



The Beacon

Beacon Unitarian Church

Volume 32, Number 5, May 2014

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.

Theology in the Movies - This month our service theme looks to the world of film and the reality in illusion. Movies are often called an escapism from reality, when in fact many cinematic stories are rooted in the struggles and triumphs of the human spirit, the search for meaning and connection, and redemption through our imaginations. - Rev. Debra Thorne

Sunday May 4, 10:30 a.m.

Wisdom of the Shire

Rev. Debra Thorne

The story of the Shire and the small but brave Hobbits who live there is an epic journey to defeat evil by those who we would least expect to be the heroes. This is a story of community and friendship, a story of courage discovered in the midst of fear and of hope shining in the darkest of times. First published as a novel in 1937, the film 'The Hobbit- An Unexpected Journey', was released in 2012.

Food Bank collection today

Followed by Choir concert @3 pm

This Pretty Planet



**Deadline for the June Beacon
May 15, 2014**

Please send to:

Newsletter@BeaconUnitarian.org



Sunday May 11, 10:30 a.m.

Theology at the Movies

Allegra Sloman

Film has the ability to rouse our emotions and touch our hearts as few human arts do. Join us for an examination of what about the movies brings us closer to the numinous and spiritual growth, or moves us away from a place of acceptance and harmony. I'll bring some suggestions for movies which Unitarians might enjoy for their alignment with our principles and sources.

Coordinator: Marilyn Medén

**Followed by presentation of
Mission/Vision Statement draft.**

Sunday May 18, 10:30 a.m.

Inspired by Movies, Opera, Books!

Movies and books and opera can be much more than merely entertaining pastimes. Through our imaginations, they can inspire, motivate, and even assist us in our own search for meaning and connection. Beacon members (**Nancy Rupert, Denis Probst, Jean Donaldson**) will share how a movie, opera or book has inspired or moved them.

Coordinator: Joan Morris

Sunday May 25, 10:30 a.m.

Fighting to Connect

Rev. Debra Thorne

In a world that is plugged in and tuned out, where the daily grind of meaningless work and a bleak future looms... where young men no longer know what it means to be men; a group of young men seek the way and means to find themselves and connect to something real. This is the theme of the underground cult film, *Fight Club*; from the 1996 novel by Chuck Palahniuk adapted in 1999 by screenwriter James Uhls.



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Special Announcement from the Board and the Minister



From the Board:

The Board of Trustees is pleased to announce that Beacon has received a second extraordinary financial gift. This \$30,000 will

be used specifically to foster Beacon's growth. In particular, the Board will be working with Rev. Debra to come up with a strategic plan that will make the best use of these funds for the intended purpose.

This donation comes at the perfect time in our history. Rev. Debra is working with us at $\frac{3}{4}$ time instead of $\frac{1}{2}$ time, thanks to an earlier donation. This further gift gives us more energy to help us to grow, to improve our ways of doing church, and to begin to fulfill our new vision and mission. Let us work together, supporting the new Board and Rev. Debra, and riding the booster rockets this will give to us in order to create a powerful, loving and effective future.

Sue Sparlin

President, on behalf of the Board of Trustees



From the Minister:

What a special year this has been, and it looks like our next church year is going to start strong and vibrant. As you have heard by now, a second extraordinary financial gift has been given to Beacon to be used to support the intentional and strategic plans for community growth. The fact that not one but two anonymous benefactors independently chose at this time to put their resources into the growth of the Beacon

Community says a huge amount about the love there is for this community. Beacon matters. Beacon matters so much to its members that they are moved to give deeply and significantly to its health and wellbeing. Beacon's future matters. It matters profoundly that we embrace and receive with joy this energy, because that is what money is. It is the energy to fuel our hopes and dreams that this beloved community not only grows but thrives and seizes this opportunity to have a meaningful impact on the world.

As I work with the Board through 2014 to shape our strategic plans it will be with this in mind. Now that our Vision statement is near completion we have our direction set; next it is for the Board, in consultation with the members, to define in concrete actions and directions how we are to fulfill the vision. I will be suggesting that we work with a two, five and ten-year strategic growth plan. You can be sure we are going to be thoughtful and intentional about how we move forward. We will also keep you informed as we make the plans.

