



The Beacon

Beacon Unitarian Church

Volume 33, Number 1, January 2015

Sunday Worship Services and Religious Education Classes are held at the **Sapperton Pensioners' Hall, 318 Keary Street, New Westminster.** Services start at 10:30 a.m.

The theme for January is Journey. Janus, the Roman God of Beginnings, looks both ways as he passes through doorways, gates and over bridges. We too will look forwards and backwards as we journey into the first month of 2015. The road we travel is sometimes straight, sometimes meandering, and sometimes it has unexpected pits and bumps. Rarely is this journey boring!

(Remember to check the Beacon web page for the theme broadsheet with inspiring readings, questions to live into, spiritual practices, movies to watch and much more.)

Sunday January 4, 10:30 a.m.

The Arc of a Life

Allegra Sloman

This homily speaks of the many ages and stages of a well-lived life, in itself the most wonderful journey of all. From the moment of conception to death we are in the grip of change. The commonality of these changes over all of our lives can help a covenantal community such as ours find the metaphors and stories most meaningful to who we are and where we are on our individual journeys

**Coordinator: Marilyn Medén
Foodbank Collection.**

Sunday January 11, 10:30 a.m.

To Question is the Answer

Rev. Debra Thorne

The Unitarian story has evolved along the twisty path of a questioning mind. We have heretics and visionaries and plenty of regular folks who are lifelong learners. Even our principles, which today are a core to our faith community, have evolved over time. Change is at the very centre of our tradition.

Sunday January 18, 10:30 a.m.

Bumps in the Road

Rev. Debra Thorne

When the unexpected happens, when you hit a bump, drop into the hole in the road (again!), when everything falls apart, what do you reach for? When is it the right time to open to a new perspective, to deepen in self-awareness or peel back the blinders? Or is it the time to curl up, turn off and tune out?

Choir sings today.

Sunday January 25, 10:30 a.m.

Evolution of a Textile Artist

Maureen Tempest

Maureen's identity as a textile artist evolved from sewing as a child, to studying textiles and design at university. The women in her family are quilters, beaders and sewers. She wonders if it is "in her blood" as her ancestors were in the textile industry in England. In this service Maureen will share her beautiful works of art and her explorations of how her creative process restores her serenity and energy.

**Coordinator: Joan Morris
Choir sings today.**



**Deadline for the February Beacon
January 15, 2015**

Please send to:

Newsletter@BeaconUnitarian.org

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From the Minister's Desk



A wonder for me is that Unitarianism has survived for 460 years. It has survived oppression, the Inquisition, and endless challenges to its beliefs, but over and over again the Unitarians of their day responded with bravery and thoughtfulness to renew, refine and improve their belief in religious freedom and toleration of religious diversity. Ours is truly a 'living tradition'.

We are a 'living tradition' because we are life-long learners. We uphold education, curiosity and the capacity to live with the tension of knowing and unknowing. In our religion this is the way. Jesus said the only way to the Father (God/Ulimate Reality/Creator) was through him. I say the only way through to knowing the whole amazing complexity of this universe is to stand in the tension between what we humans have learnt about its workings and simultaneously open ourselves to the vast unknown, what some call the Great Mystery. To stand with one foot on the shore of the known and one foot in the ocean of mystery and in that stance open our hearts

and souls to the wonderment of it all. William Blake stated it brilliantly, "To see a World in a Grain of Sand, And a Heaven in a Wild Flower, Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand, And Eternity in an hour." This is the poetic truth of our human experience, the yin and the yang of it, the micro and the macro, the unity in the diversity! Isn't this marvellous?

In the *Advancement of Learning*, written in 1605, it is written that "wonder is the seed of knowledge". The wonder of this religion is that in a world where most religions marketed themselves as the one and only truth, Unitarianism has staked its claim on the freedom to learn and grow.

May this wonder never cease!

In the days of Winter darkness may the light of loving-kindness, generosity and hope be yours, and yours to give to others.

With love,
Debra

Greeters' Workshop

Calling all greeters!

Current greeters and anyone interested in becoming a greeter are welcome.

Short workshop right after church **January 11th 11:45 am**.

