



The Beacon

Beacon Unitarian Church

Volume 32, Number 10, November 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.

The theme for November is 'Futures'. How many futures can there be? An 'infinite number' is the only reasonable answer! This month we are exploring many possible futures: From the future of our aging population, to the re-imagining of the church of the future, to the future of new technologies and how they may change the meaning of being 'human'. Our future changes with every breath taken.

(Clocks go back one hour previous night)

Sunday Nov 2, 10:30 a.m.

Riding the Silver Tsunami

Rev. Debra Thorne

The largest population in the current demographics has entered the fourth stage of life. The 'Baby Boomer' population has had a profound impact on the whole of society as it rolls through the aging spectrum. Whether we are part of this generation or not, we are being affected by their interests, their fears and their values. How are they changing the world for future generations?

Choir sings today.

Foodbank Collection.

Sunday Nov 9, 10:30 a.m.

A Rational Look at Rationality

Jim Stephenson

Drawing on the work of Jonathan Haidt, Jim will bring some interesting insights to the discussion of "Rationality", both for those who stake their beliefs on rationality and those who have their doubts.

Coordinator: Marilyn Medén

Deadline for the December Beacon

November 15, 2014

Please send to:

Newsletter@BeaconUnitarian.org

Sunday Nov 16, 10:30 a.m.
Re-imagining a Church for our Future

Rev. Debra Thorne

Second Life virtual church or vibrant theological Café, one thing is sure, the grey-haired church that just keeps re-creating last year's routines is doomed. Not only how we do things, where we do them and what we focus on, the church of the future needs to offer a compelling vision of a way of life that is worth living – a powerful, life-changing message. 'The future belongs to those who give the next generation reason to hope.' says, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

Choir sings today.



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Sunday Nov 23, 10:30 a.m.

Starting Over

Edith Wallace, Sue Sparlin

What happens when your life falls away from under you? If you're singer/song writer Edith Wallace you make music about it. Join us this Sunday as Sue has a heart-warming conversation with Edith about recent transitions in her life. Many have held onto her music as lifelines through their own difficult journeys. Edith is open, authentic and beautifully creative. Join us for this day of connecting with deep sorrows, inspiring one another through music, and perhaps transforming our lives into something more authentic.

Coordinator: Joan Morris

Note: Edith's CDs will be available for sale during coffee hour.

Sunday Nov 30, 10:30 a.m.

The Future is Now

Rev. Debra Thorne

Diamond nano-strings, driverless cars, micro surgery with organs created in the laboratory: the future is now. I wonder how the experience of being human will change in the next fifty years. I wonder if we will forget our souls as we become happy cyborgs. I wonder if humanity is spiritually ready for the offerings from technology and science. How will you respond?

Soup lunch follows.

First Sunday of Advent.



From the Minister's Desk

Are you ready for the future? I'm not sure I am. In my research for our November theme I have been reading articles and websites on the latest technological inventions. It seems that we are passing even the futurists' predictions. George Jetson and his flying family car is ready for production. On CBC radio last month I listened to a scientist describe how they have discovered how to combine the atoms of diamond into nano strings; the hardest known substance in our universe. They then theorize that these nano diamond strings can be put together and flung into space as a sort of space-cable that can then be used to ferry people and objects up and down... sort of like elevator cables between here and the orbiting space stations.

There are some really stunning and exciting discoveries that will enhance life and extend life. There are technological innovations that will help shift our oil-hungry culture to alternative energy sources just as the oil is coming to an end. There are geek gadgets for enhancing the gamers' experience to multisensory.

Futurist and inventor Ray Kurzweil believes that the next evolution of the human being is into a techno-human; sort of half human and half machine. He expects this to happen in his lifetime. The newly released movie 'Transcendence', starring Johnny Depp, explores this very idea.

This brave new era has both its supporters and its critics. In his new book, 'Present Shock: When Everything Happens Now', social theorist Douglas Rushkoff describes the phenomenon of '*presentism*', in which every thought and every event is colliding into this present moment. This can be both energizing and disorienting to people. I think that it is also bringing to a head a psychic and a spiritual crisis.

The very purpose of many spiritual practices is to help seekers accept the present moment through practices that strengthen and focus one's attention. It's ironic that as the world is speeding up and we're feeling like we are trapped in a pressure cooker as the temperature is being turned up, the solution - the remedy - is to practice focusing on the present moment. More than ever we all need to be strengthening our mental focus so that we can **embody** the present moment.

