



Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Community, Compassion, Commitment

Mid-Week Update: **October 8, 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, October 12, 10:30am – Together in the Boat - Marsha Vollkommer, celebrant and Sunny McMillan, minister

The late William Bridges, a preeminent authority on change, once used the metaphor of a boat moving away from an old shore and toward a new shore to describe how we as humans navigate transition. As we embark upon the journey of my ministry at BUF, we will explore this boat we'll be sharing, who is in it, and where we are headed together. Here's to the voyage!

Sunny Notes



Hello BUF!

It was wonderful to join you all this past weekend on October 5 for my first official Sunday service at BUF. Thank you for the incredibly warm welcome I received from so many people AND for the carrot cake during coffee hour—holy wow, that was delicious! After spending much of last week meeting with various committees and folks in leadership, attending the Wednesday Community Night Dinner, dropping in to watch the choir practice with Ben, attending the auction

on Saturday night, and now having participated in a Sunday service, I already am feeling right at home at BUF.

I am writing to you today from a flight bound for Montgomery, Alabama, where I will be spending the next few days participating in the in-person component of my Year-Long Transitional Ministry Training course. This course is required for UU ministers who engage in interim or transitional ministry, and this week we are doing a deep dive into the work of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) and visiting EJI's Legacy Sites in Montgomery—all part of the anti-racist/anti-oppressive educational components of the course. I imagine I will have many meaningful experiences to share following this trip.

I look forward to seeing you all upon my return this weekend, when I will be back at BUF on October 12 to preach my first sermon. In the meantime, I encourage you to [sign up for a "Getting to Know You" small-group meeting with me](#). These are listening sessions designed for *me* to hear from *you*, and what I learn in these sessions will help guide our work together at BUF. You may use the link below to access my online calendar to grab a spot; or feel free to use one of the paper sign-up sheets currently in the hanging box outside my office door.

<https://sunnyjoycmillanscheduling.as.me/?appointmentType=83784886>

I look forward to meeting as many folks as I can in these first couple months with you all! See you Sunday...

— Sunny Joy McMillan, J.D., M.Div.

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

The Great Questions - Bonnie Phinney & Emmie Schohohm

5 sessions - Sundays, October 5-November 2, 12:15-2:00pm, Flex Room

This five-week course will explore our varied answers to some of religion's biggest questions: What does religion mean to you? Who or what is in charge? What happens when we die? What is the nature of evil? What does it mean to be human? With an emphasis on discussion, we will make use of provocative questions, quotations, music and art to stimulate your thinking. Some (minor) preparation and journaling will be expected of participants. *(Even though this event has started you can still sign up.)*

[Register](#)

Events

Community Night Dinners Need Your Help

Next Dinner is Wednesday, October 8, 5:45pm

Hello! My name is Jennifer Villalva-Cheap. I am the lone organizer of the Community Night Dinners. I need your help!

First, what is Community Night Dinner (CND)? Traditionally, CND is held Wednesday nights at BUF where for \$5 you can enjoy a home-cooked soup, a fresh salad, a bread option, and a simple dessert in the wonderful company of other BUFsters.

Second, how can you help? There are THREE big ways you may be able to help!

1. Come help to **plan, shop, and facilitate the cooking** each week. I need 2-3 more leaders to keep the dinners running. When we started up dinners three years ago, there were three people organizing this amazing event and now it is just me. With 3-4 people organizers, the time commitment is about 4-5 hours a month per person.
2. Sign up for **set-up, clean up, or help in the kitchen**. Time commitment is as much or little as you like. Sign-up once or come every week; any frequency is useful!
 - a. Set-up Folks: Arrive around 5:20pm to set up tables/chairs, fill water pitchers, put out salt/paper.
 - b. Clean-up Folks: Begin around 6:30pm to put away everything and help to store leftover food, and sweep the floor
 - c. Kitchen Help: Arrive at 5:45pm to prep the soup ingredients, chop the salad, prep the bread, and plate the dessert. If you can use a knife, you can help!
3. You can **come to eat dinner on Wednesday nights!**

Finally, you can sign-up by putting your name on the sign-sheet found on the clipboard in the Narthex at BUF or online at [Sign-Up Genius](#) for the Option 2 helping.

