



# Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

Mid-Week Update: **May 15, 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, May 18, 10:30am - Comfort the Afflicted/Afflict the Comfortable –**  
**Rev. Paul Beckel**

This juxtaposition is most frequently expressed in reference to the pastoral vs. justice functions of a congregation's mission. Today, since we will hold our Annual Congregational Meeting following the service, I'll offer some reflections on the phrase related to interpersonal skills, and group dynamics, that I will encourage you to consider in the coming months—when lay-leadership will be at the center in your living out the BUF covenant.

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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 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

### Bellingham Co-Housing Site Tour

**Saturday, May 17, 10:00am, Bellingham Co-Housing Common House**

Bellingham Co-Housing is celebrating 25 years of building community! Join BUF members Barbara & Jaco ten Hove for a site tour (including Jaco's famous composting station) this Saturday, May 17 in the Common House (2614 Donovan Ave). There will be coffee, tea and snacks from 10:00-11:00am followed by a brief introduction to the site and tours.

For more information, contact Barbara at [revbabs10@gmail.com](mailto:revbabs10@gmail.com).

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### Interfaith Coalition Spring Fundraiser: Comedy and Cobbler

**Saturday, May 17, 7:00pm, Bellingham High School**

Enjoy an evening of Improv with the Upfront Theatre followed by feasting on a variety of delicious fruit cobblers. The event will be held at Bellingham High School on Saturday, May 17 at 7:00pm.

Tickets: \$50

[Buy Tickets](#)

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### Annual Congregational Meeting

**Sunday, May 18, 12:00pm, BUF Sanctuary**

If you can't make this meeting in person, you may attend via Zoom:  
<https://zoom.us/j/738363620>

Passcode: BUF

This is an important event and we hope that all members will attend. Childcare will be provided in the flex room.

Names of members are posted outside the entrance to the Sanctuary. If your name is not listed, please contact Michelle immediately.

[Click here to read the Agenda, Candidates for the Board and Nominating Committee, and the Proposed Budget.](#) There have been recent updates to the proposed budget to reflect changes made possible by additional pledges received.

[See Agenda](#)

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## Bellingham Ukulele Orchestra Spring Concert

**Monday, May 19, 7:00pm, BUF**

The Bellingham Ukulele Orchestra invites our community to their spring concert on Monday, May 19 at BUF. The event is free and will be a colorful expression of music and song.



# Outdoor Work Party

**Saturday, May 24, 9:00am-12:00pm, BUF**

This is an invitation to participate in an outdoor work party at BUF Saturday, May 24 with the goal of keeping BUF looking clean, attractive, and tidy as summer approaches.

We will be doing general cleanup, lawn care, pruning, trimming, weeding, sweeping, and other gardening tasks. Bring gloves, your favorite gardening tools, and choose the task that appeals to you. Arrive and leave as you wish. BUF will provide some tools, and coffee.

Contact Ron Quinn, Jim Reimer, or Michelle Fox for further information.

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# George Floyd Memorial

**Sunday, May 25, following the worship service, Fouts Park**

On May 25 five years ago, Officer Derek Chauvin of the Minneapolis Police Department kneeled on the neck of George Floyd for more than nine minutes until he died. In 2022, Kristina Martens and BUF BLM organized a community gathering in the park to remember George Floyd by nine minutes of silence, and to raise funds for a memorial bench, two plaques, and a tree. This is now an annual BUF tradition.

On Sunday, May 25, immediately after the worship service, we will hold our fourth memorial, in circumstances that make community celebration unfitting. Please join us at the bench for nine moments of silence and a chance to recommit ourselves to racial diversity, equity, and inclusion.

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# UPLIFT Updates & Pride Events

## *LGBTQIA+ Voices at BUF and Beyond*

We encourage everyone to participate in some of the many upcoming Pride events:

- **May 31** - [Youth Pride in Bellingham](#)

- **July 12-13** - [Bellingham Pride](#)
- **July 19-20** - Ferndale Pride
  - July 19 - Educational event and happy hour
  - July 20 - Whatcom Library Pride in the Park at Pioneer Park

Also, all are welcome to join the UPLIFT Committee. How can you be involved?

- **Attend team meetings: first Sunday of every month at noon.** Email Grace Nyblade at [gnyblade@gmail.com](mailto:gnyblade@gmail.com) if you want to be added to the email list for meetings. All events are announced here in the MWU and other communications from BUF.
- **Volunteer!** We would love to include you. Email committee co-chairs Grace (see email address above) or Natalie at [NatalieLJohnson53@gmail.com](mailto:NatalieLJohnson53@gmail.com)

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## Sunday Potlucks Return in June

### NO MAY POTLUCK

Due to an important Congregational Meeting after the service on May 18, there will not be a Third Sunday Potluck this month. Our **next gathering will take place on June 15.**

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## Celebrate Rev. Paul's Retirement from BUF and Ministry

**Saturday, June 21, 6:00-8:30pm & Sunday, June 22, 10:25am**

Memories and appreciation of Rev. Paul's ministry will be compiled and shared with him.