Money and purposeful plans are wonderful to have, but we cannot grow a community without every single one of you. A community is people. People join a community because they are welcomed, and enfolded and honoured. People will stay because there is a place made for them and that is up to each of you.

Even a million dollars will not guarantee the growth of this or any community. Now is not the time to sit back. Now is the time to say 'How can I help?' And I would respond to you by saying, 'Start by sharing the news that Beacon is a vital, relevant and meaningful community that wants to make an impact in the world.' As we live it, so it is true.

Debra



Beacon Unitarian Church

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From the Minister's Desk

A New Model of Leadership

With the church year's end in sight, this month the new Board will be gathering itself to plunge into a whole new model of leadership for Beacon's upcoming year. At the AGM on April 27 Beacon's membership will be voting in a new Board. Different from past years, the membership will vote in a slate of Board Members that includes a four-person Executive. This year is different because the Executive will not be voted in with specific positions attached. The reason for this is that your new Board wants to test a new model of leadership at Beacon.

The Board Executive have challenged themselves with moving into a holistic approach to organizational decision making. This means that the four members of the Board's Executive will work as co-equals in their responsibilities and duties.

The new Board and I are both excited and a little anxious about how the future will unfold. Here are some of the things we know now. We know that Board meetings will be chaired in rotation, and that newsletter updates and announcements will also be written in rotation. We know that one of the four members of the Executive will make announcements at Sunday services in rotation. When you have a question for the Board you can ask any one of the four Executives. We know that the new Board will carefully and deliberately ensure that the Beacon Community meets its financial, judiciary and custodial responsibilities.

Although we are excited to test this partnership of power, it is a risk. We anticipate that there will be bumps and confusions on the road ahead. As Jim McMahon said, 'Risk-taking is inherently failure-prone. Otherwise it would be called 'sure-thing-taking'. So please bear with us, wish us well, and share with us your curiosity for the process.

Rev. Debra Thorne



President's Ponderings



Beacon is about to enter a new phase of its life as a church. Our newly elected Board is proposing a more collaborative way of governance. Our vision statement is near completion. We have received generous donations that give us additional time from our beloved Minister Rev. Debra Thorne,

and funding to prepare and implement a plan for strategic growth. We could not be in a better position – right now.

The question before all of us is this: What shall we do with this opportunity? How shall we care for the "talents" with which we have been entrusted?

Churches that grow do so not by focusing on the numbers in the seats or on the membership roll, but rather on "doing church well." Where does Beacon do church well? And where might we improve? Perhaps

exploring these questions will lead us to grow into our vision.

I could not be more pleased at leaving the Presidency of the Board at such a time. I will be taking on the responsibility of leading the Stewardship Team going forward and I will be working with the new Board and several congregants to come up with an Investment Policy for the Board's consideration. I am looking forward to my new role in our faith community and to getting to know you, and you me, in deeper and more joyous ways, as yet to be imagined.

Blessings be to us all.

Sue Sparlin
Past President, Beacon Board of Trustees

Beacon's Religious Education Corner

by Laura Redmond

The 7th Unitarian principle has been the focus of the Religious Education program this past month: **Value our home, Earth, that we share with all living beings** (Violet Promise).

On April 20th, the Religious Education program, together with Rev. Debra Thorne, presented a version of the Dr. Seuss book, *The Lorax*. The story is told from the perspective of a senior citizen, a retired businessman—the Once-ler (think: Once upon a time... “way back in the days when the grass was still green, and the pond was still wet, and the clouds were still clean.”)

(see photos below, & on page 5)

The story tells how, as a young man, the Once-ler discovered a beautiful place, rich in natural resources, and saw an opportunity to make money. He then proceeded to cut down all the “Truffula Trees”, and pollute the air and water in the process. A creature named the Lorax questioned his motives and goals, and showed him the consequences of his actions, but the Once-ler was unwilling to change his course.

Now, as an older and wiser man, the Once-ler is visited by three Unitarians who hear his story. The Once-ler gives them a parting gift—the seed of a Truffula tree. The Unitarians promise to “plant the seed, and treat it with care, give it clean water, and feed it fresh air”. “We’ll grow a forest of trees, and protect them from axes that hack. Then the Lorax and all of his friends may come back.”

We are grateful to all the volunteers who participated in the play, with special thanks going to Rob Warner for his role as the “Old Once-ler”.