If you have interest in helping in the organization of CND, please contact me (Jennifer Villalva-Cheap) at jennifermvillalva@hotmail.com.

[Sign Up to Volunteer](#)

BUF Auction Update



Thank you to everyone who bid, donated, attended, and volunteered at our annual auction! We had so much fun celebrating with you. Once we take care of expenses and do some final accounting, we'll be excited to share the amount of money we raised together. As of now, we're nearing \$24,000! To help us reach even higher toward our goal, consider bidding on the items, events, and services still available. Bidding has reopened online at auctria.events/buf2025.

- If you have an outstanding balance and wish to pay by check, please bring it to the office ASAP and label it "auction." To pay by credit card, follow the link in the Auctria statement you received via email.
- If you donated a hosted event, you'll receive your guest list via email this week.
- If you were the winning bidder for a non-physical item, you'll be connected with the donor via email this week.
- If you have physical items to pick up, please do so at Wednesday's community night dinner or after the service on Sunday, October 12. If neither of those times work for you, please contact Annie Sorich at AuctionAdmin@buf.org to make other arrangements.

[View Auction Catalog](#)

News

News from BUF's Safety and Security Team

Our AED has a new home! The AED (automated external defibrillator) has been relocated to the narthex, near the sanctuary doors, to be closer to where main activities take place. This was a change recommended by our resident medical experts. Many, many thanks to Constance O'hana for re-installing the AED.

Workshops:

You are enthusiastically invited to our upcoming training series:

- Intruder response training on Sunday, November 16 at 12:45pm in the Social Hall, presented by the Bellingham Police Department Community Engagement Officer.

The more of us who feel up to speed on these topics, the better; please come!

Questions?

Talk to any team member: Jim Reimer (chair), Michael Berres, Michelle Fox, Elie Friedlob, Sarah Pearson, Felice Davis, Linda Twitchell, Cindy Denchfield, and Doug Branson

Alohas: Hellos and Goodbyes

Highlighting BUF Members

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

Aloha of Goodbye to Marian Bedill



Long-time BUF member Marion Bedill died on Monday, September 29 at the age of 89 years. We will be planning a gathering to remember our friend sometime in the next month.

If you are interested in planning this event, please contact Dawna Seeley at 360-527-9822, or Ann Stevenson at 360-961-4468 or ann.v.stevenson@gmail.com.

Aloha of Thanks From Barbara ten Hove

Dear BUFsters,

A great big thank you to everyone who gave me such a lovely sendoff on September 28. I felt very appreciated for the work I did during my short transitional ministry. I look forward to seeing everyone when I return to BUF in the middle of November.

All the best,
Barbara ten Hove

Building and Grounds

IT Update

A Wi-Fi upgrade is in progress.

BUF's IT team is working on upgrading the building's network and wifi infrastructure. Our goal is to improve wifi availability and reliability throughout the building. This may take a month or two, so please be patient.

You may see things like blue tape on the walls (marking the locations of new and existing wiring), or mock Wi-Fi access points in various locations. Please leave these in place.

If you have questions or comments, please send them to either Rory McLeod (mcleodnw@gmail.com), or Jed Reynolds (jed@bitratchet.com).

~ Your volunteer IT team

Parking Lot - Potholes - Pickaxe - and Cider

Saturday, October 18, 9:00am-noon (or until done, whichever comes first)

Our beautiful BUF has a parking lot with some pot holes that need filling. Bring your pickaxe or shovel, if you have one, or come to help spread a little gravel. As they say, "many hands make light work." We can get this effort finished quickly with lots of hands, and we can have fun and camaraderie while doing it. We will serve hot cider to help keep you warm and hydrated.

Questions? Call Ahwren at 360-312-1244.