Embodiment is the antidote for the anxiety of 'present shock'. When we can **embody** the present moment, we transcend the rushing pieces and the pressures of infinite choice. We discover that we are simply and perfectly just right here, right now.

It's going to be an interesting month. Please remember to keep breathing!

Warmly,
Debra

New 2 Unitarianism

This is a one-session plunge into what Unitarianism is, where it came from and the influences that has transformed it over 460 years. We'll cover history, theology and polity and answer all the questions that you have brimming over. This class is appropriate for newcomers and those who have been around for a while and still just want to know. 7 pm Thursday November 20 Location TBA. Please email Rev. Debra Thorne that you are coming: minister@beaconunitarian.org

Beacon Unitarian Church

#414, 552A Clarke Road Coquitlam, B.C. V3J 0A3
info@BeaconUnitarian.org

Consulting Minister 2013-2014:

Rev. Debra Thorne minister@BeaconUnitarian.org

Lay Chaplain: Marilyn Medén
604-469-6797, m.j.meden@telus.net

Choir Director: Charlene Dubrule
604-464-3992, char4myc@shaw.ca

Board Executive:

Terry McComas, Nancy Rupert, Audrey Taylor, Carol Woodworth
Trustees: Peggy Lunderville, Jane Shoemaker, Rob Warner

Connections & Membership Jean Donaldson 604-461-0056,
donaldsj@telus.net

Care & Concerns: Renée Spakowsky 604-463-8086

Beacon Editor: Donna Hamilton newsletter@BeaconUnitarian.org

Beacon Distribution: Tom & Uta Poiker

BeaconUnitarian.org



Board Bitz

From your Board Executive

Fall continues to be a busy time for the Board, as we take care of the everyday business of Beacon, as well as spend time each meeting creating a strategic plan for growth.

We are currently looking into updating our website, so if anyone has any contacts in this area, please let a Board member know.

We are excited to see changes at Beacon, from the Membership/Connecting Committee's hard work at developing and implementing a new welcoming protocol, to the new programs available this fall at Beacon. These, combined with seeing new faces at Sunday services, have given Beacon a real feeling of rejuvenation and new energy.

This month the Board has been working on Reverend Debra's Ministerial Evaluation. Although this is work that is required for a newly ordained minister, it is also an opportunity to reflect on our good fortune here at

Beacon to have such a talented new minister leading us!

The Climate Change committee will be offering their series of educational sessions again starting October 18. (see below) These were well reviewed the last time they were offered, so anyone who didn't get a chance to attend is encouraged to check them out this time. They will be held at Century House in Moody Park, and Climate Change committee member Marilyn Medén can answer your questions at (604) 469-6797.

Finally, just a reminder to committee chairs that budgets are due in to our Treasurer very soon! Please ensure Audrey Taylor has received your budget sheet by November 2.

Our next Board meeting will take place on Nov. 2, from 1 pm-3pm at Peggy Lunderville's. All are welcome to attend; please RSVP to Peggy at 604-522-3001.

Climate change changes Me!

Seminar Series at Century House in New Westminster

Are you concerned about climate change? Do you want to learn more? This **free**, seven-week series of discussions will explore the entire subject, from whether climate change is real and threatening, to what we can do about it, personally and as communities, on a local scale and beyond. Networking opportunities with like-minded people will be offered, as well as strategies for feeling less overwhelmed or discouraged. Our talks will have no scientific jargon and are aimed at lay people, like ourselves. We invite you to join us.

Presenters Terry McComas, Marilyn Medén & Teresa Morton, all passionate about sharing our knowledge and experience on Climate Change, are members of Beacon Unitarian Church, which meets in New Westminster.

Saturdays, 1:30 to 3:30 pm in the OAK Room (Century House, 620 Eighth St., New Westminster, BC)

The November sessions include November 1st, Evidence and Causes, November 15th Being Responsible World Citizens [a new and important topic], November 22nd, Food [the Dave Steele eye - opening presentation], and on November 29th, Alternative Energies.

This is an excellent chance to clarify your ideas about climate change and also to invite others to join you. It's certainly not a Beacon only event!

FREE

Beacon's Religious Education Corner

By Amber Strocel

What does it mean to be a Unitarian Universalist?

We've been tackling this question by exploring our seven principles – or seven promises, one for each colour of the rainbow – with the RE children. So far we've played a game to illuminate truths from world religions, listened to a story about a bird who learned the hardest word (*sorry*), sang a song about being a unique Unitarian, and a whole lot more. If you ask the children, though, the weekly highlight seems to be snack time. Who can blame them?