In addition to the Lorax presentation, the children have been invited to participate in the Beacon Choir spring concert. We’ll sing *One Light, One Sun* by Raffi. The lyrics remind us that we share *one* world, home to everyone. *The Double Life of Amphibians* describes how

animals such as frogs and salamanders “lead a double life”. They start their life underwater with gills, and then transform to air-breathing creatures with lungs. But they also “lead a troubled life”, because in the past three decades, declines in populations of amphibians have occurred worldwide, attributable to emerging diseases, climate change, increased ultraviolet-B radiation, or long-distance transmission of chemical contaminants by wind

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decline_in_amphibian_populations).

The final piece will be a *Place in the Choir*, a light-hearted song which celebrates the wonderful diversity of life in the animal kingdom. Here’s one verse: “Listen to the top where the little bird sings; On the melody with the high notes ringing; The hoot owl hollers over everything; And the jaybird disagrees.”

To conclude, a quote from *Heart to Heart* by Christine Robinson and Alicia Hawkins, which helps me process the enormity of climate change in a helpful way: “Perhaps these efforts (eg. purchasing a car that gets good gas mileage, compact fluorescent lightbulbs, or energy- and water-saving appliances etc.) prevent despair. Despair is always a shortsighted emotion, a faithless and hopeless and often loveless stance toward the future. A sustainable approach to climate change turns its back on despair and gets to work.” They conclude their essay with the following thoughts: “The solutions to the problems we have created will no doubt require sacrifice, ingenuity, and adaptation to change. What will carry us through the times of difficulty and paring down will be the sustaining values of learning, faith and community.”

With thanks to our Beacon community,

Laura

(Photo credits: Jeneen Rankin-Bayer, Debra Thorne)



The final bow



The full cast

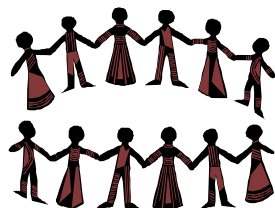
Affinity Groups

Beacon's "Affinity Groups" include several small groups which are always equally welcoming to newcomers and seasoned Beaconites. So, 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; for information contact Ivy Hubbard 604-527-9990.

Choir - Tuesday rehearsals, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. at Miller Park School. New members most welcome. For more choir info: call Charlene 604-464-3992.

Book Club - Next meeting is 7 p.m., Thursday May 15. Do you love books? Come join us. The book to read for May is "The Art of Racing in the Rain", by Garth Stein. This will be at Nancy Rupert's in Port Coquitlam. For more info call Bev Lock 604-525-6791.



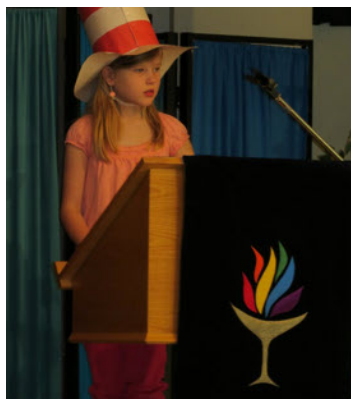
Humanist Group Meeting - Sunday, April 27, 7.30 p.m. at Astoria House, Port Coquitlam. Presenter John Slattery
Topic: Dialoguing with Christians – Are we missing an opportunity?

Perhaps the first question to ask is why should we? And if we must, what can we dialogue about? The weather? The unhappy fate of the Canucks? Hear about how some Unitarians have conducted themselves when in serious conversation about religion with Christians and other serious believers. And other than religion, are there other areas of common interest that we should be more inclusive about?

Come share your experiences and insights. For more info, contact Joy Silver 605-941-2606 or odetojoy@telus.net



A few more photos of the Lorax production



One of the narrators



The Once-ler family, making Thneeds



Young Once-ler, with his axe



The whole scene

Mission/Vision Team News

Positively Inspiring!

Your Mission/Vision Team has been **inspired** by the many people who gave time and careful thought to our first vision statement drafts. We are grateful. You made our work easier and we thank you to all!

You **connected** with us quickly and **transformed** our work into a labour of love and joy because of the unity within our diversity. We truly can be ONE!

The Team is crafting a mission statement, describing some of the ways we can focus our energies into action. Drafts will be presented to the congregation immediately after the service on May 11th; again, we will ask for your evaluations and thoughtful comments.

