



# Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

Mid-Week Update: **April 23, 2025**

## Upcoming Services

### Religious Education

- [Children's Religious Education](#)
- [Adult Religious Education](#)
  - [Pathways for Parents](#) - April 27, May 4, May 18
  - [Transgender Inclusion in Congregations](#) - May 4-June 8
  - [Pathways for Newcomers](#) - May 17

### Events

- [Community Night Dinner](#) - April 23
- [Gathering of the Eagles Fundraising Dinner](#) - April 28
- [Retirement Shindig for Rev. Paul](#) - June 21 and 22

### Stewardship

- [Our Serious Shortage Still Exists](#): Stewardship Update
- [Paddle Call Proposals for BUF Auction](#)
- [BUF Auction: Join the Event Team](#)

### Social and Environmental Justice

- [SEJC's April Special Collections Recipient](#): The Airow Project
- [SEJC Spring Meeting](#) - April 27 - noon
- [Sunday Justice Brainstorming](#) - April 27 - 9:1 am
- [Invitation to Attend Sunday Justice Collections Decision Meeting](#) - May 7

### Engagement & Support

- [Lunch with Paul](#) - most Tuesdays
- [BUF Text to Give](#)

**Please note: The BUF Office will be closed for the next several days.** We're checking email to [admin@buf.org](mailto:admin@buf.org) and phone messages at 360-733-3837.

Michelle will be in on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings. Please send any email or leave a message if you'd like to schedule a time to see her.

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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, April 27, 10:30am - Anyway - Rev. Paul Beckel**

Doing the right thing.

**Taize - Monday, May 5, 7:00pm**

Please join us for singing, candles, meditation, and centering in community in person or on zoom.

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## Religious Education

### Children's Religious Education



Children who wish to attend Sunday School start in the Sanctuary with their families then 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.

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### Adult Religious Education

**Pathways for Parents - Gayle Tilles and Ellen Berning**

**3 sessions** - Sundays, April 27, May 4, and May 18, 10:30-11:45am

Childcare provided.

BUF is offering a special three-session Pathways for Parents this Spring. Led by Gayle Tilles and Ellen Berning, participants will come out with a better understanding of UU theology, lasting friendships, and feeling more a part of BUF. To make it convenient for busy parents, this Pathways offering will be held Sunday mornings 10:30-11:45am with childcare provided. *Coffee, tea, and snacks will be provided.* We hope you will take this opportunity to deepen relationships with fellow parents and learn more about our unique denomination. Questions? Email Gayle Tillis at [borders2@frontier.com](mailto:borders2@frontier.com).

[Register](#)

### **Transgender Inclusion in Congregations - Constance and Hank Ohana**

**6 sessions** - Sundays, May 4-June 8, 3:00–5:00 pm, BUF Sanctuary

Designed specifically for UU congregations, this discussion-focused course counters mainstream narratives about who trans people are, supports understanding of non-binary identities (such as genderqueer, agender, and Two-Spirit), and employs a deeply intersectional approach. Among other topics, we will explore congregational welcome, relationship-building, and skills-building. Congregational teams (e.g., Board, Staff, Hospitality, Choir, Worship Arts, RE) are particularly encouraged to participate. Individuals welcomed!

[Register](#)

### **Pathways for Newcomers - Felice Davis**

**1 session** - Saturday, May 17, 10:00am–2:00pm

Hosted by the Hospitality Committee and open to all those new to BUF. Pathways is a Unitarian Universalist tradition for adults to get to know others in a small group setting and to learn about our church and UUism. The session features a Q&A with our minister, Rev. Paul. Fun and Informative! Sign up with Felice Davis: text 253-307-8981, or email [fdavis1944@gmail.com](mailto:fdavis1944@gmail.com).

[Register](#)

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## **Events**

### **Community Night Dinner**

**Wednesday, April 23**

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 are always needed.**

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## Gathering of the Eagles Fundraising Dinner

**Monday, April 28, 5:00pm-7:00pm**

BUF's Native American Connections and Environmental Justice Committees will be hosting a fundraising dinner for this year's Gathering of the Eagles event in May. As is often said by our Lhaq'temish (Lummi) friends and neighbors, "when the tide is out, the table is set!" There will be traditional Lhaq'temish foods and entertainment with the one and only Freddie Lane emceeing.

[Register](#)

A minimum \$25/per plate donation is requested.

[Donate](#)

Then join:

- Canoe Journeys - May 17-22
- Lummi Nation - May 23
- Bellingham – May 24 (part of Ski to Sea festivities)
- Lummi Nation - May 25-26

**More volunteers needed to help with set-up, cooking, serving, and more.**

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## Retirement Shindig for Rev. Paul

**Saturday, June 21 and Sunday, June 22**

Rev. Paul Beckel is retiring and we're planning a celebratory send-off! The retirement shindig will take place Saturday evening, June 21 and Sunday morning, June 22. Saturday's event will celebrate Paul's 30 years in ministry with stories, music, food, and drink, while Sunday will include a ritual of goodbye between Paul and BUF and one last time to hear Paul preach before he and Jane move to Minnesota. There will be a lot

more information to follow but please mark your calendars now for this important event in the life of BUF.

Questions? Email co-planners Barbara ten Hove at [revbabs10@gmail.com](mailto:revbabs10@gmail.com) or Jeff Copeland at [jeff.copeland@gmail.com](mailto:jeff.copeland@gmail.com).

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## Stewardship

### Our Serious Shortage Still Exists

We are far short of our goal. Our giving is down and operating expenses will need to be reduced.

If you have been meaning to pledge but haven't yet, please get your pledge in. If you have already pledged and you are willing and able, please consider additional support for our community by upping your pledge.

