



Sunday Services—Inspiring Learning and Spiritual Growth

Each Sunday brings a rhythm of gathering, music, reflection, and connection. Here's what you can expect when you join us:

- 10:10 am: Approximately twice a month we have a pre-service sing-along and we invite you to sing or just listen. Our next sing-alongs are scheduled for March 22 and April 19 and 26th. On other Sundays you can socialize before the service—in person and online. At the hall, please help yourself to a tea or coffee.
- 10:30 am: Our service starts. In person, we meet at Sapperton Community Hall in New Westminster (318 Keary St.) and online using the Zoom platform. You can register for the Zoom link on our website

Pre-Service Sunday Sing-Alongs



We get together to sing inspiring, uplifting songs before the Sunday service begins. Kate Smith & Bill Marshall will host the sing-along on March 22 and April 19! PLUS the 'Beacon Singers' lead on April 26. Be there at 10:10 to join in song!

homepage (on the righthand side of the page): beaconunitarian.org. The services are 60–70 minutes long. Each Sunday offers something a little different—sometimes thought-provoking and reflective, sometimes creative and hands-on. We invite you to join us for a few services and experience the full spectrum of what Beacon has to offer.

- After our service, we hope you can stay a while for connection and conversation (in-person and online). Light refreshments are served in Sapperton hall.

We list [upcoming service descriptions](#) on our website and in our weekly e-newsletter, *Beacon This Week*.*

If you're a newcomer, general Sunday [service information](#) is located in the second link of the footer menu on our website. Our services are designed for adults *and* we welcome all ages! If you would like us to follow up with you and get more information, you are invited to fill out the [Beacon Connecting Form](#) (on our website homepage).

*To receive *Beacon This Week*, our weekly e-newsletter, please contact adminsupport@beaconunitarian.org to be put on our emailing list.

We welcome your feedback and ideas for songs, discussion topics, and new elements in our services. You can also reach our worship team anytime at worship@beaconunitarian.org.

If you'd like to see past [recordings](#) from our services, they are linked from our website's homepage. Come and be part of our caring and questioning community.

We look forward to connecting with you and getting to know you!



Soup Lunches

**Sunday, March 15th
Sunday, April 19th**

Please join us after the Sunday service for lunch in the downstairs hall. Suggested donation is \$5 or as you are able—free for newcomers! Last minute participants welcome. Anyone able and willing to bring soup, salads, buns and butter, or desserts please phone Augusta Hamilton, 1 (250) 741-7924.

The Practice of Seeking Wisdom

From the [Meaning Making Theme Packet, March 2026](#)

When I think of wisdom, one of the teachings that first springs to my mind is the Buddhist story of the Second Arrow. As you may know, one of the Four Noble Truths at the heart of Buddhist teaching is the simple recognition that there is suffering (*dukkha*). To be alive is, inevitably, to encounter pain and difficulty. *Dukkha* shows up in many forms: physical pain or injury, illness and aging, birth and death, loss and disappointment, or a quieter, persistent sense of dissatisfaction with your life. No one is exempt from this. This is not a failure—it is simply part of being alive, being human.

To help us understand suffering in our minds and hearts, the Buddha offered the teaching often called the Second Arrow. In this story, the Buddha says that when a person is struck by an arrow (literally or metaphorically), they naturally feel the pain of the wound. This first pain—the physical or emotional hurt itself—is unavoidable. But then, almost immediately, we add something more. We react to the pain by spinning stories about what it means.

These stories tend to follow familiar patterns and often reveal our deepest fears, judgments, or beliefs about ourselves and the world. Many are directed inward: “I’m going to die,” “I’m useless now,” “I deserved this.” Others turn outward: “They did this to hurt me,” “People can’t be trusted,” “Everyone is against me.” Though they feel convincing in the moment, these stories are rarely grounded in reality. They are attempts to escape, control, or explain the pain, but instead they become a form of resistance to it. In trying to protect ourselves, we wound ourselves again. This added layer of suffering—the fear, shame, anger,

despair or disconnection created by our stories—is the second arrow.

Sometimes, we can be struck by additional arrows. We may judge ourselves for having reacted badly, feel guilty for not being more “mindful,” or ashamed for struggling at all. In this way, third or fourth arrows can follow, compounding the hurt.

Buddhist wisdom invites us to a different response. Rather than fighting or fleeing the pain of the first arrow, we are encouraged to lean into it—to feel it fully and honestly, without adding a story. This means meeting our pain with compassion, tenderness, and care, including seeking medical, spiritual, or other professional support when needed. It also means gently turning toward the reality of the situation as it is, rather than the frightening stories our minds may create.