On Sunday, June 15th we will celebrate our collective accomplishment.

Sharing the Plate 2014

by Gurinder Mann



communities embracing restorative action

Restorative Justice: An Invaluable Tool in the Sustainability of Police Resources

Sustainability of police resources is a considerable concern. Current resources will likely not be adequate to sustain our police in the future.

Utilizing restorative justice to address offences, especially those involving youth, can serve to lower the burden on police and their workload through preparation of fewer "Recommendations to Charge" to Crown Counsel, simplified reporting for the referral of cases to community justice, and reduced overtime for court appearances. This reduced workload will free up currently stretched police resources for more pressing activities.

In addition to their vast number of administrative responsibilities, police deal with so many other issues

which they are not trained for, such as matters related to poverty, addiction, mental health, neighbourhood disputes, and family issues. These are matters for social workers, mediators, and mental health professionals to deal with.

Utilizing restorative justice as much as possible is an invaluable tool to sustain police resources. For all those quarrels in the neighbourhood, disputes in the family, and conflicts in the community where police get called numerous times, restorative justice organizations can assist.

We are glad that we are taking this approach in our communities. CERA is working effectively with New Westminster Police Service, the Coquitlam/Port Coquitlam RCMP, and Port Moody Police Department in dealing with such issues.

"New to Beacon" Orientation!

You are invited to a stimulating evening of introduction to the Beacon Congregation, May 8 at 7 pm at the Hagens' in New Westminster.

This is an opportunity to hear what Beacon is all about: a little history, a little polity, a little delicious snacking, and a little singing. This gathering is a chance to ask questions about Unitarianism and how Beacon functions. It is also an opportunity to hear how unique the spiritual journeys are that have led each person to this community.

Space is limited so please contact our Minister, Rev. Debra Thorne, if you are interested in participating. minister@BeaconUnitarian.org

Worship Planning Workshop for 2014-2015

Saturday May 31 - 10 am to 3 pm

Location: Hamiltons' in Coquitlam, 604-944-3113

Pot-Luck Lunch at 12 noon

Do you have an idea for a worship service? Is there a theme that you'd like to suggest? Would you like to try a new form, or new practice, or new style of music in the Sunday worship services next year?

If your answer is 'Yes!' to any of these questions then please come to this worship planning workshop. This is the planning session when the Worship Team brainstorms themes for the upcoming church year. It is fun and creative and an opportunity to shape our spiritual life together.

Interested? Talk to Debra minister@BeaconUnitarian.org or Marilyn Medén m.j.meden@telus.net.

Board Bitz

By Sue Sparlin

ANONYMOUS DONATION NO. 2

Your Board received some very exciting news this month. We received a second anonymous donation: this time a donation of \$30,000 to be used toward the growth of our beloved Beacon community. We accepted the donation and the conditions put on it by the donor as we are very much in alignment with growing our community.

AD HOC COMMITTEE TO DRAFT AN INVESTMENT POLICY

The Board clarified the scope and purpose of the ad hoc committee to develop a draft investment policy. Terry McComas will be the lead on this group. He will be asking for volunteers to join him.

CUC DELEGATE TO THE AGM IN MONTREAL

Your CUC delegate, Sue Sparlin, reported that she will be attending the CUC in Montreal. By accepting the \$578 from the Board's Conference Fund, together with a subsidy of \$600 from the CUC and personal donations of \$400, she will be able to make up the difference. The Board approved doing a cheque exchange for her portion of the expenses. (A cheque exchange makes it possible for the delegate to claim her expenses as a charitable donation by submitting an expense claim and donating the same amount to the church.)

TRANSFER TO THE NEW BOARD

The Board had a brief discussion about transfer of responsibilities from the out-going president to the

incoming Board. Sue will give the new Board member (Carol Woodworth) her keys to the Sapperton Hall.

The Board set a date for an orientation meeting for the new Board and a date for the first Board meeting in May.

YOUTH COORDINATOR

With sadness, the Board accepted the resignation of Nadine Shinkaruk as Youth Coordinator effective the end of March. Nadine has not been able to recover sufficiently from her car accident last fall. We will be advertising for a new Youth Coordinator to start in September. In the meantime, Rev. Debra will continue to work with the Youth. The Board recommended that Rev. Debra research ways in which our Youth Program might combine with one or more Youth Programs in the three other Lower Mainland Unitarian Churches. The President asked the new Board to be aware of the Safe Congregation Policy as regards to driving and carpooling.

