



Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

Mid-Week Update: **March 12, 2025**

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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, March 16, 10:30am - Centering for Courage - Su Livingston and Tom Nicholas

Reflections on these words of Victor Frankl: *Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.*

Words from Paul: Reflections and Conversations after Sunday Services

Each Sunday we'll print a "Coffee Hour Question" related to the theme of the service in the order of service. Plus the question, "How did today's service relate to whatever is on your mind or heart?"

Join others who want to reflect on these questions at the front of the sanctuary after every Sunday service. Pull up pews or chairs into a circle (and please put them back). Doug Branson will facilitate conversations.

The same questions will be printed on slips of paper in the social hall and in the library, and adjoining rooms 2 and 3. You'll find these rooms, and the library, considerably quieter than the social hall—but wherever you are, use this rare opportunity to get to know one another on a deeper level.

And wherever you are in conversation, consider these guidelines adapted from our Chalice Circles practices to ensure everyone is included in the conversation:

- Speak one at a time; let everyone else speak before you speak a second time
- Listen, don't concentrate on what you want to say next
- Invite others into the circle
- Speak for yourself
 - not about what others think/feel/do
 - not about what others should think/feel/do
- Don't rush to fill the silence

We're seeing a lot of newcomers post-inauguration. Let's invite them into the joy of building upon our culture of inclusive community.

Peace, Paul

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.

Adult Religious Education

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 newsletter.

[Read Choir Gazette](#)

Community Night Dinner

Wednesdays, 6:00pm

Wednesday, March 12

We'll be serving soup, salad, and dessert. Suggested donation is \$5.00 per/person; children 12 and under are free. Come and enjoy!

More Volunteers Always Needed

In order to sustain our weekly dinners, we need kitchen helpers, folks to set-up and set the tables, and folks to help reset the social hall. 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 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.

Alohas: Hellos and Goodbyes

This past fall of 2024, BUF welcomed 10 new members:

- Peggy Jones
- Rose Edington
- Lucy Kesterson
- Su Livingston
- Tom Nicholas
- Panda Stuart (Robin)
- Maryann Welch
- Lauraine Maness
- Pam Hayer
- Pam Wooster

As your paths cross, be sure to say "Aloha!"

Third Sunday Potluck

Sunday, March 16, BUF Social Hall

More than 80 people attended the February potluck and thankfully many brought food to share. Let's do it again! We'll gather for this community meal right after the service on March 16. Please deliver your food contribution to the Social Hall before the service.

In February, the Potluck Crew was kept quite late taking down tables and chairs and cleaning up after the meal. Please remember: they are all volunteers! Pitch in to help if you can so the work can be completed by 1:00pm and everyone can go home and enjoy the afternoon. If you're willing to join the Crew for either set up or take down please contact Judy Kasper at Hospitality@buf.org. Thank you!

Indivisible Bellingham Meeting: Immigration in Whatcom County

Monday, March 17, 7:00pm, BUF

The next in-person meeting of the members of [Indivisible Bellingham](#) will focus on our new Immigrant Support Team and an overview of immigrant support in Bellingham and Whatcom County.

IMMIGRATION
in Whatcom County

Immigration Lawyers
Hannah Stone & Holly Pai
Indivisible Immigration Support Team Member
Kathy Kuba

Monday, March 17, 7PM

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship, 1207 Ellsworth Street

INDIVISIBLE BELLINGHAM www.IndivisibleBellingham.org

Immigration attorneys Hannah Stone and Holly Pai will speak about what is actually happening in our County. And Kathy Kuba, Indivisible Bellingham Immigrant Support team member will follow with an update on the emerging effort by many Whatcom groups to set-up effective support actions for our immigrant neighbors.

Attendees will gain perspective about the rapid changes that our federal government is implementing to scare and unfairly apprehend immigrants and the many ways that our local and state governments are working to counter those brutal attacks.

Women's Retreat - Wild Rising: Shedding, Becoming, Emerging Together

April 25-27, Camp Lutherwood

Calling all BUF women! Join us for a memorable weekend retreat, starting 5:00pm on April 25 through 11:00am on April 27 at Camp Lutherwood on Lake Samish. The retreat is open to all those identifying as she/her/they/them. With a nod to the Year of the Snake, our theme is "Wild Rising: Shedding, Becoming, Emerging Together." Find details and register at [BUF Women's Retreat](#) or click on the link on the BUF homepage under Featured Events.

Registration

Pricing:

- Through March 23 - Full Weekend: \$165 | Saturday only (including meals): \$65
- Starting March 24 - Full Weekend: \$175 | Saturday only (including meals): \$75

Register by April 10.

[Register](#)

Scholarships

If cost is a barrier, contact Sue Doster at Suraku@comcast.net to request a scholarship. Also, donations toward our scholarship fund are gratefully accepted. To donate, stop by the table during social hour on Sundays or contact Sue.

Seeking Proposals for Workshops/Skill-Sharing

Apply by March 31

Are you attending and able to offer a skill/workshop, especially one that relates to the theme? We want your proposals! In the past, we've had yoga, meditation, dance, tai chi, art, storytelling, writing workshops and more. Don't be shy; share your idea with claire.lending@gmail.com before the March 31 deadline.

