



Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

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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, June 22, 10:30am - To BUF: What brought me? What did I bring? What will I take with me? – Rev. Paul Beckel

I'll address these questions directly, but mostly all of this will be conveyed through a collaborative feast of music, others' reflections, and a ritual of leave-taking. It will mean so much to me to have you there!

Sunday, June 29, 10:30am – Sing DE!DE! Songs that celebrate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - Rev. Barbara ten Hove

Delight, Energy and Inspiration. Led by Rev. Barbara with the Celebrant Team and Andrea Rackl, keyboard artist.

Sunday, July 6, 10:30am - A Crazy Quilt Religion: Exploring UU Theology through a Creative Lens - Rev. Barbara ten Hove

Led by Revs. Barbara & Jaco ten Hove with Marsha Vollkommer, celebrant, and Melanie Reick, keyboard artist.

Monday, July 7, 7:00pm - Taizé

The July Taizé will focus on Rest. Join us for a meditative service either in the sanctuary or on Zoom.

Sunday, July 13, 10:30am - Let's Talk About It! - Rebecca and Erika Crichton

A presentation by mother-daughter duo, Rebecca and Erika Crichton, with guidance and insights for how we can openly talk about issues related to aging and end of life. With Steffany Raynes, celebrant and Melanie Reick, keyboard artist.

Words from Paul

It's said that most ministers have only two basic sermons—which they deliver over and over. Ideally, these are adapted each time to their specific moment ... for their particular set of people... and are presented with an integrity and authenticity uniquely resonant to that minister's voice and life.

For me, the two sermons that fulfilled all of these criteria in previous congregations were:

- *We Can Do This, Together (and Look, We Did!)*
- *Here are Some Interesting Perspectives to Consider regarding XYZ...*

But so much has changed. The places and the people and the times have changed. I have changed. I'm curious what you have experienced as the two sermons I've delivered over and over here at BUF. Here's what it's felt like for me:

- *Here We are Again, Living with Uncertainty*
- *We're Growing Strong as We Grow into Beloved Community*

~ ~ ~

Maybe this is why two things I heard this past week have jumped out at me. Please carry them with you, as my blessing, as you live them into being:

First, these words—regarding inclusion and leadership—by Shauna Niequist:

True hospitality is when someone leaves your home feeling better about themselves, not better about you.

Second, these words—regarding spirit, and honoring the gift of our lives—were Su Livingston's chalice lighting from last Sunday's Flower Communion:

We live in moments that change into new moments.

The vivid blooms of rhodies had turned brown before the iris in my garden rose electric purple and yellow. Once the peonies burst open, the iris had shrunk to sticky papyrus husks. As the peonies drop their petals in profusion to blow about, apples are beginning to blush, and cherries darken.

This is the impermanence of life and the power of now. These moments that flourish and fade remind me to be awake and soak in all I can as they unfold. Because the life of flowers, like each day of childhood, like love, like health—does not wait.

It invites us in, as it happens, to be part of the dance. We light our flaming chalice to life's transience, worthy of all our attention.

Thank you, beloveds,
Paul

Religious Education

Children's Religious Education

Summer Childcare beginning June 29

Summer Childcare, led by Lucy Major, will begin on June 29 and will be similar to the regular school year, with all ages together in the Flex Room. They will begin in the service and will be prompted to go upstairs when it is time.

- **K-8** - Children who will be in K-8 in the Fall will read stories and do arts and crafts with Lucy and their team
- **Pre-K (2-4y)** - Children 2-4 years of age can go to the Pre-K room, also upstairs, where we have two adults supervising.

Parents are also welcome to stay with their children if they wish, or stay to enjoy the rest of the service. Pick-up is upstairs at 11:45am (enjoy some coffee first if you have time).

At BUF, families sit anywhere in the sanctuary that meets their needs and many sit near the children's rug in the front. The Wiggle Room is also available if you need it (The Wiggle Room is at the back of the sanctuary and has toys for younger children, chairs and hymnals for adults, and a large window and speaker to hear the service).

Lis Epperson, RE Coordinator, is available this summer, supporting Lucy and the summer team and preparing for the upcoming year, which starts on September 7. You can reach her at RE@BUF.org.

Admin & Interim Minister Update

Transitional Support Minister Hired

Rev. Dr. Barbara Wells ten Hove

Since we were sadly unsuccessful in finding an Interim Minister, and are currently unsure when a contract minister may be hired, the BUF board has asked retired UU minister, Rev. Dr. Barbara Wells ten Hove, to provide quarter-time transitional support ministry June 29-September 30. She formerly served BUF as Sabbatical Minister and this role will be similar as she will manage the Sunday services, provide supervision and support for the staff, and generally offer ministerial advice and experience.

Rev. Barbara has been a UU minister for 40 years and is glad to offer support to this congregation that has been so welcoming of her in retirement.