The first arrow, the Buddha reminds us, is unavoidable. Pain will come. Loss will come. But the second arrow—the harsh self-talk, catastrophic thinking, blame, and fear—is not inevitable. With practice, awareness, and compassion, we can learn to set it down, allowing ourselves to suffer less even during great difficulty.

Over the years, my understanding of this story has deepened. I have come to see that it applies not only to moments I label as “bad,” but also to the everyday interactions and experiences. The stories our minds create in response to what we encounter unconsciously shape how we relate to one another and to the world around us.

When I am faced with the many truths that arise from connecting with people of different identities, life experiences, religions, and cultures, I find it helpful to return to the wisdom



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of this teaching—especially when the truths offered challenge or differ from my own. In those moments, I try to pause and gently reflect on what is actually happening, and what may be shaped by the stories I am telling myself.

Untangling what is real from the narratives my mind creates can take patience and care. Because storytelling is one of the ways we make meaning, I try not to reject these stories outright, but to hold them with curiosity. I ask whether they arise from fear or insecurity, or love and connection. Do they draw me closer to—or further away from—my values and from the way I hope to be in the world?

As you explore wisdom in your life, community, and beyond this month, may you be free from all unnecessary arrows.

Warmly,

—Rev. Arran Morton

“The function of the Clearness Committee is not to give advice or “fix” people from the outside in but rather to help people remove the interference so that they can discover their own wisdom from the inside out.”

—Parker J. Palmer

Central to Quaker thought is the belief that we each have our own connection to wisdom, our own inner teacher. We do not need other people’s guidance. But we can use some help. The “clearness committee” is a way for a small group of people to help one person (the “focus person”) find their own inner teacher, the voice within. The primary activity of a Clearness Committee is asking open, honest questions – that is, questions to which the question-asker does not have an answer. “Have you thought of seeing a therapist?” is not an open honest question and not just because it is a yes/no question! There is an implied correct answer, which makes it advice.

During the two hours of a Clearness Committee, the committee members do their best to let go of their own ideas, advice, worries, or stories and instead put their attention to the focus person, letting new questions rise up in the moment. Each Committee has a scribe who records the questions, to hand to the focus person at the end of the session (committee members also hand over notes, if they take them), which helps the focus person stay present and in the moment, too.

Guidelines for holding a Clearness Committee are available in Palmer’s book *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life* (2009) and [online](#).

—Rev. Karen Fraser Gitlitz

Have you ever received wisdom from the unconscious? According to Jungian psychology (not only the works of Carl G. Jung but interpreters such as Thomas Moore, Clarissa Pinkola Estés, James Hillman and many others) wisdom comes to us not only through our conscious minds but also via the Unconscious—through dreams, intuitions, synchronicities, and shared myths and symbols in the world. When life is understood through the symbolic lens, it often provides wisdom that is complementary—or challenging—to our personal ego’s agenda.

—Rev. Lynn Harrison

The Hidden Singer

by Wendell Berry

from

The Selected Poems of Wendell Berry

(Copyright © 1998)



The gods are less for their love of praise.

Above and below them all is a spirit that needs nothing but its own wholeness, its health and ours. It has made all things by dividing itself. It will be whole again.

To its joy we come together—the seer and the seen, the eater and the eaten, the lover and the loved.

In our joining it knows itself. It is with us then, not as the gods whose names crest in unearthly fire, but as a little bird hidden in the leaves who sings quietly and waits, and sings.

Wisdom, fundamentally, is knowing who you are, where you are, and what you’re trying to do or be.

—Gordon B McKeeman, from *Becoming: A Spiritual Guide for Navigating Adulthood*

Knowledge is not wisdom. But wisdom is knowledge in action. I have lived most of my years immersed in the culture of books. I command a lot of facts. I comprehend a lot of concepts. That does not make me wise or even intelligent. It just indicates what I have memorized. But when I activate these facts and concepts to find the greatest, grandest version of myself, and then use them to work towards that vision, I begin the process of wisdom. The most essential question to ask myself is not “What do I think about this?” but rather “How do I feel about this?” In such simplicity is greatness made possible for an individual, a society and a human family.

—Richard Wagamese

Board Bitz

The board has been BUSY! Here are some of the projects we are working on.

Tech Backup Plan: We have a plan in place for those (rare) Sundays when Tyler, our sound technician, is unavailable. We need to use a simpler set-up so that Deepak can get things organized before the service begins. This means that Zoom participants can hear the service but can't speak to Sapperton Hall, videos are not included, and only one camera is used. We also don't switch mics unnecessarily. If this tech work appeals to you, please connect with Deepak!