[Email a Proposal](#)

More questions? Stop by the Social Hall following the Sunday services to chat with the **Retreat Planning Team**: Sue Doster, Claire Lending, Genia Allen-Schmid, Constance Ohana, Ann Lackland, Karen Collins, Sarah Pearson, and Peggy Jones.

Why Do I Pledge?



Because BUF welcomes me, surprises me, stretches me, supports and generously nurtures me with humor, tenderness, open heartedness, open-mindedness. And, it touches my heart to witness and experience this community, as a whole and as individuals, grow and shine.

I want this fellowship to continue to thrive in our larger community as a source of social justice and social awareness and as a spiritual refuge. I want more people to discover the beauty, simplicity and comfort of Taizé.

Our son Eli, my husband Rick and I participated, were included, supported, and honored in many ways over the years. We contributed what we could with money, time and creative energy. I always wanted to do more!

I appreciate the reminders to focus on the good, our commonality, our community ~ to be our best selves. It seems like we need each other now more than ever; we've said and thought that before and it's still true, and we're still here. May we continue to be.

Lee Willis

Stewardship Update

We just finished the first week of our four-week "Raise the Light Together" pledge drive for BUF's 2025-26 canvass, and already we have 48 pledges received. Last year we received 160 pledges, so we are off to a good start and we need to continue at this pace. Thank you if you have already pledged.

Our pledges make up 85% of our annual income. They allow us to build a strong infrastructure, which supports our activities in the larger community as well as inside our doors. Your pledge makes it possible for our Board to create a budget, set salaries

for staff, and will determine much of what we are able to do in the coming year. For example, it will greatly affect our options for hiring an Interim Minister, both in terms of salary and costs of moving an Interim Minister to Bellingham.

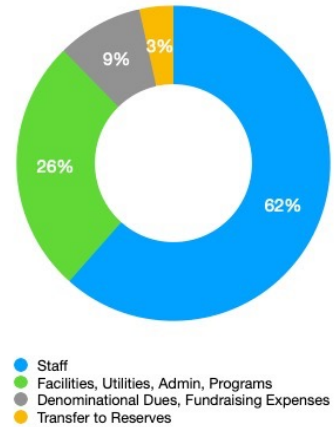
The graph shows the percentages of our expenses through December 2024, for reference.

This month we are contacting every BUF member and friend, either in-person or by email. This annual commitment is usually paid once a month, but other options are also available. For in-person visits, your canvasser will bring you a pledge card; or, you can [pledge online](#).

[Make a Pledge](#)

Our BUF community and presence are so greatly needed this year. Thank you for everything you do to help all of us Raise the Light!

BUF Expenses 2024



SEJC’s March Special Collections Recipient *Children of the Setting Sun* - Young Tribal Leaders Program

Children of the Setting Sun’s Young Tribal Leaders Program (YTLP) is a force for change, equipping Indigenous youth with the tools to lead with purpose and amplify their voices on critical issues. By fostering leadership grounded in heritage and vision, it empowers young people to shape the future of their communities and beyond.

YTLP was recognized by Washington Conservation Action for their work on the Climate Protection Act and mobilizing Native voters in the 2024 election. Their efforts are proof that Indigenous youth are not just the leaders of tomorrow—they’re leading today. These young leaders are forging careers in tribal advocacy, graphic design, environmental activism and communications. Mentors are helping them refine their skills and connect their work to a broader movement for sustainability, education, and government accountability.

National Recognition: Named a top program by the National Indian Youth Leadership Network for youth-driven leadership, cultural preservation and advocacy; Received the Native American Environmental Network’s award for youth-led land restoration and sustainability efforts; Featured in Indian Country Today for innovative integration of leadership development, media production and cultural preservation 80% of participants have taken on leadership roles in local schools, tribal councils and environmental projects.

[Learn More](#)

Invite Organizations to Apply: SEJC Collection

Application Deadline: Friday, April 11

We encourage all in the BUF community to invite organizations to apply to receive a collection during the next church year. Please let them know that the firm deadline for applications is April 11, 2025.

[Access the Application](#)

We particularly encourage organizations to apply who serve a diverse and/or underserved population. Grassroots and small organizations are welcome to apply. Social change organizations are welcome to apply. We prefer to select organizations where BUF’s contribution will make a significant difference for the organization and its work.

Thank you for your help in creating a diverse, effective and meaningful pool of applicants.

Upcoming Sunday Justice Brainstorming

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

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.

Upcoming sessions:

- **March 23** - Justice and Immigration
- **April 13** - Justice and the Economy
- **April 27** - Justice and Democracy

Lunch with Paul

Tuesdays, noon

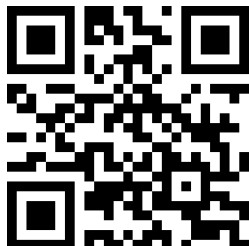
Every Tuesday we gather at noon in the social hall to share about what's going on in our lives, questions on our minds, etc. We steer clear of politics for as long as we can. Drop in anytime; bring your own lunch.

BUF Text to Give

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

There are a few different options for designating your gift:

- Text “**\$5**” to donate \$5 to the collection basket
- Text “**\$5 SEJC**” to send your contribution to this month's SEJC recipient
- Text “**\$5 Taize**” to support BUF's Taizé ministry
- Text “**\$5 CND**” for Community Night Dinners
- Text “**\$5 Fair**” for purchases of fair trade products at the church (coffee, chocolate bars, etc.)



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.](#)