We will be updating and reviewing our new procedures. Prepare to give us feedback! contact: Joan Morris (joanmorris@telus.net) or Jean Donaldson (donaldsj@telus.net)

Beacon Unitarian Church

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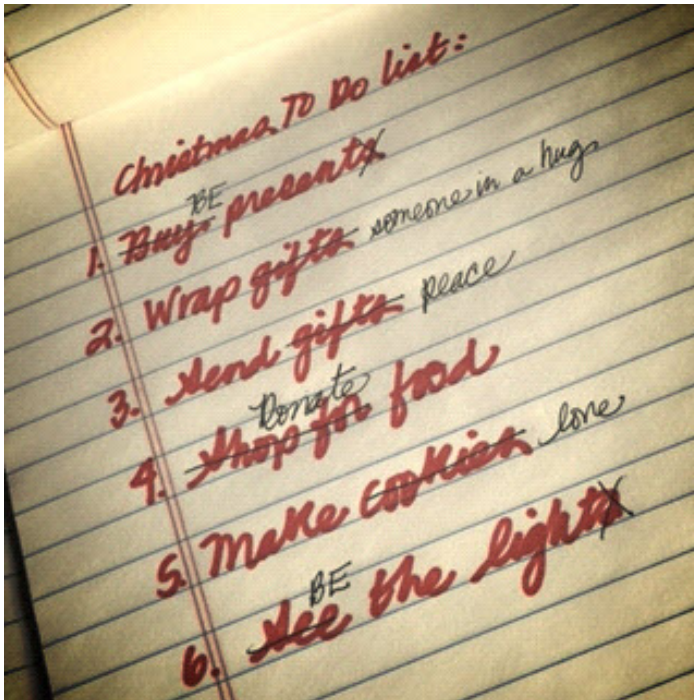
Board Bitez

From your Board Executive



Merry Christmas and happy New Year from your Beacon Board! We hope that everyone is taking time to enjoy the holiday season.

Here's my favourite to-do list this year:



Parking

The Sapperton Hall parking lot is very small, and can be quite congested some Sundays. Fortunately, we have other parking options in the neighbourhood. We have permission

to park in the Children and Family Development parking spots (marked Staff) across the laneway (do be careful not to park in spots that say "tow" on them, though!). Mountainview Health and Wellness has a parking lot behind the building at 237 E. Columbia, and they are closed on Sundays, so this is another area Beacon congregants may park. There is quite a bit of street parking on Columbia Sunday mornings, and it is free before noon.

Please try to leave the parking lot for those with mobility issues whenever possible, and be careful not to block the laneway.

Budget Meeting

Many thanks to those committees that revised their budgets as well as to those in our community who felt moved to pledge more in order to meet the needs that 2015 will bring. We will be holding our annual congregational budget meeting on January 11 following the Sunday service. This is also a soup lunch day, so we'll be able to make fiscal decisions on a full stomach!

Calendar

Please remember that we have an up-to-date calendar with Beacon meetings and events accessible on the Beacon website (you will find the link on the right column, halfway down). Thanks to Carol Woodworth for keeping this updated.

Our next board meeting is at 7pm on January 14th, 2014. Meetings are held at the home of Peggy and Tom Lunderville. Please RSVP if you'd like to come, to Peggy at 604-522-3001.

Soup Lunch & Budget Meeting

There will be a soup lunch on January 11 after church, followed by the budget meeting for 2015. To contribute, please contact Peggy Lunderville at 604-522-3001, or plunder@gmail.com



Beacon's Religious Education Corner

by Amber Strocel

It's beginning to look a lot like Solstice in RE this December. As we write, we are working hard on our pageant, *Solstice 2014: The Return of the Light*. This annual event is fun for the children, and also provides lots of opportunities for the kids to learn about how people celebrate the darkest day of the year.

We have also been experimenting with some new rituals in church school. We've introduced some opening words before sharing joys and sorrows each week, in order to reinforce the concepts of community and connectedness. We've also changed the way that we "share the energy" at the end of our joys and sorrows. Instead of crowding around the basin of water and stones and holding our hands over it (or, for many children, splashing fingers *in* it), we join hands and send a tap around the circle. The children have gotten pretty good at it, and the taps now go around quite quickly.