Want to share a short vignette or photos? Please share them **by Sunday, June 14.**

- Email short vignettes to Barbara ten Hove at [revbabs10@gmail.com](mailto:revbabs10@gmail.com)
- Email photos from BUF events over the past 11 years to [walt@buf.org](mailto:walt@buf.org)

Cards and gifts may be brought to the event at BUF.

Volunteers are still needed to help with the Saturday evening event. If you can provide flowers, dessert, make lasagna (regular or gluten free), or help with set-up or clean-up, please contact Genia Allen-Schmid at [geniaas@gmail.com](mailto:geniaas@gmail.com).

Please mark your calendars to attend both meaningful events in honor of Paul's long ministry at BUF and his retirement from 30 years of active UU ministry.

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## Interim Minister Update

As you know, Paul – our beloved minister of 11 years – is retiring. At the same time we are saying our goodbyes to him, the Transition Team (Claire Lending, Hank Ohana and Lin Skavdahl) is working with the Unitarian Universalist Association, our national organization, to choose an interim minister.

Unlike the Settled Minister Search Team who is elected by the congregation and spends an entire year looking for a minister, the Transition Team is appointed by the BUF Board and has only a few months to work with the UUA who ultimately chooses our best fit. We do have input, including interviewing and checking references, but it is the UUA who makes the selection. If all goes as planned, the potential minister is approved by the board and, as per UUA recommendations, serves for two years beginning August 1. If the board does not approve the choice, the Transition Team goes back to the UUA and we begin again. We are hoping for a successful match the first time around. This week, the Transition Team is conducting interviews and checking references. We hope to have news within two weeks.

–Thank you for your trust,  
Lin Skavdahl

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## Alohas: Hellos and Goodbyes

### Highlighting BUF Members

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

## Adieu Gil Baker

We are sorry to share the news that long time member Gil Baker passed on Monday, May 12 surrounded by his loving family. He had “the most peaceful passing one could ask for,” as described by his compassionate wife Ginny. A celebration of his life will be held later this summer.

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## Meet Diane Groody



As a 30-year member of CUUF in Wenatchee, WA, I am delighted to find a new home at BUF. I am mother to Sergei and Leo, grandmother to Andre and Alex; a world traveler and life-long learner, who enjoyed careers as a geologist, a child-family counselor and a college research professor; Now, blessedly retired, I am loving the coastal climate and the warmth, diversity, openness and depth found at BUF.

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## Celebration of Life: Leslie McFee

**Friday, May 30, 2:00pm, BUF**

Beloved, long time BUF member Leslie McFee passed away recently. She had moved to the Yukon only days before. Join us for an informal celebration of her life.

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## Social and Environmental Justice

SEJC's May Special Collections Recipient  
*Bellingham Queer Collective*





The [Bellingham Queer Collective \(BQC\)](#) connects, celebrates, unites, and advocates for the LGBTQ+ and BIPOC communities. The BQC started in 2022 and grew into a nonprofit organization, supporting over 3,000 people in Bellingham and beyond. The BQC is improving the Social Health of the queer community through arts, movement, nature, service, and belonging.

The BQC, partnering with Northwest Youth Services, opened the first LGBTQ+ community center, between Seattle and Canada, last year. The BQC is growing and just obtained their own long term lease and moved into a new space in March.

The BQC Community Center space is a free, queer, 3rd Space for the 18+ community. Hosting peer-led groups including identity, recovery, social, and interest groups. They hold wellness and educational workshops, including fentanyl overdose awareness.

This all-volunteer organization relies on community contributions only. All funds collected support rent and operations. Immediate needs include purchasing basic furniture, equipment, and safety features including security cameras, window film, and new door hardware. Donations today will significantly impact the BQC June Pride Fundraiser Campaign titled "Unite and Thrive in 2025; Let's Raise \$30,000 in 30 Days."

[Learn More](#)

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## Humanitas

### Humanitas Update

Elizabeth came to us requesting money for the Airporter to SeaTac. She had been able to secure a round trip ticket to Richmond, VA, to be present at the birth of her first grandchild, but just needed this bit of extra help. She told how for many years she had been a successful preschool teacher in Marin County (CA) until required surgery left her in excruciating pain leading her to addiction to painkillers. It took years to get sober

resulting in years of homelessness and estrangement from her family, including the daughter who will be giving birth. St. Paul's bought her ticket to SeaTac; [Humanitas](#) bought the return ticket home (\$61).

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## Engagement & Support

### Meal Train for Barbara Gilday

Barbara Gilday has been battling heart issues and pneumonia. She was in the hospital but is now home, and could use our help with meals for the rest of this month. Please [sign up here](#) or email [Annie Sorich](#) and she will sign you up.

[Sign Up](#)

Notes:

- Gluten-free and low on dairy
- No more than 2 servings
- No soup, please

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### Lend a Quilt for Display in Sanctuary

If you have a quilt you would like to lend to BUF for two to three months, it would be displayed on the wall behind the podium, for everyone to enjoy. If you are interested in sharing your works of art, please send a photo to [admin@buf.org](mailto:admin@buf.org) for consideration.

[Share Your Art](#)

A huge thank you to Drew Betz for her beautiful contribution of the quilt that is currently hanging behind the podium. It is appropriately called "Dancing Birds" that brings the Spring time in for us all to enjoy.

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# 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.](#)