



Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

Mid-Week Update: **April 16, 2025**

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Engagement & Support

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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 20, 10:30am - Easter and Earth Day - To Rise Together - Rev. Paul Beckel

Our interdependence with one another calls us to lift each other up. Since interpretations of the meaning of Easter vary widely—with some emphasizing punishment instead of reconciliation—it's important to lift up the latter. Likewise, a naturalistic approach to Easter fits with honoring our interdependence with Mother Earth.

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.

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.

[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.

[Register](#)

Events

Community Night Dinner

Wednesday, April 16

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.

Potluck Sunday

Sunday, April 20, Social Hall

Join us on April 20 for another Potluck Sunday, dining in the Social Hall right after the service. The third Sunday falls on Easter this month so you might find a lot of deviled eggs and egg salad on the serving table!

Please bring a generous dish to share if you can, knowing visitors will be invited to join us. You can deliver your donation to the Social Hall before the service begins. Help with take down and clean up is needed this week.

Volunteers needed. The set up duties are covered, but four volunteers are needed to help put away tables and chairs and clean up the serving area after the Potluck this Sunday, April 20. Two of the usual crew can't make it and two have to leave early due to a class. Please volunteer to help. Email Judy Kasper at hospitality@buf.org.

Indivisible Bellingham - Defending Democracy: Understanding the Autocratic Playbook

Monday, April 21, 7:00pm

Indivisible Bellingham (IB) will host Jim Ace of the Troublemakers presenting “Defending Democracy: Understanding the Autocratic Playbook.” The event builds on the content of the last few IB “All Hands” meetings at BUF and the April 5 rally at City Hall. Rooted in recent examples from around the world, the training offers frameworks to go beyond “calling your congressional rep” and act with purpose to protect the people, freedoms, and institutions we love.

Questions? Call Michael Berres at 360-393-6802.

Earth Day Service - We Are One: Kinship with the Earth, Humanity, and the Natural World

Tuesday, April 22, 6:30pm-8:30pm



We Are One
Kinship with the Earth, Humanity, and the Natural World

Swil Kanim
Mark Nichols
Lummi Blackhawk Singers and Dancers
Tim Burnet, Red Cedar Zen Center
Autumn Selkie, Whatcom Pagans
Andrea Shupack, Congregation Beth Israel
Spring Cheng & Daelina
Peter Ali
and other guests . . .

Story Telling, Poetry, Music,
Singing, and Reflection,
Engagement, and Taking Action

ASL Interpretive Services

April 22, 2025
6:30-8:30 pm

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship
1207 Ellsworth St., Bellingham

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/738363620>
ID 738 363 620, password BUF

Donations will be collected
and accepted for the
Gathering of the Eagles



Checks to Friends of the San Juan, Memo: Gathering of the Eagles
Mail to: Friends of the San Juans, c/o Gathering of the Eagles, PO Box 1344, Friday Harbor, WA 98250

A night of storytelling, poetry, music, singing, reflection, engagement, and taking action. Featuring Swil Kanim; Mark Nichols' Lummi Blackhawk singers and dancers; Tim Burnet, Red Cedar Zen Center; Autumn Selkie, Whatcom Pagans; Andrea Shupack, Congregation Beth Israel; Spring Cheng & Daelina; Peter Ali; and other guests.

Join us in person or via Zoom. ASL interpretive services available.

Use this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/738363620>

Passcode = BUF / 738 363 620

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.

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 or Jeff Copeland at jeff.copeland@gmail.com.

Alohas: Hellos and Goodbyes

Highlighting BUF Members

Meet, greet, and bid adieu to BUF Members in this recurring MWU section

Meet David Shirey



My name is David Shirey, and I'm proud to have been a UU since 2012. I was born and baptized a Presbyterian, but I could never understand as a child why someone had to die for my sins. To be honest, I still don't understand that, which is why I drifted away from organized religion for many years as an adult.

In 2001 I moved to Reno, NV in order to be closer to, and help out, my aging parents. However, when they had both died by 2011, I felt lost. My sister suggested that maybe I could try a religious community of some sort, but...luckily, she came across the Unitarian

Universalist Fellowship of Northern Nevada, which captured my head AND my heart after my first visit there. I had found a spiritual home!

So when I moved to Bellingham earlier this year to be near my nephew and his family in Sedro-Woolley, the first thing I did was look up BUF and read everything I could before I left Reno. And wouldn't you know, I was welcomed with open arms once again, by a community of like-minded individuals who recognize that it's not what you SAY that counts in life, it's what you actually DO with the life you have.

And once again, I've found a home.

—David Reeb Shirey

(And yes, the Reverend James Reeb was a cousin of my mother's. I guess I was destined all along to be a Unitarian!)

Stewardship

Help Solve a Serious Shortage

With most of our pledges in and about 3/4 of follow-up finished, we are still **\$20,000 short** of our goal for 2025-26. This is a serious problem. Our goal is \$365,000, which will let us continue what we're doing this year and cover some of the expenses of hiring an interim minister. As of April 12, we had \$345,000 in promised pledges.

Our average per-person pledge is up by a little over 1%, but so far we have fewer pledgers this year. That's why we're \$20,000 short. It doesn't seem like much, but our budget is bare bones already. So this final \$20,000 is REALLY important. It will make a very large difference in what we are able to do next year.

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. Call Michelle at the office, or 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 this **final \$20,000** in! stewardship@buf.org.

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

Lee Seaman, for the Stewardship Team

[Make a Pledge](#)

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!

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 text (360-930-0015) or see me at BUF on Sunday. I am hoping to schedule our first meeting for early May.

Social and Environmental Justice

SEJC's April Special Collections Recipient
The Airow Project



[The Airow Project](#) enables recreational opportunities accessible to individuals with disabilities, thereby promoting inclusion, diversity and community. To fulfill these goals, the non-profit has developed programs such as the Ski Program and Community Engagement to adapt to their needs. They raise funds by offering these experiences for a fee, selling T-shirts and hats and other fundraising events. This year, they need grants to fund the upcoming Summer Camp.

Contact April Katz, Executive Director at aprilkatz@theairowproject.com or 360-788-3099.

Please attend the BUF service on April 20, and contribute generously to enable individuals with disabilities to attend summer camp and access outdoor sports. Remember, you can contribute throughout this month at the BUF Office.



[Learn More](#)

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.

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 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.

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.

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.](#)