One of the highlights of RE for the children has been the return of snack time, which has worked well for the children and the adults. Clearly word about those snacks has spread, because we have had a great start to the church year. A much higher number of children have attended regularly since September as compared to the last few years. In response, in January we will be dividing the Sunday school into two classes. We are hopeful that by grouping the children by age and coming together for some rituals, we will be able to maintain the connections while also keeping the interest level high with age-appropriate material, and the noise level a little more manageable for the adults.

We also recently enjoyed our annual Night Tree Party. Here are some photos of the fun.

Happy New Year!

~ Amber and Laura



Beacon's Small Groups

If you'd like to meet with Beaconites in a warm and supportive environment, check out our small groups.



Lunch Bunch - meets every Thursday at noon, resuming January 8. For information contact Ivy Hubbard 604-527-9990.

Book Club - meets the evening of the third Thursday of each month. The next meeting is on January 15. This month's book is "Evidence of Things Unseen: A Novel", by Marianne Wiggins. **This is an open group so please feel free to join us if a particular title interests you.** For meeting location and other information please call Bev Lock 604-525-6791.

Youth Group meets next on January 9. Further info contact minister@beaconunitarian.org

Choir - Choir meets Tuesdays, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. at Miller Park School. Choir info: call Charlene 604-464-3992.

Theology Pub! On hold pending venue change.

Soul Matters groups meet once a month to explore the theme of the month. The next daytime group meets on January 14 at 1 pm, and the evening group meets on January 15 at 7 pm. Send an email to minister@beaconunitarian.org

Simply Pray is a small group that meets once a month for the whole church year, to explore the many varieties of prayer. The next session is January 21 at 7 pm. If you are interested in attending send a message to minister@beaconunitarian.org

Humanist Group Meeting -The next meeting will be January 25, 7:30 p.m. at Astoria House, Port Coquitlam. Luc Beaudoin asks:

- What are pertinent questions to ask about consciousness?
- What are the functions of human consciousness?
- What are qualia and why are they unimportant?

We will assume that consciousness is the executive suite of the human brain, comprising the functions that manage its processing of information.

For more info, please contact Marilyn Medén 604-469-6797 or Joy Silver 604-941-2606.

Beacon Awards Gala Evening & Dinner

Saturday, January 31st at Sapperton Hall

Join us as we celebrate our fellow Beaconites with a community potluck dinner. Children and youth are most welcome, and child care will be provided.

Help us make the evening fun by imagining funny awards and naming the recipients. For example, I nominate Sue Sparlin for the "Giving the Most Shameless Self Promotions" award. Or I nominate Denis Probst for the "Sitting in the Same Seat for the Most Sunday Services" award. Or I nominate Jacob Strocel for the "Wearing the most number of costumes to church." Have fun with it. Yes, you can nominate yourself! Submit your nominations and award names to anyone on the Stewardship Committee: Sue Sparlin, Susan Tarras, Carol Woodworth, or Anne McLeod.

Black ties and long gowns would be welcome attire if you want to dress up. Tiaras are optional!

Tickets will go on sale after church on January 11, 18 and 25.

We want to make sure that everyone can attend, so if you would find it difficult to afford a ticket, just ask for a complimentary ticket – or pay what you can.

Ticket Prices:

- Adults \$15 plus one potluck dish, or \$25 with no dish
- Children 6 to 16 \$5
- Family maximum: \$35 plus two potluck dishes or \$55 with no dishes.

New Beaconite

In mid-December Beacon formally recognized a new member to our congregation. (see below).

Membership in our church is both simple and difficult. It is simple because all that is required is to sign our membership book. It is difficult because that simple act carries with it complex meaning. That act means one has made a decision to join a community searching for truth with no promise of success. You are joining that search. This simple act means that you have joined with a people who strive to live in loving and respectful relationship with each other. This church holds no set creed upon which everyone agrees. What we do affirm is that we must be respectful and accepting of each other in our varied understandings of the religious life and that we must take responsibility, personally and corporately, for the world we live in and the life we lead.