Hospitality

Pathways for Newcomers with Felice Davis

Saturday, October 18, 10:00am-2:00pm, Flex Room (Top Floor)

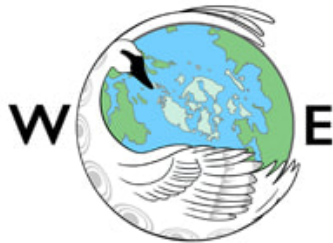
Hosted by the Hospitality Committee and open to all those new to BUF, Pathways is a Unitarian Universalist (UU) tradition for adults to get to know others in a small group setting and to learn about our church and UUism. The session features a Q&A with one of our ministers.

Partial lunch provided. Fun and Informative!

To sign up, text Felice Davis at 253-307-8981 or email fdavis1944@gmail.com.

Social and Environmental Justice

SEJC's October Special Collections Recipient *Whiteswan Environmental (WE)*



[Whiteswan Environmental \(WE\)](#) envisions a future where the environment and Coast Salish culture thrive together in the Salish Sea. 170 years ago, our ancestors were removed from their village sites. WE dreams of healing that begins with the restoration of Houses of Healing, Houses of Learning Longhouses. Through these sacred waters that flow from Kwelshan (Mt. Baker) to the Salish Sea, perhaps one day future generations will witness Truth, Healing, and Reconcili-ACTION. To address the disparities left to Mother

Earth and her people, WE co-founded a Washington State Charter School. This initiative arose from the urgent need to create a learning environment where indigenous youth and their peers can grow in ways that honor both Indigenous and Western worldviews — reconnecting education to land and culture. WE is leading a resurgence of classroom-to-place-based education that uplifts all peoples' history, culture, governance, and language, and prepares youth to carry forward intergenerational responsibilities of land care and relational leadership.

The SEJC Collection On October 12 Will Be Used For:

- Learning from the Homeland Language Camps — a safe, immersive experience for Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth that revitalizes knowledge systems and nurtures future leaders grounded in ancestral homelands.

[Learn More](#)

Stewardship

Dining With Friends

Dining with Friends, a great way to meet and get to know fellow BUFsters, will start in November. You can learn more and sign up at wp.buf.org/connection/affinity-groups/dining-with-friends.

Paper forms will also be available at coffee hour.

If you can help please contact Heather Higgins at hhiggins31@gmail.com or 360-820-2259.

[Learn More & Sign Up](#)

UPLIFT

UPLIFT Update: Uplifting Queer Voices Within BUF and Beyond

- 1. The UPLIFT Committee meets on the first Sunday of every month in the Conference room at noon.** Please come. All are welcome. Next meeting is October 5.
- 2. Look for Rainbow ribbons attached to name tags.** These folx want you to come ask questions. These volunteers are up for telling you about networking with the queer folx in our congregation and will help you meet people. Friendly and welcoming is our goal.
- 3. Second Sunday of every month** - brown bag lunch with LGBTQIA+. We will gather after coffee hour for socializing and getting to know each other better. Bring food and food to share if feeling inspired. 12:30-2:00pm-ish, October 12.

We have some social activity each month. Check here in MWU. We will let you know. If you want to help organize an event please let us know. We welcome new energy and want to get to know you.

Please reach out to our co-chair Grace Nyblade. Gnyblade@gmail.com or 360-545-3265 (cell).

—Grace Nyblade, Co-chair

Engagement & Support

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.

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

Interfaith Coalition's Winter Coat Drive

Through Oct 24



INTERFAITH COALITION

Partners in faith. Changing lives.

BUF has traditionally participated in the [Interfaith Coalition's Winter Coat Drive](#) to provide new or gently used coats to help keep our neighbors warm.

This year's Coat Drive is now underway until October 24. You may drop off donated coats in the bin provided in the entryway at BUF during office hours, Wednesday dinners, and on Sunday mornings.

All sizes are needed. In high demand are children's sizes and XL, XXL, XXXL for adults.

Thanks for your generosity!

Questions? Ask Rose Edington, BUF Liaison to Interfaith Coalition

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" to "Humanitas" to support the community in need
- 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](#)

[Sign up for the Mid-Week Update and/or the BUF News Digest.](#)