



Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

Mid-Week Update: **August 13, 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, August 17, 10:30am - Sustaining Rhythm - Led by Su Livingston with Rev. Barbara ten Hove; Melanie Reick, keyboard artist

The rhythms we sustain in our lives, that also sustain us, deepen when we return and revisit them. This service will explore how.

Sunday, August 24, 10:30am - The Great Wheel Turns - Led by Patricia Conover and Rev. Barbara ten Hove.

"The Great Wheel Turns," refers to the shifting of the earth and sky as we move toward fall. It is a particularly reflective time (and service) considering the issues of transition, letting go of the "freedom" of summer, all in the context of the rotating earth against the heavens. How do you struggle against the turning of the wheel or change in general?

Sunday, August 31, 10:30am - Work and Its Rewards - Led by Tom Nicholas and Carrie Koehnlne, with contributions from BUF members and friends.

In acknowledgement of Labor Day, we will explore ways that work can bring meaning into our lives (or not). This service will be Andrea Rackl's last in her role as BUF pianist, so we will honor the work she has done for us. And Lin Skavdahl, the president of the board, will make an announcement about ministerial leadership plans for the fall.

Sunday, September 7, 10:30am - Water Communion Service - Rev. Dr. Barbara Wells ten Hove

Please bring some special water from your summer to share in our annual service. More info about the service to come.

Taize - Monday, October 6, 7:00pm

Carrie Koehnlne and Steffany Raynes coordinate these services in BUF's Sanctuary and on Zoom.

We are committed to continuing to bring Taize to this community and are hoping we will find just the right musician soon. In the meantime, we are cancelling Taize for September ONLY. Thank you for your support of this ministry.

Words from the Transitional Minister

Fall is Coming! Here are some dates to remember.

- **Wednesday, September 3 – Choir Practice begins.** Note the new start time of 6:30pm! Everyone who likes to sing is welcome to join in. NOTE: Community Night Dinner does not begin until October 1 (see below for more info). Questions about choir? Contact Choir Director Ben Workman-Smith at choir@BUF.org.
- **Sunday, September 7 – Water Communion All-Ages Service.** Please bring a small sample of water to mingle with others at this cherished service. There will be extra water if you forget. We will also do a Backpack Blessing for kids.

- **Sunday, September 14 – In-Gathering Service with Choir on the theme “We Begin Again in Love.”** The Religious Explorers Program for grades Pre-K through 8th grade begins. For more information, please contact Lis Epperson at re@buf.org.
- **Wednesday, October 1 – Community Night Dinners Return.** Note the new start time – 5:45pm. Helpers are needed to make this important part of BUF continue strong. If you can help in any way, please contact Jen Villalva at jennifermvillalva@gmail.com.

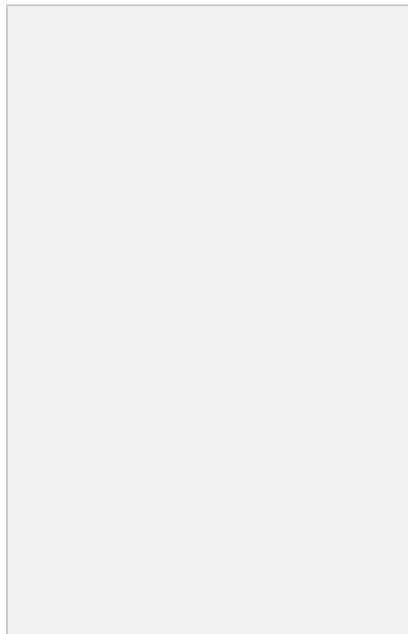
—Rev. Barbara ten Hove, Transitional Minister

Religious Education

Children’s Religious Education

School Year Kick-Off

Sunday, September 7



Summer Religious Explorers ends on August 31 and the regular school year begins for the BUF Religious Explorers on Sunday, September 7. We will kick off the new school year with three exciting events happening that day - an open house, backpack blessing, and water communion!