Each new face and each new voice that joins with us brings joys and sorrows, skills and abilities, thoughts and beliefs. Each time a new person is added to this body, we are changed. Growth is more than numerical. With every new member, new adherent, new friend, we become a new congregation. This church changes as new individuals join us.

Bev Lock has re-joined Beacon. She was a member in very early days of Beacon, but work took her away to other places. We warmly welcome her return.

Bev has been retired for a year and a half from teaching, a job she loved. Retirement is a work in progress. She spends a lot of her time being Nana to two little girls in North Vancouver and two boys and a girl in Comox.

She enjoys conversations, movies, and long walks with friends. Bev spent three weeks this summer

travelling across Canada by train, driving through the Maritimes and visiting Quebec City.

She discovered Unitarianism many years ago in Maple Ridge. Since then this connection has provided a very stimulating and supportive community in which to ask life's big questions. A few things she is grateful for: singing wonderful, familiar songs, participating in meaningful rituals, and listening to the thoughts and feelings of others during services, courses, workshops and retreats.

New to Beacon?

New to Beacon? Keep this date open: Sat., February 7, 2015 10 am-2pm

This is an opportunity to meet others who are new to Beacon and perhaps new to Unitarianism in a relaxed day of conversation and questions. There'll be a little Unitarian history thrown in as well. 'Getting to Know U!', is just that, an opportunity to get to know both you and this U(nitarian) congregation.

Lunch will be provided and childcare will be available. Location: Glenbrook Park Amenities Centre, 76 Jamieson Court, New West.

If you are interested in attending please contact either Joan Morris (joanmorris@telus.net) or Rev. Debra Thorne (minister@beaconunitarian.org) for more information.



Beaconites in the Spotlight

This is an occasional column about performances or exhibits which feature our Beacon friends, and it is up to you to send your notices to include in the Beacon! Please send to Newsletter@BeaconUnitarian.org by the 15th of the month.



The time has come to dream beyond your wildest dreams! Join Out in Harmony as we explore reveries, aspirations, and flights of fancy. From the powerful words of Langston Hughes' Dreamkeeper, to the whimsy of Clara's toys-come-to-life in Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy, to the impossibly upbeat world of the Lego Movie's Everything Is Awesome, we

will discover that Anything Is Possible!

Venue is wheelchair accessible. The doors will open at 7pm, and tickets are available at the door, from Little Sister's Book Emporium, or through choir members.

As always, keeping our concerts accessible in all ways is a priority for

us, so our ticket prices remain only \$15. \$10 concession tickets are available, and nobody will be turned away for lack of funds. Children 12 and under are admitted free.

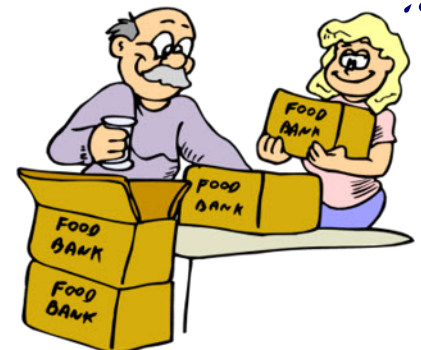
We are always looking for volunteers! To volunteer at the concert, contact denise.garzon@gov.bc.ca by Tuesday January 13, 2015.

Share Food Bank Project @Beacon

A few weeks ago, Terry McComas spoke at church and urged Beaconites to make social outreach a part of our personal and congregational practice. Beacon has generously donated over \$1200 to SHARE Food Bank since September. As the year ebbs, we celebrate this generosity of action and spirit. We know SHARE is able to multiply our gifts two and three times over. Thank you also for the thoughtful bags of food.

Next Sunday Food Bank is Feb 1

Anita and John Hagen



Interfaith Dialogue

by Renée Spakowsky



Our local Interfaith Dialogue Group had a two hour public display at the Maple Ridge library on Dec 3 to inform the public about our “Sacred Texts”. The program was hosted by our local active Baha’i group of friends and six faiths were on display. Jasper and Renée set up a chalice table on a white cloth with Joy Silver’s spirit play as the centrepiece. John Slattery volunteered to come as professional historian and a very successful evening ensued.