The board is also creating an Interim Operations Team to provide guidance to the congregation as we navigate this time of change. They will oversee general day to day administrative, program, and ministry functions of BUF.

New Interim Operations Team Formed

In anticipation of Paul's retirement in late June, the BUF Board of Trustees has voted to create a new Interim Operations Team to provide support to our administrator, Michelle, and offer general oversight on the many day-to-day functions at BUF. The Interim Operations Team replaces the existing operations committee, and will exist for two years. It will steer BUF on a steady track and provide support when a new contract minister joins BUF.

The Interim Operations Team will include our administrator Michelle Fox, Board members Natalie Johnson and Ahwren Ayers, and John Stewart and Lucy Kesterson. Cindy Denchfield and Todd Jones have also agreed to join. The team will select a leader and recommend additional members to the Board as needed.

Thanks to the outgoing members of the Operations Committee – Jim Reimer, Deb Cruz, and of course, Paul Beckel – for their contributions to BUF.

Events

Community Night Dinner *Last CND until September*

Wednesday, June 18, 6:00pm, BUF

Don't miss this week's CND. Enjoy soup, bread, salad, and dessert!

The dinners will resume again in September.

We're Celebrating Rev. Paul's Retirement

Saturday, June 21, Send-Off Party (Dinner and Program), 5:50pm-8:30pm

Sunday, June 22, Service, 10:20am-noon

The **Saturday Send-Off Party** includes a Lasagna Dinner and Program celebrating Paul's 30 years of ministry. We've got the lasagnas and desserts covered thanks to so many people stepping up. If you are bringing a lasagna, have it hot and at BUF by 5:50. We'll have a special dessert table set up for your dessert contributions as well. Don't forget to label your dishes/plates!

Flowers, blossoms and buds!

We still need flowers of any size, shape, and color to decorate the social hall and sanctuary for Paul's Send-Off. We'll be at BUF to collect your fragrant offerings this Friday afternoon, June 20, from 4:00pm to 6:00pm, and Saturday morning (June 2) from 9:30am to 10:00am. For questions, contact Genia at geniaas@gmail.com.

The Sunday, June 22 Service will include the BUF choir, speakers, and Rev. Paul sharing last words in honor of his years in ministry and at BUF. Please make it a priority to attend!

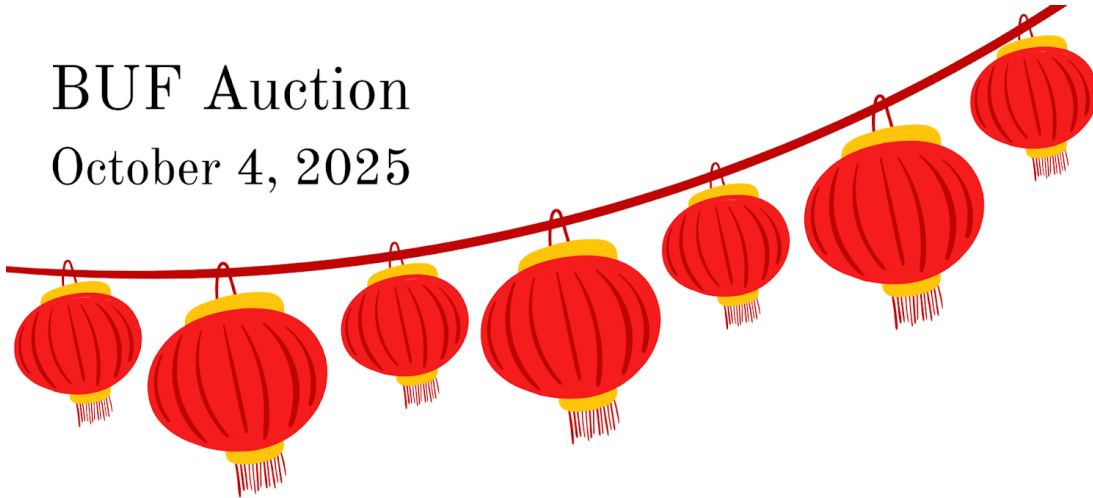
Individual cards and gifts may be brought to BUF at the Saturday event. Contributions to the congregational gift may be sent by check to BUF or given in cash to Barbara ten Hove or Jeff Copeland. Or donate online! Many thanks.

Let's make this Send-Off a fun and meaningful goodbye to Rev. Paul and Jane!

Auction Update: Save the Date & Donate

BUF Auction

October 4, 2025



Mark your calendars for October 4 and plan to attend this year's BUF Auction. [Visit our website to purchase your tickets](#); your \$35 per person admission includes a professionally catered dinner and childcare for those who need it!

We're seeking auction donations of Gatherings, Tours, Services, Meals, Gift Cards, Trips, and Fine Crafted Items. [Complete the form on the website to submit your donation](#), or talk to a member of the auction team in the social hall after a Sunday service. We've already had a few donations, including a huge spaghetti dinner, four hours of childcare, and a private in-home concert. What can you add to our growing list of auction items? There will be plenty of ways to get involved; more information on volunteering for the auction will be shared next month.