We've been enjoying having more children in church school each week. Each one is helping to contribute to a vibrant program. With more kids in RE, though, sometimes the adults are spread a little thin. This is a great problem to have! We do appreciate help all the same. If you're able to be a model student by offering your insight and assistance downstairs on a weekly, monthly or even yearly basis, please let Amber or Laura know.

Even if you're not able to come downstairs during church school, we always appreciate your efforts to connect and interact with the children. They appreciate a smile, a warm

welcome and a kind word. As parents and co-directors of religious education, we also appreciate your understanding and patience when the children are being their exuberant and energetic selves. They have a lot to offer to our congregation ... just not always quietly.

Speaking of exuberance and energy, we've been running a six-week trial in the green room. We've been offering a supervised nursery to children under five years old, with a volunteer youth on hand to help out. There's a speaker in the nursery so that parents and volunteers can hear the service, as well as toys and seating. It's a place that younger visitors and their parents are welcome to use throughout the service if they need to retreat.

We're excited that RE is growing and we look forward to the months ahead as we head into the holiday season with the children. We can't wait to see what the rest of the year has in store.

~ Amber and Laura

Annual Winter Traditions at Beacon

All adults and children are invited to attend these casual and relaxed get-togethers, when we take the time to enjoy annual activities and the warmth of community, against the backdrop of winter darkness and cold.

Advent Wreath Social

Join Peggy Lunderville (at the home of Karen Greenland in Port Coquitlam) in making an advent wreath out of cedar boughs and candles. The advent wreath becomes an important part of the Sunday morning services in December. Well also sing a few carols and enjoy a light snack.

Please plan on joining us for this special celebration!

Date: Saturday, November 29, 2014

Time: 6:00 PM

Place: Home of Karen Greenland, address in church directory, or call Karen at 604-464-5671

Bring: Cookies or dessert to share.



Night Tree Party – Christmas gifts for our feathered and furry friends

“Night Tree” is a story by Eve Bunting that tells of a family’s annual Christmas tradition of making edible ornaments for neighbourhood wildlife, and then using them to decorate a tree in the forest. At our party, you can string cranberries and popcorn on thread, or add peanut butter and seeds to pinecones. Later we’ll go outside and hang our ornaments on a tree and sing carols in the moonlight.

Date: Friday, December 12, 2013

Time: 6:00-8:30 PM

Place: Home of Peggy Lunderville (Close to Gaglardi Exit on Hwy 1) Phone: 604-522-3001

Bring: Warm clothing, a flash light and a contribution of food to eat & share.

RSVP: Laura Redmond (604-939-9310) or

lauraredmond2@telus.net. If you forget to RSVP, please come anyhow!

Beacon's Small Groups

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



Theology Pub! Next meeting - venue and date TBA. In traditional Unitarian fashion, we will question, explore, wonder and share in a stimulating atmosphere of curiosity and respect.

We are not looking for the right answer but to deepen and broaden our thinking.

Book Club - Meets on third Thursday each month from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. Book for November meeting is *Atonement*, by Ian McEwan. For meeting location, and other info, please call Bev Lock 604-525-6791.

Humanist Group Meeting -The next meeting will be October 25, 7:30 p.m. at Astoria House, Port Coquitlam. Details below. For more info, please contact Joy Silver, odetojoy@telus.net

Youth Group meets next on November 14. For 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.

Soul Matters groups meet once a month to explore the theme of the month. The next daytime group meets on November 12th at 1 pm, and the evening group meets on November 13th 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 November 19 at 7 pm. If you are interested in attending send a message to minister@beaconunitarian.org

Also, don't miss:

- New 2 Unitarianism - see page 2
- Climate Change series - see page 3
- Advent Wreath making - see page 4
- John Hagen's concert - see page 6

Soup Lunch

There will be a soup lunch on November 30, after church. To contribute, please contact Peggy Lunderville at 604-522-3001, or plunder@gmail.com



Humanist Group Meeting (See above for time & location)

The Influence of First Nations Spirituality in Our Canadian Lives Presenter, Doug Sabourin from the North Shore Unitarian Church (NSUC)

This month we will take a second and different critical look at John Ralston Saul's book *A Fair Country*. We will examine his thesis that much of what makes us a distinctive society is due to our European forbears' interactions with the native peoples who resided here for millennia. Is Ralston Saul right, but much has changed since the onset of the residential schools and the cultural shifts of the 60s? Is Ralston Soul onto something that needs revisiting, or is he grossly simplifying a complex cultural and spiritual heritage?