Connecting Team: The board needs to reconstitute the Connecting Team, which has the crucial roles of keeping track of newcomers and making sure they are connected to Beacon small groups or other Beacon services, touching base with the Beacon Community members who have been absent for a while, and coordinating people who prepare coffee, count the

collection and arrange Soup Lunches! If this sounds like something you would like to be involved in, please connect with Teresa or Susan!

Consultations Team: The team is currently preparing their final report for the board. The report summarizes feedback from the congregation on being community-led, priorities for ministerial support plus preferences on the financial approach. Details will be shared once the board has reviewed the report.

The Consultations Team is deeply appreciative of the open and generous participation of the congregation in this process!

MetroVan Unis: The five Lower Mainland Unitarian communities have been meeting, about every three to four months, to share information, explore options for collaboration and strengthen connections between congregations. There is a potential new model for providing ministry called Tidal Pool, where a pool of

ministers can provide specific ministerial supports to various congregations.

Annual General Meeting, Sunday

April 26th: At our AGM, the board and Committees present reports on our work of 2025, including the nomination of a slate of trustees for the next church year. The notice for the AGM will be issued on April 15th. If you are preparing a report, it needs to be submitted to our admin assistant Rachael by April 1st.

Growth Lab: Beacon has enrolled in a training course for maximizing the effectiveness of our website and digital resources. Deepak is the lead on this and the Communication and Marketing Committee is also participating. If this sounds intriguing, please connect with Deepak!

—Teresa Morton, Co-President



Teresa Morton
Co-President

Homily Club Update!

The Beacon Homily Club will be presenting services monthly; March 29, Apr 12th, May 17th, and June 21st so that club members get opportunities to plan and present services. Roles range from lighting the chalice, or reading opening words or meditations, through to planning the whole Sunday experience.

To support planning a service, there is now a checklist of the usual service components and a framework for arranging those components. Additionally, at our monthly Homily Club meetings we are exploring lessons from the book 'The Shared Pulpit' by Erica Hewett. A third component is our sharing of short homilies with the group to receive (gentle) feedback prior to presenting homilies to the congregation.

The Homily Club (a collaboration of our Worship Services Team & the Co-Presidents) is meeting on March 22 and May 3rd after the service. All are welcome!

Caregivers—You Are Not Alone.

The strain of caregiving for a family member or friend can leave you exhausted, anxious and isolated.

Century House, through its *Care for Caregivers* series, offers a weekly program via Zoom which allows participants to take a break from their duties from the comfort of their own homes. Under the guidance of a professional facilitator, share experiences, learn from each other and guest speakers, access information / resources and have fun. We can assist with navigating Zoom. Open to caregivers 50+ years. A Zoom link will be emailed prior to each session.

Dates & Time: Tuesdays, 1:30–2:30 pm (Zoom room opens at 1 pm) Series runs until the beginning of June 2026.

Location: Online only, via Zoom

Registration: Century House front desk: 604-519-1066.

Registration Fee: Free

Contact: For more information: peggy.hinkley@gmail.com

Beacon Programs

We invite you to explore these great ways to connect to the Beacon community and to yourself!

The Humanist Discussion Group

(online) likes to think about and discuss our common humanity, and our place as individuals and collectives in this dance of life. As a group we welcome different points of view and discuss a wide range of ideas. We will meet at 7:30 pm, via Zoom, to discuss questions of significance to humanity on **Sunday, March 29th** and **Sunday, April 26th**. The topics and Zoom link will be provided in the weekly e-newsletter. If you would like to receive regular emails from the Humanist Group, please contact Marilyn Medén at humanist@beaconunitarian.org.

Book Club (in person) meets on fourth Fridays at 1 pm at John's place in New Westminster. Book selections appear in *Beacon This Week*. Please read the book ahead of time so we can dive right into discussion. See the box on page 6 for our current books and contact details. Newcomers and drop-ins are always welcome!

Lunch Bunch (online) meets every Tuesday from noon until 2 pm, year-round, currently via Zoom. Bring your lunch and share in lively and topical conversation. Contact Laura Ramsay at 604-816-5331 for the Zoom link or check the *Beacon This Week* email. Newcomers are welcome!

Film Club (online and in person)

meets 1st and 3rd Fridays at 7 pm via Zoom. Some in-person events are arranged from time to time. For more information see page 6 or email Marilyn Medén: filmclub@beaconunitarian.org. The Zoom link is in Thursday's email, *Beacon This Week*.

Beacon Men's Group

In our diverse community, we recognize that many men seek spaces to:

- Reflect on their personal journeys and spiritual growth.
- Navigate life's challenges in dialogue with others who understand.
- Explore topics such as relationships, identity, vulnerability, and purpose in an atmosphere of mutual respect and acceptance.
- Build meaningful friendships and a sense of community.