We displayed our hymnals and books titled Faith without Certainty, A Faith for All Seasons, Reason and Reverence and Out of the Flames (Servetus) along with our seven principles. What a great opportunity to interact with a curious public and other faiths to build understanding!



Sharing the Plate 2014-15

NEW VIEW SOCIETY, Port Coquitlam

December was very busy with all the hustle and bustle of the holiday season! Our Clubhouse was decorated beautifully both inside and out. We hosted many wonderful activities for our members; a trip to the Stanley Park Train, a Christmas Lights Tour, Coffee House with music & games, a Carol Cruise, Christmas Eve Brunch and even a New Year’s Eve Lunch. And in the true spirit of the season, Kay Swalwell along with our volunteers hosted a Christmas Day Brunch for some of our people who did not have any place to be on Christmas Day.

Our “We Speak Recovery Dinner” provided a wonderful meal and the opportunity to hear from two of our members who have made great strides in their recovery journey by becoming employed. This quarterly event is always a highlight as it gives hope and inspiration to some of our folks who are also considering joining the workforce. We have an

average of 20 to 35 people who attend this event.

On February 10th we will begin another series of Family to Family. This 12 week course will be held on Tuesday evenings in our Clubhouse. We received tremendous feedback from our fall group. In the words of one of our participants “This course was our lifeline.” For information on registering call Shalene Olson at 604.941-3222 ext 142.

Donna will be offering Mental Health First Aid on Feb. 19th/20th. This intensive 2 day course teaches you how to recognize the early signs and symptoms of mental illness and how to help someone who may be experiencing a mental health crisis. For a complete outline visit our website at www.newviewsociety.org.

We wish you a Happy New Year and the very best for 2015!

visit www.newviewsociety.org.

Here Comes the Sun!

A Solstice Service for the Whole Family - Dec 21, 2014



Amber & Laura introduce Mother Darkness



Amber introduces the Sun



Mother Darkness swallows the Sun



The spiral walkway where the gratitude candles were collected. Folks came to the centre, and each lit a candle in gratitude for something in their lives, and left the candle on the spiral on their way out.



Gratitude brings back the Sun

New Year's Eve Party - 2014

Late-nighters or not, lots of Beaconites don't want to miss the traditional Silver/Slattery **New Year's Eve Party**. It is held at the home of Joy Silver and John Slattery on Wednesday, December 31 at 7:30 p.m. The evening is filled with laughter, games, music and community. **Children, Youth and 90 year olds** are especially welcome! Seasoned attendees, think of asking someone at church who hasn't been.

- ❖ Fun board games
- ❖ Delicious potluck spread
- ❖ Worship service at 11:00

(you are invited to bring an inspiring reading, share what life means to you at this cusp of concerning world events)

Please bring a contribution for snacks and the midnight repast.



Address

Available in directory, or call Joy

RSVP

by Tuesday, December 30th

604-941-2606

odetojoy@telus.net

Beacon Calendar for January 2015

Sunday, January 4	<i>The Arc of a Life</i> with Allegra Sloman
Wednesday, January 7	Stewardship Committee meeting, 1 p.m.
Friday, January 9	Worship Committee meeting, 9:15 @Sally Frith's; Youth Group 7 p.m.
Sunday, January 11	<i>To Question is the Answer</i> with Rev. Debra Thorne , Greeters' workshop, 11:45
Wednesday January 14	Soul Matters Group One 1 - 3,
Thursday, January 15	Soul Matters Group Two 7 - 9; Book Club 7:30-9:30; Newsletter Deadline
Saturday, January 17	Youth Group "Archery Event" with UCV & NSUC youth, meet 5 p.m
Sunday, January 18	<i>Bumps in the Road</i> with Rev. Debra Thorne , choir sings
Monday, January 19	Music Committee meeting, 9:30 a.m.
Thursday, January 22	Connecting and Membership meeting, 1 p.m.
Sunday, January 25	<i>Evolution of a Textile Artist</i> with Maureen Tempest
Saturday, January 31	Beacon Awards Gala Evening & Dinner (see page 5)

Thursday at noon (from Jan 8) - Lunch Bunch, see page 5 for contact info

Every Tuesday at 7:30 - Choir, see page 5 for contact info