Leading the discussion will be Doug Sabourin, a member of NSUC who has spent most of his professional life in working with native people in a wide variety of contexts. He recently delivered a sermon at NSUC on *The Influence of First Nations Spirituality on My Life*.

Following a brief survey of the book's main points, we invite you to share your ideas about the legitimacy of his argument, and to share whatever interactions you may have had with native peoples and the influence they may have had on Canadian society.

Beaconites in the Spotlight

This will be 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.

In the SPOTLIGHT this month is John Hagen:

Annual Pops Band Concert, New Westminster & District Concert Band, will be held Monday November 17 @Michael J. Fox Theatre in Burnaby. Please see **John Hagen** (604-521-1335) for further details and tickets.

Bob Wright awarded “Highest Public Service Honour”

Bob Wright (Robert Wright, Q.C.), well-known Beacon member and Laura Ramsay's husband, has been honoured with the Legacy Premier's Award and has been inducted into the BC Public Service Hall of Excellence. This is the highest honour that the BC Public Service can extend to its employees, recognizing long-lasting achievement, dedication and service to the province. His many Beacon friends will be delighted that his outstanding life is being recognized and honoured.

The website <http://engage.gov.bc.ca/excellence/robert-wright/> describes Bob's achievements in these words:

His legal career and distinguished service to the Ministry of Justice's Criminal Justice Branch, the Province of B.C., and the Canadian justice system represent the highest levels of commitment to which a Crown counsel can aspire. His professional achievements – spanning over 35 years – have been an inspiration to legal counsel across B.C., Canada and beyond.

Robert regularly assisted police and Crown counsel with evidentiary and strategic issues that arose in the course of a prosecution, and he built an extraordinary legacy in the education of lawyers and other justice professionals.

As executive director of the Criminal Justice Branch's Crown Law Division, Robert guided the design and implementation of the branch's Major Case Management Model, a significant justice reform that applies

best practices to large, high-profile cases for a just and efficient outcome.

Of the countless criminal trials Robert has been involved in, one of the most prominent is the Air India bombing. From 1997 to 2005, he was lead trial counsel for the prosecution, B.C.'s first mega-case, and a case of unprecedented scale and complexity. He assembled a legal team of 17 lawyers and a group of administrative professionals, and pioneered the use of a project management approach to large prosecutions

Robert demonstrated visionary and empathetic leadership, providing new and experienced branch lawyers, administrative staff and other members of the justice system with an outstanding example of public service.

The web-site also includes this quote from Bob: “My job as Crown Counsel means my main obligation every day is to do the right thing. It is a great luxury as a lawyer to never have to take a position that I do not believe is right, fair and just. Working in public service provides fulfilling and incredibly interesting work while surrounded by talented and passionate people.”

The inaugural induction of the Hall of Excellence took place at the provincial Premier's Awards ceremony in Victoria on Oct. 8, 2014, where Premier Christy Clark recognized both the 2014 recipients and past recipients of the Legacy award.

Many thanks for Jane Shoemaker for bringing this to our attention

Impressions of the memorial service for Beacon member Jenise Sidebotham

Offered by Jean Donaldson and Joan Morris

The service for Jenise was warm, with a strong feeling of Windsong, the loving and caring community where she lived. It was a lovely service with about 40 attending, mostly Windsong residents. Close to 20 folks spoke – touching stories of her wit and love of words. We learned that Jenise had perfect pitch and a strong, pure voice before her illnesses. It once led her to a challenging choral performance of the Monteverdi Vespers – 12 parts of harmony, two choirs plus orchestra – performed in Pittsburgh.

Many stories were shared, with a theme of "puzzles", as Jenise loved doing puzzles of any kind, but particularly jigsaw puzzles and was often seen in the common area of the housing working on puzzles. She wrote an article for the Windsong newsletter a number of years ago about why she loved doing them. Here's part of it.

"Some of you have wondered why I do jigsaw puzzles as much as I do. I do it mainly because solving puzzles gives me pleasure. I get a "reward" feeling from each piece placed, from each section completed, from every session that results in clear progress toward completion.

I like to do a puzzle full of colour, which I like looking at. For me it would not work to assemble a picture of darkness and

despair. Fortunately I have not seen such puzzles, but perhaps I have selective vision.

And I like seeing others getting enjoyment from the puzzle, some from watching it grow, some who put in one or two pieces, and some who spend some time with it, whether or not I am there with them. When I arrive to do the puzzle and see that someone else has been enjoying adding to it, I feel a connection.