We meet every second week at 7:00 pm at various locations. If you're interested in joining or learning more about us, please email mensgroup@beaconunitarian.org.

Women's Groups are discussion groups—held both in person and online—for women who attend Beacon. To join a group please contact Beth Connelly or Cathy Burpee. Please check the Breeze directory for contact information.

Music Jams

2nd Thursdays of every month, 7–8:30 pm

Music jams are an opportunity to share a song, to play music together or just come along to sing with others. Watch for reminders in the 'Beacon This Week' emails. Jams begin at 7:00 pm and run until 8:30 pm. All are welcome! Music Jams are happening March 12th (in New Westminster) and April 9th (in Coquitlam).



Earth Day, Enviro-bees & Hope Matters!

Enviro-bees

We have special presentations coming up for our March 8 & April 12



Teresa Morton

sessions. In March Kathy & Joan will talk about *Hopeful Progress in Canada*, and for the April session Ken is presenting *Geothermal Energy!*

We get together after the service finishes (allowing ten minutes for everyone to get coffee/tea & a snack). Envirobees are for in-person and on-line participants.

Earth Day Service April 19

I will present a service on April 19 called 'The Experience of Hope' with wonderful musical support from Kate & Bill. This will focus on understanding how hope works and will use examples related to our precious planet earth.

Book Study Series in May

elin kelsey's recent book *How to be Hopeful* will be the basis of a new series in May! I will be presenting four Zoom sessions (May 5, 12, 19 & 26) exploring the book and its implications for a HOPEFUL STANCE in CLIMATE. Please watch for registration info.

—Teresa Morton

Film Club (via Zoom)

View the film in advance, then come to the Zoom meeting to chat about it. In addition to our Zoom meetings, we will plan some in-person theatre events.

The Zoom-films selected are all available from YouTube for a rental fee (from free to \$6.99). They may also be available for streaming from other internet sources, so if you have a subscription to a streaming service, do check there first. To rent a film from YouTube, just search for the title in YouTube and look for the video that has a blue “Buy or Rent” box next to it. For more information, please connect with Marilyn Medén: filmclub@beaconunitarian.org. The Zoom link is in Thursday’s email, *Beacon This Week*.

Friday, Mar. 6, 7 pm



Roma, available on Netflix and presented by Rhea Kikkert.

Set in 1970 and 1971, *Roma* follows the life of a live-in indigenous (Mixteco) housekeeper of an upper-middle-class Mexican family. It is a semi-autobiographical take on Cuarón’s upbringing in Mexico City’s Colonia Roma neighborhood.

Friday, Mar. 20, 7 pm



Inherit The Wind, available on YouTube

Inherit the Wind is a parable that fictionalizes the 1925 Scopes “Monkey” Trial as a means to discuss McCarthyism. Written in response to the chilling effect of the McCarthy era investigations on intellectual discourse, the film is critical of creationism.

Friday, Apr. 3, 7 pm



I’m Still Here, available on YouTube.

Eunice Paiva begins a lonely battle to learn the truth behind the disappearance of her husband, former PTB deputy Rubens Paiva, while trying to keep her family together

Beacon Book Club (in person)

Fourth Fridays at 1 pm, in person in New West. Contact John at bookclub@beaconunitarian.org. Please read the book ahead of time. Newcomers and drop-ins are always welcome!

Friday, Mar. 27, 1–3 pm



The Book club will meet at John Hagen’s home in New Westminster to discuss *Fight Night* by Miriam Toews.

The beloved author of bestsellers *Women Talking*, *A Complicated Kindness*, and *All My Puny Sorrows* returns with a funny, smart, headlong rush of a novel full of wit, flawless writing, and a tribute to perseverance and love in an unusual family.

Food Bank collection is taken on the first Sunday of the month at Beacon.

In addition, donations can be made online (<https://bcvfd.foodbank.bc.ca/participant/124/417/>)

Thank you for supporting our neighbours with your donations.



www.beaconunitarian.org
info@beaconunitarian.org

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Treasurer:
Richard Hollins;

Co-Secretaries:
Deepak Sahasrabudhe,
Rob Warner;

Members at Large:
Lauren Casalis, Dave
Kristjanson.

**Connections and
Membership:** TBD

Beacon Newsletter:
newsletter@beaconunitarian.org

Production: Laura Redmond
Proofreading: William Marshall
and Catherine Smith.

Deadline for submissions
is the 15th of the month
preceding Sep. 1, Nov. 1, Jan. 1,
Mar. 1, May 1, and July 1.