TRANSFER OF BUILDING FUND TO TERM GICs RESCINDED

The Board rescinded its previous motion to move Beacon's building fund into laddered one-year GICs. Once an Investment Policy has been adopted by the Board, then the Building Fund monies will be reconsidered in the light of the new policy.

THANKS TO THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT

The Board meeting ended with the Board presenting a flowering begonia to Sue in appreciation for her years of service as President.

Sing, Write, Climb!

Day Workshops at Unitarian Family Camp
Sasamat Outdoor Centre, Port Moody, June 6–8, 2014

Download a brochure/registration form at www.beaconunitarian.org/sasamat.html or see Beacon members **Laura Redmond** or **Peggy Lunderville** for more information.

Interested in attending for the full weekend? Email registrar at lauraredmond2@telus.net for availability.

The Energy of Sound: A Choral Workshop

with Alison Nixon

Saturday, June 7th,
10–11:30 am,
1:30–4 pm (and optional
Sunday performance, 10:30 am)

Learn how to best create and support sound with your voice and body. Feel how the energy of singing can be channeled back into yourself for a rejuvenating experience, either meditative or invigorating. And learn some light hearted and beautiful music from three different cultures: *Erev Shel Shoshanim* from the Middle East, *Sakura* from Japan, and, *Kalinka* from Russia. Saturday workshop with lunch: \$67 (includes access to canoes and kayaks from 4–5 pm).



Writing for a Personal Religion

with Franci Louann

Sunday, June 8th, 1–3pm

The CUC encourages us to 'Dare to be Religious'! Let us write words of inspiration, of hope, of comfort, of appreciation... what comes to mind? Let's write with our hearts... let our yearnings move our pens. Write to yourself, but consider—perhaps your words could be used at a chalice lighting, or closing, or to introduce a time of meditation or prayer. In addition, create a comforting or inspiring mantra for yourself or someone else. *Franci Louann is a published poet and Unitarian.* Sunday workshop with lunch: \$39 (includes access to canoes and kayaks from 3–5 pm).



Climbing Wall or High Ropes Course

Sunday, June 8th,
Climbing Wall: 1–3 pm Age 6 to adult.

High Ropes Course: 3:30–5 pm Age 8 to adult.

Challenge yourself and have some fun. Sunday workshop with lunch: \$39 (includes access to canoes and kayaks from 1–5 pm).



This Pretty Planet

Our part of the Interconnected Web

May 4, 2014, 3 pm

Sapperton Hall, 318 Keary Street
New Westminster, BC

Tickets:

\$12 in advance,

\$15 at the door

families \$25 (max)

Tix 604-513-1526

or from choir members

Spring concert presented by:

Beacon Unitarian Church Choir,
Musicians, Children and Youth.

Director: Charlene Dabrule

Accompanist: David Hamilton

May 2014

Fri May 2	Worship Services Meeting 9:15 a.m.
Sun May 4	<i>Wisdom of the Shire</i> with Rev. Debra Thorne (Food Bank collection)
Sun May 4	3 p.m. This Pretty Planet - Choir Concert
Wed May 7	Board Meeting 6:00 pm @Lundervilles
Thurs May 8	"New to Beacon" Orientation
Sun May 11	<i>Theology at the Movies</i> with Allegra Sloman Followed by Congregational Discussion - Mission/Vision statement presentation and two CUC resolutions
Thurs May 15	Newsletter Deadline
Sun, May 18	<i>Inspired by Movies, Opera, Books!</i> with Nancy Rupert, Denis Probst and Jean Donaldson
Sun, May 25	<i>Fighting to Connect</i> with Rev. Debra Thorne
Sun May 25	Humanist Group meets, 7:30 pm
Sat May 31	Worship Planning 10 - 3

Every Thursday at noon - Lunch Bunch, see page 5 for contact info

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

Wed May 14, 28 Food Bank @Como Lake United

Every Sunday at 10:30 Worship Service at Sapperton Hall

Looking Ahead

Save the dates!

May 4 - Beacon Choir Concert
June 6 - 8 - Sasamat Family Camp
June 15 - Last service of the
season, followed by
church picnic