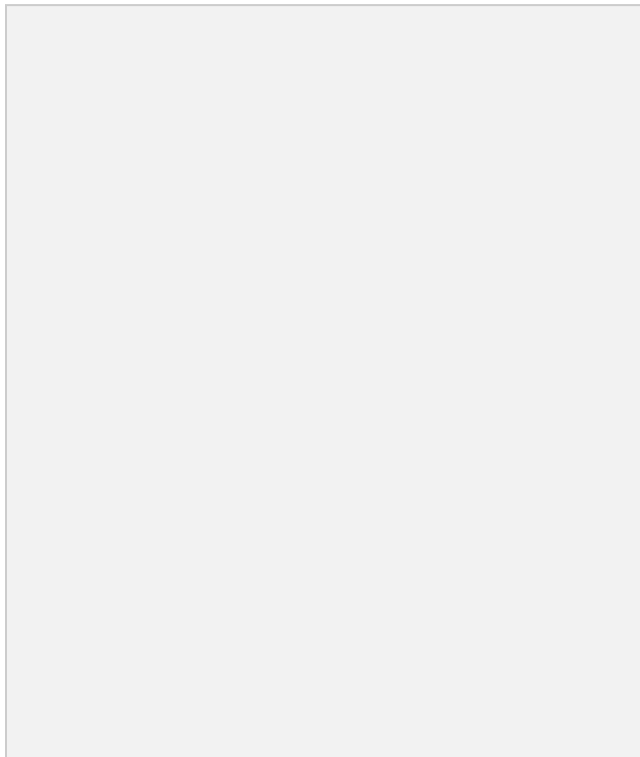
9:15am - Open House in the Flex Room - You and your family are invited to say hello to familiar faces and meet our new Child/Youth Religious Explorer volunteers at our Open House! We will do introductions, you will get to see the curriculum and the space, and have coffee/tea and pastries.

Backpack Blessing (kids, bring your backpacks!) + **Water Communion** During the service on September 7

Family Camp-Out

September 13-14, Katrina & Abe Lloyd-Poppe's Place

Save the Date: the Family Camp-Out is happening September 13-14! This event is for families of all kinds with children and teens. There will be a camp lantern craft, a potluck, and a "campfire" circle with songs and stories. Contact Lis at RE@buf.org for more information, and look out for an email with more details including a suggested packing list!



–Lis Epperson, RE Coordinator: RE@BUF.org

Adult Religious Education

From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians - Jim Reimer

4 sessions - Sundays, September 7-28, 12:15-1:45pm, Flex Room

From Jesus to Christ traces the rise of Christianity, explore the life and death of Jesus, and the men and women whose conviction and martyrdom created the religion we now know as Christianity. Archaeological finds have yielded new understandings of Jesus' class and social status. Fresh interpretations offer new perspectives on the identity of the early Christian communities. Drawing upon historical evidence, the series challenges assumptions about Christian origins.

This course will shed light on one of the historical sources of our Unitarian Universalist faith, which began as a liberal Christian denomination several hundred years ago. Four video sessions with facilitated discussion. Feel free to bring a snack. Scholarships are available.

[Register](#)

Events

Potluck at Whatcom Falls Park

Sponsored by UPLIFT

Saturday, August 16, 5:00-8:00pm, Whatcom Falls Park

Come enjoy a late-Summer potluck at Whatcom Falls Park, sponsored by UPLIFT. We'll gather this coming Saturday, August 16, from 5:00 to 8:00. As shown on the [map](#), we are in the covered picnic shelter near the restrooms. We're in the trees, somewhat hidden.

Come hang out with new and old friends, throw a frisbee, walk the trails. Enjoy! There's always good food and good conversation!

[See a map of the area here.](#)

Ice Cream Social at BUF

Sponsored by Hospitality Team

Saturday, August 23, 2:00-4:00pm, BUF Social Hall and Patio

The Hospitality Team will be serving up scoops of vanilla ice cream and a variety of toppings at this almost-the-end of summer gathering on Saturday ,August 23 from 2:00pm to 4:00pm. There will be chairs and canopies set up on the patio for your comfort while you enjoy your sundae and the fellowship of other BUFsters. All ages are welcome.

News

Job Posting: Keyboard Artist

As most of you probably know, our beloved Andrea Rackl is retiring from her Keyboard Artist position at BUF after 23 years. We now are accepting applications for one or more persons to provide music during many Sunday services throughout the church year and for the monthly Taizé service.

[Here is the link to the job posting on the BUF website.](#) This document describes the details of each job and directions on how to apply.

Hiring Team: Barbara Ellis-Quinn, Rev. Barbara Wells ten Hove, Tessie Mandeville, Carrie Koehnlne, Gayle Tilles, Ben Workman Smith

[Learn More](#)

BUF Office Closure

The BUF Office is closed this week, August 10-16.

Summer hours will continue next week:

Monday - Closed
Tuesday-Thursday - 10:00am-2:00pm
Friday - Closed

If you would like to meet outside these hours, please schedule with Michelle at admin@buf.org.