Use the website with the button below. Talk to Lee Seaman, Steffany Raines, or John Jurceka on the Stewardship Team. BUFsters have a long history of stepping up when we're needed, and we are truly needed now. Let's get to our goal of \$365,000! [stewardship@buf.org](mailto:stewardship@buf.org).

Thanks for all you do, and for making BUF all that we are. Let's do this!

[Make a Pledge](#)

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### Paddle Call Proposals for BUF Auction

**Deadline: April 30; Auction date: October 4, 2025**

You may be familiar with paddle calls—a fundraising tool used at gala events to raise cash funds. The funds may go to supporting the mission of the organization or a

specific project. In past years, BUF auction attendees have funded such items as the replenishing of emergency reserves and updates to the BUF website.

This year the Board is planning ahead for the October 2025 auction. If you have an idea for a project, consider submitting a proposal. A good project is one that doesn't exceed \$10,000, it solves a specific BUF problem, can be completed within one year, and will generate wide support. Proposals must include such details as the cost of materials and labor based on researched estimates, and a timeline for completion. If your project will depend on volunteers it will identify who is willing to help.

Check out the proposal form linked below, and submit your completed form **by April 30** to any of the Paddle Call Committee Members.

[Download Paddle Call Proposal Form \(PDF\)](#)

If you have questions or to return a completed form, contact a member of the **Paddle Call Committee**: Stephanie Sarver, Gayle Tilles, Kathryn Allen, and Murray Bennett. See us at the Paddle Call table in the Social Hall on Sunday!

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## BUF Auction: Join the Event Team

**Save the date: October 4, 2025**

Greetings BUF friends! Sign ups are continuing for the 2025 Auction Team. I am grateful for the folks who have stepped forward!!!! We need a few more willing folks to round out our team. Please consider joining the team. Respond by email, [drewlenore@me.com](mailto:drewlenore@me.com) text (360-930-0015) or see me at BUF on Sunday. I am hoping to schedule our first meeting for early May.

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## Social and Environmental Justice

# SEJC's April Special Collections Recipient

## *The Airow Project*



“One organization that fulfills our practice of living together is AIROW: Adaptive & Inclusive Recreation of Whatcom County” —Rev. Paul Beckel, on Earth Day/Easter, April 20, 2025.

The eloquent talk of the founder of Airow Project, April Katz, at the last Sunday service was about how and why the adaptive and inclusive project for disabled children and youth arose (based on her own painful experiences in overcoming barriers), how it was fostered by the dedicated staff and volunteers, and its transforming impact on the youth and their families. All of this moved the full-house at BUF to great applause.

Airow's numerous, adaptive, and unique activities throughout the year altered the lives of these youth (and their families), giving them confidence, independence, and joy for outdoor recreation, resulting in its impact on the whole community.

The newest Summer Camp, with its numerous inclusive experiences and of wider scope covering others, has added value to the program. The cost for Airow is estimated at \$2,800 per camper, for the seven-week program, for which 15 have signed up. (A separate small program costs \$180 with four signed up). Donors can contribute to individual parts such as staffing or equipment. Airow just received notification that the Federal government cut their current year's grant of \$10,000. This adds to their total expenses. So, let us come together and act, giving as much as we can, and fulfill our covenant of inclusiveness and equity beyond BUF. Those who have not given yet or those wanting to give more, remember, the rest of April is available to drop off cash or checks in the BUF Office.

For details and illustrations, please contact April at [aprilkatz@airowproject.org](mailto:aprilkatz@airowproject.org) or visit [theairowproject.org](http://theairowproject.org).

[Learn More](#)

# Social Environmental Justice Committee Spring Meeting

**Sunday, April 27, noon, BUF Library**

All are welcome to attend the Social Environmental Justice Committee's (SEJC) spring meeting. The SEJC supports programs to advance justice, human rights and environmental sustainability through the work of issue-focused Action Teams. The committee also interviews and selects organizations for the monthly Justice Collections that are taken one Sunday each month. It sponsors groups that use our building for events and programs, and we also sell Fair Trade products each Sunday during the coffee hour following the Sunday services. New members are always welcome. Bring your ideas and concerns, and join us next Sunday at noon. Bagels and refreshments will be served.

[Learn More](#)

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## Upcoming Sunday Justice Brainstorming

**April 27, 9:15-10:15am, Conference Room**

**Topic:** Justice and Democracy

These next four years are going to be very difficult, with social and environmental justice issues 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.

Deb Cruz will lead the last of these scheduled brainstorming sessions 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.

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# Invitation to Attend Sunday Justice Collections Decision Meeting

**Wednesday, May 7, Zoom**

This year, the Social and Environmental Justice Committee (SEJC) has decided to open the decision-making about monthly Sunday Justice Collection recipients to all interested members of the congregation.

Participating in this process is no small matter. First, participants are required to read in advance all the applications that have come in from various organizations. Second, all those voting are required to attend the full length (typically 3.5-4.5 hours) meeting, where we hear presentations from each applicant, as well as discuss our criteria and the pros and cons of various applicants. Of course, members of the congregation who wish to participate but not vote do not need to attend the full meeting.

This meeting is held on Zoom to facilitate all the organizational presentations. The meeting will be held beginning at 12:30pm or 1:00pm on Wednesday, May 7. The length of the meeting will depend on the number of applicants.

**If you wish to participate in this meeting and/or vote on applicants, send your name and email address to Kara Black ([kara.black525@gmail.com](mailto:kara.black525@gmail.com) or 360-676-2300 by April 29.** Kara will send you all the materials to review in advance as well as the link to join in the meeting.

[Email to Participate](#)

The committee looks forward to including the congregation in this process.

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## Engagement & Support

# 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.

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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.

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](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.](#)