[Learn More](#)

News

Attention Choir Members

Attention current and former members of BUF Choir: It's the end of the choir season, which means it's time to gather and file our choir music. If you have music from this year (or any previous years), please return it to the marked box in the Choir Room by June 23. After that date, the box will be moved to the coatroom and you can return your music there. —Kjerstie Nelson, Choir Librarian

MWU Summer Schedule

MWU will move to an every other week schedule starting this week and resume the weekly schedule on August 27. **The first Wednesday with NO distribution will be June 26.** Submit by Monday at noon before a Wednesday distribution. Submit your content in the body of an email to mwu@buf.org.

Summer distribution dates and submission deadlines:

- **Wednesday, July 2** | Submit by Monday, June 30
- **Wednesday, July 16** | Submit by Monday, July 14
- **Wednesday, July 30** | Submit by Monday, July 28
- **Wednesday, August 13** | Submit by Monday, August 11
- **Wednesday, August 27** | Submit by Monday, August 25

[Submit to MWU](#)

Alohas: Hellos and Goodbyes

Highlighting BUF Members

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

Alohas of Farewell to Frank and Sue McDonald



The McDonalds are moving to Grand Junction, Colorado. They became Bellinghamsters in 2010, to be near their grandchildren. The McDonalds were very active at BUF, both Frank and Sue on the Hospitality Team, and Frank on the church board for one term, and the Finance Team. Now that the grandkids are grown, it's time for a new adventure. Frank has family in Grand Junction, and their new UU church is

walking distance from the senior center. Both Frank and Sue will miss all their dear friends in the BUF community.

Meet BUF Board Member Jim Shaver



I came to BUF to connect and meet with a community of like-minded people, and, along with my wife and our youngest son, moved to Bellingham from Spokane in 2019 to be near our older son and his partner. I am a professional gardener, a writer, and an avid volunteer with the Bellingham Parks/WNPS Stewardship work party program and with Humanitas here at BUF. The people at BUF are why I decided to join, and I am proud to be a member of a fellowship that is striving to do so much good in our world today!

Social and Environmental Justice

SEJC's June Special Collections Recipient *PFLAG*



The mission of [PFLAG \(Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays\)](https://pflag.org/)

is to act as the bridge between straight and queer communities. The [Transgender Assistance Fund](#), a collaboration between PFLAG Bellingham/Whatcom and PFLAG Skagit, will utilize the SEJC collection to provide members of the transgender community with the direly needed financial resources. The organization has a speakers' bureau to help the straight community understand and support the queer and transgender community.

The Bellingham Whatcom chapter hosts meetings every Tuesday of the month, 5:30-7:00pm. For more information, email info@pflagwhatcom.org or call 360-255-3408.

[Learn More](#)

Please contribute to PFLAG anytime during this month.

Stewardship

Pledge Drive Update

Great news — we just reached our pledge drive goal of \$365,000! This is a huge accomplishment, and puts our fellowship in a stronger position as we support each other, reach out to the larger community around us, and search for our new minister. Heartfelt thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make this happen: canvassers, follow-up team, staff and volunteers who provided background support, and everyone who stepped up with their pledge, their encouragement, their support, and their commitment to our shared mission.

Thank you so much!
Lee Seaman, Stewardship Co-Chair

UPLIFT

UPLIFT T-Shirt Delivery

Sunday, June 22, after Service

Our UPLIFT t-shirts will be available a week earlier than anticipated. Please plan to pick up your shirts after service next Sunday, June 22. Cindy Denchfield and Natalie Johnson will be distributing them just outside the Sanctuary.

Please wear your t-shirts the following Sunday, June 29, for service. We will be called to stand together in a show of solidarity. If everyone wears their shirts, we will have upwards of 50 people united in their support of the LGBTQIA+ community! What a powerful statement about BUF and its commitment to queer people.

Engagement & Support

Lunch with Paul Becomes Lunch for All

Tuesdays, noon, Social Hall

This week sadly was the last "Lunch with Paul." However, the social gathering can continue even without the presence of our beloved minister. **Next Tuesday, June 24, will be the first "Lunch for All"** hosted by Mark Allyn. Please join us at noon in the social hall for food and conversation. This will still be a bring-your-own lunch as it was with Lunch with Paul. We hope this will be the beginning of a new tradition.

Questions? Contact Mark Allyn at allyn@well.com.

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 “**\$10**” to donate \$10 to the collection basket
- Text “**\$10 SEJC**” to send your contribution to this month’s SEJC recipient
- Text “**\$10 Taize**” to support BUF’s Taizé ministry
- Text “**\$10 CND**” for Community Night Dinners
- Text “**\$10 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 account 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.](#)