.

Another coincidence was references to looking one another in the eye mentioned by multiple participants (even a magical moment of a deer looking at someone in the eye).

But the big one: Saturday afternoon it became apparent that we needed to start from scratch on a Children's Focus. It wasn't hard to come up with an appropriate story about the natural cycles of growth, decay, death, and rebirth through the experience of "The Fall of Freddie the Leaf." Unfortunately, the book's pictures were few and uninteresting. Remarkably, our celebrant, Tom Nicholas, had sent me that week some of his late wife Trula's photographs (including the aforementioned deer). Within this small set—in addition to apt photos for each of the various elements of the service related to ritual and solstice—there was a perfect photo to accompany every single page of "Freddie the Leaf."

Maybe it shouldn't be surprising when such things emerge when we plan, and the whole congregation comes together, within the immediate context of seasons, shared social concerns, and awareness of one another's joys and sorrows. It happens so often that I may quickly forget the details. But I always carry with me the feeling of gratitude, and connection.

Thank you for that ongoing gift,
Paul

Adult Religious Education

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

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

[Read Choir Gazette](#)

Community Night Dinner

Wednesdays, 6:00pm

Menu for Wednesday, January 8

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.

Sunday Potlucks

Third Sundays of the month

In 2025 the Sunday Potlucks will be on the third Sunday of the month. In January the gathering will be on the 19th, 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 January Special Collections Recipient: Bellingham Food Bank

The [Bellingham Food Bank](#) serves over 5,000 households a week in Whatcom County. Rev. Peter Luton and a number of other BUFsters volunteer at the food bank. Peter shares that there is a wide diversity of people who are served including many elderly residents, students, the unhoused, working people, and non-English speakers from many countries. Your donation will support your neighbors who are struggling to feed their families. A plate collection will be circulated during BUF service on January 12 and donations can be sent to BUF throughout the month with the designation to the "Bellingham Food Bank." Thank you for your generosity.

Upcoming Sunday Justice Groupthinks

2nd and 4th Sundays of the month, 9:15-10:15am

This next four years is going to be very difficult and social and environmental justice issues will be requiring more attention from all of us. People and the planet are going to be devastatingly impacted from health care to fossil fuels, from endangered species to food insecurity, from pollution to LGBTQAI+, from racial and ethnic inequity to climate chaos and everything else in between.

On the second and fourth Sundays, Deb Cruz will be in the BUF conference room from 9:15-10:15am for folks who want to gather and express their concerns, share wisdom and maybe find ways to prevent, mitigate, or undo the damage that is to come. All are welcome regardless of expertise and experience.

Bring your concerns, questions, knowledge, ideas and experience to share. Come speak, or come listen, or both. If you have phones, computers or iPads, you might want to bring them so we can explore resources together.

The sessions are as follows:

- January 12** - Justice and the WA Legislature
- January 26** - Justice and the Environment
- February 9** - Justice and Racism and Oppression
- February 23** - Justice and LGBTQAI+ Communities
- March 9** - Justice and Indigenous Communities
- March 23** - Justice and Immigration
- April 13** - Justice and the Economy
- April 27** - Justice and Democracy

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!

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, no word doc attachment needed. 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.](#)