While the main pull is the pleasure, the main benefit is the meditation aspect. Formal methods of settling and clearing the mind, such as meditation, have always been hard for me to do, and have not tended to feel very satisfactory or helpful. On the other hand, puzzle-solving calms and clears my mind immediately. I find it so relaxing, so peace-giving, that I feel new energy, and new ability to think with focus and insight, once I have finished a session. If I do some puzzling before going to bed, I definitely sleep better."

Jenise loved to join in Messiah sing-along performances. She has a whole "bag" of books and CD recordings of the Messiah (some in tenor which was the part she sang) that her sister has donated to the Beacon choir, along with a CD player.



sharing the plate 2014-15

NEW VIEW SOCIETY, Port Coquitlam

The fall season at New View Society has been all a buzz with so many wonderful and exciting happenings. September brought our Board and society members together for our Annual General Meeting. We reflected on our accomplishments of the past year and shared our goals and plans for the future.

Thanks to some brilliant weather, we were able to enjoy a warm and sunny afternoon picnic with members at Gates Park enjoying lunch on the barbecue and summer games.

Our new Family to Family Workshop series (in partnership with the North Shore Schizophrenia Society) began on September 16th. This 12-week program brings families together to connect with one another and learn how to better support loved ones who are living with mental illness. We are now taking registrations for our next series scheduled for February 2015.

In October we hosted a two-day Mental Health First Aid training course facilitated by our very own staff member

Donna Bonertz . This unique course provides information and the tools to direct someone to help who may be showing signs of mental health problems.

On October 8th Victoria Maxwell delivered her mesmerizing solo performance of THAT'S JUST CRAZY TALK before a sold-out audience at the Inlet Theatre. The following day she presented her workshop "Wilderness Tips for the Come Back Trail" exclusively for clubhouse members from across the lower mainland. We are grateful for having had the opportunity to bring this incredibly inspiring and courageous woman to the Tri-Cities.

In closing, it wouldn't be October without a Thanksgiving Dinner! We welcomed over 60 of our members into our clubhouse kitchen for a traditional turkey feast with all the trimmings. It was a wonderful evening of comfort food and compassion.

visit www.newviewsociety.org.

Notice from Care & Concern Committee

Beacon has a “caring quilt” which makes its way from place to place to comfort Beaconites who are ill or bereaved, and who need to be wrapped in a Beacon “hug”. At the moment, **two items have gone missing** - the booklet which records where the quilt has been (and a bit of a story of who was comforted by it), and the clear plastic zippered cover that keeps it clean in transit. If you have any idea where these items might be, please phone Renée Spakowsky to arrange pick up of either or both items 604-463-8086.

Thank you,
Renée Spakowsky, for the Care & Concern Committee



Share Food Bank Project @Beacon

Sunday, Nov 2 is the next Beacon Food Bank Sunday.

Last year SHARE distributed 1100 Christmas hampers. Your coins and cheques are very useful for this big SHARE project. Donations of \$20 or more will receive a tax receipt.

Beacon members also work many volunteer hours every second Wednesday between 11am to 3pm to distribute food hampers. Join us, if you can.
We have a good time.

Anita and John Hagen



Beacon Calendar for October 2014

Sunday, Nov 2	<i>Riding the Silver Tsunami</i> , with Rev. Debra Thorne , choir sings, Foodbank, last day of Stewardship Drive
Friday, Nov 7	Worship Committee meeting, 9:15 @Sally Frith's
Sunday, Nov 9	<i>A Rational Look at Rationality</i> Jim Stephenson
Wednesday Nov 12	Soul Matters Group One 1 - 3, Board Meeting 6:30 pm @Lundervilles
Thursday, Nov 13	Soul Matters Group Two 7 - 9
Saturday Nov 15	Newsletter Deadline
Sunday, Nov 16	<i>Re-imagining a Church for our Future</i> with Rev. Debra Thorne
Monday, Nov 17	Annual Pops Band Concert, see page 6
Wednesday, Nov 19	Simply Pray 7 - 9
Thursday, Nov 20	New 2 Unitarianism 7 pm, see page 2
Sunday, Nov 23	<i>Starting Over</i> with Edith Wallace & Sue Sparlin
Sunday, Nov 30	<i>The Future is Now</i> with Rev. Debra Thorne , Soup Lunch, Humanist Group
Every Thursday at noon -	Lunch Bunch, see page 5 for contact info
Every Tuesday at 7:30 -	Choir, see page 5 for contact info
Every Saturday except Nov 8 -	Climate Change Series, 1:30 - 3:30, see page 3 for details