Please note that BUF will also be closed September 1, in recognition of the holiday.

MWU Summer Schedule

MWU is currently on an every-other-week schedule and will resume the weekly schedule on August 27. 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, August 27** | Submit by Monday, August 25

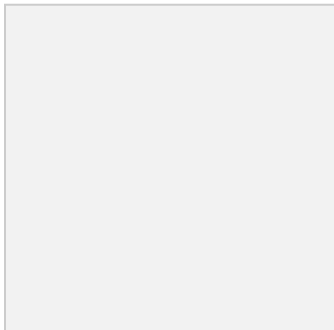
[Submit to MWU](#)

Alohas: Hellos and Goodbyes

Highlighting BUF Members

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

Thank you from Ginny Baker



Thank you to everyone who lent a hand during Gil Baker's Celebration of Life. I gave a personal thanks to many but there were several people who volunteered when they saw a need. Some of those people I noticed and some I did not. Please know that was deeply appreciated and helped make the day so special. It does take a village and you're the best.
—Ginny

Humanitas

[Humanitas](#) is a ministry action team supported by individual contributions from members of the BUF congregation. The program provides financial assistance as an expression of community service and operates in alignment with our Covenant:

“Love is the spirit of this fellowship and service gives it life.”

Humanitas operates on a weekly basis to assist individuals experiencing financial difficulties, whether these challenges stem from unforeseen circumstances, prior decisions, or struggles to meet essential expenses. Recent economic and political developments have contributed to increased demand.

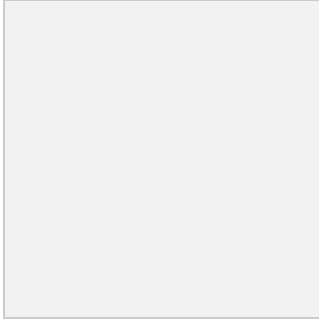
Humanitas volunteers listen, offer a safe, non-judgmental environment, and provide limited emergency support when possible. When needs exceed available funds, guests are referred to our comprehensive support network that includes St. Paul’s Alms Ministry, St. Vincent de Paul Society at Sacred Heart, Hillcrest Chapel, and Interfaith Coalition. Pledges are then combined to address these larger needs. Through the generosity of donors and volunteers in 2024, this network provided around \$100,000 in support to the Community.

Services are available to guests on Wednesdays from 10:00 to 11:00am.

Social and Environmental Justice

SEJC’s August Special Collections Recipient *Bellingham Food Bank*

Because hunger is unacceptable, the [Bellingham Food Bank](#) (BFB) has, since 1972, provided free food to hungry people in Whatcom County while addressing the root causes of hunger in our communities.



Today BFB provides food to 5,000 families weekly with its Free Grocery Program, Drive Thru, and Home Deliveries. Through the Whatcom County Food Bank Network, BFB also is the food distribution center for Whatcom County.

When Federal SNAP funds (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) were cut in 2021, BFB's weekly visits jumped from 1,700 families to 3,500. The new federal budget will cut SNAP funds further. The following funds have already been eliminated:

1. Local Food Purchase Assistance, providing \$180,000 to purchase food from local farmers
2. Emergency Food and Shelter Program, providing \$50,000
3. The Commodity Credit Corporation, providing \$650,000 worth of emergency assistance food

Washington is maintaining State funding, but new federal funding cuts bring huge challenges for hungry people and to BFB in its work to alleviate hunger. Learn more about BFB at bellinghamfoodbank.org, sign up for their newsletter, or arrange a tour.

BFB proclaims "Food justice is social justice" and does not have proof of address or ID requirements to receive food! BUFsters' generosity is much appreciated.

[Learn More](#)

Engagement & Support

Join a Chalice Circle

Need to feel more connected at BUF? If you are new to BUF or just want to feel more deeply connected, consider joining a [Chalice Circle](#)—small groups designed to help participants deepen connection and expand personal and spiritual growth. We will be placing people into existing groups or new chalice circles early in September. If you are interested, please contact Kathryn Allen at kasavelie@aol.com or Bonnie Phinney at bonnie_phinney@hotmail.com.

[Learn More](#)

Lunch for All

Tuesdays, noon, Social Hall

Join fellow BUFsters **for a "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.

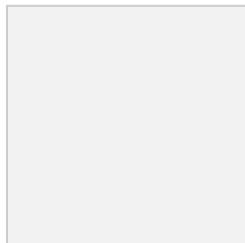
Questions? Contact Mark Allyn at allyn@well.com.

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.](#)