



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 May 24 and June 7th and 14th. 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-alongs on May 24th and June 14th. PLUS the 'Beacon Singers' lead on June 7th. 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.

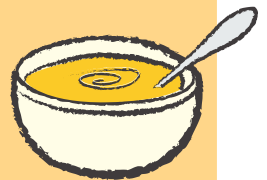
If you'd like to see past [recordings](#) from our services, they are linked from our website's homepage. Come and be part of our caring and questioning community.

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

Soup Lunch

Sunday, May 17th

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.



Sunday, June 21st: Picnic

See page 3 for information.

The Practice of Liberating Love

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

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that English has only one word for love, while other cultures have multiple words for describing the different manifestations. The ancient Greeks described different kinds of love that occur at different stages of life: eros for the intensity of attraction that has sexuality in its mix. Philia for the deep love that we have for our friends. Agape, the love that we have for those who are flawed and vulnerable – variously translated as compassion or charity.

There is value in understanding the ways different experiences of love are shaped by our age and stage of life and the form of relationship that they arise within. There is also value in turning a critical eye on the way that modern Western culture speaks about love – predominantly romantic love (especially the love of opposite-sex cis-gendered people – cue all the clichés here!) and secondarily the love of a parent for a child (cue another large bucket of clichés).

All these things are true. And yet. When we speak of the liberation that is possible within love, because of love, it can show up at any age or stage of life and in any form of relationship. It doesn't matter whether we are learning to love ourselves, the ones we live with, the ones we care about, or this good earth that we inhabit. Love draws us out of ourselves, nudging us, in small and big ways, to be more . . . ourselves in all of our relationships, just as it draws us into more concrete actions for others.

How this happens is a bit of a mystery and it can come wrapped up in other strong and sometimes not-very-loving feelings.

Years ago, I had a friendship that ended painfully. I struggled with

memories and recriminations long after we broke contact. I wrote about my anger, I listened to it, attempted to make friends with it, meditated on it, and called my energy back in ritual. All to no avail, or at least, not much in the way of results.

Then one day, stopped at a traffic light, listening to the radio, I looked up into the deep blue sky and the thought came, unbidden, that I wished my former friend well.

Years ago, I had a friendship that ended painfully. I struggled with memories and recriminations long after we broke contact.

Why did that happen right then? I don't know. I could write about how all the various attempts to come to terms with the ending of the friendship and my role in that built up some sort of architecture in my brain and eventually this showed up in my life.

Maybe that's true. Somehow, it seems more true that this revelation was tied to the particular blue of the sky that day. I wonder whether my former friend somehow let go of their struggle at the same time (although not enough to contact them!).

That moment of looking into the blue sky did not prevent my former uncharitable thoughts from coming back – several times after that, I found myself regurgitating my former way of thinking. But over time it happened less, and when it did, I was able to catch myself, reminding myself that I

didn't need to think like that anymore.

Love is both very simple and very complicated.

Love requires our intention and it exists beyond our intention. Love is both an experience and an action.

Love is at the heart of what it means to be a human being and it is not unique to us.

This year the *Meaning Making* project has explored how we can meet this moment with love and justice, two important values in Canadian Unitarian Universalism.

With this last packet, "liberating love," we are stepping onto hallowed ground – following in the footsteps of some of our religious and spiritual ancestors.

For our Universalist ancestors in Ontario, Québec and Nova Scotia in the 1840s, the belief that we are loved by God was revolutionary. People left the faiths of their families in in the hundreds because this belief was liberating. Universalism relieved them of a horrible burden and gave them a profound purpose in their daily lives – to express this love in their interactions with all of God's beloved.

In the late 1800s, as more mainstream Christian movements adopted some aspects of Universalism, the momentum faltered. Now, almost 200 years later, we are living through a rise of a secular form of predestination: people are condemned for being immigrants, or trans, or some other aspect of their life and identity. Now is the time to catch the echoes of our Universalist ancestors and shape their words and actions to fit our century and our problems.

May it be so. Yours in faith,

—Karen Fraser Gitlitz

The Practice of Liberating Love

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

- Love is a form of sweet labor: fierce, bloody, imperfect, and life-giving — a choice we make over and over again. —*Valarie Kaur*
- Real love comes with a powerful recognition that we are fully alive and whole despite our wounds or our fears or our loneliness. It is a state where we allow ourselves to be seen clearly by ourselves and by others, and in turn, we offer clear seeing to the world around us. It is a love that heals. —*Sharon Salzberg*
- Love is what brought us here. Love is what sustains us here, and it is love that will deliver us back home. There is one love (‘eshq, in Persian). Human love, when it is stripped of the traps of ego, is divine. To journey on this one love is what the mystics called the path of radical love. How liberating this can be, to know and realize that to participate in any love is to be a part of the divine unfolding, the cosmic unleashing. —*Omid Safi*
- Justice and love are not identical, but they are indivisible. —*Cornel West*
- As Canadian Unitarians our interdependence calls us to love and justice. Love and justice. Love asks us to enlarge the circle over and over again, until all are welcome. —*Rev. Fiona Heath*
- The more I wonder, the more I love. —*Alice Walker*
- Never let a problem to be solved become more important than the person to be loved. —*Barbara Johnson*
- The practice of love is the most powerful antidote to the politics of domination. —*bell hooks*
- To practice love is to disrupt the status quo which is masquerading as peace. —*Austin Channing Brown*
- I’ll love you forever, I’ll like you for always, As long as I’m living, my baby you’ll be. —*Robert Munsch, from his book, Love You Forever*
- I write for my people, as an act of love and resistance and because until relatively recently, very few people were able to do so. I grew up a disappointed reader because I never saw myself in the books I was reading—none of the books were written for me. I made a decision early on in my career to speak first to a Nishnaabeg audience, as a way of not centering whiteness. I am not writing to educate white folks. That’s not what motivates me. I want to interact with my audience on my own terms. —*Leanne Betasamosake Simpson*
- Every action for peace requires someone to exhibit the courage to challenge the violence and inspire love. —*Thich Nhat Hanh*
- Love doesn’t just sit there, like a stone, it has to be made, like bread; remade all the time, made new. —*Ursula K. Le Guin, from her book, The Lathe of Heaven*

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.

Hold the Date for Beacon’s End of the Year Picnic

After the service on June 21st, we look forward to holding our annual all-ages picnic. Bring food to share and a drink of your choice. We will provide hotdogs (meat

and vegetarian). If good weather is predicted for that day, we will meet in Sapperton Park playground (corner of Sherbrooke St. and East Columbia in New Westminster). If the weather is rainy, we have booked the lower level of Sapperton Hall and can gather

there instead. It is a wonderful way to finish off our Sunday services program for the year. Then we take a break from Sapperton services until September 13 (the first Sunday after Labour Day). We hope you can join us!

SAVE THE DATE!
Reserve Sunday, June 21st for a Beacon picnic in the park.



Board Bitz

The 2025–2026 season has been a busy and meaningful time for Beacon, marked by many changes and new initiatives.

We have been a lay-led congregation this year, with David Kristjanson and Glenn Wootton guiding the Worship Committee, and with the support of the full Board of Trustees. The Worship Committee has been supported by the newly formed Homily Club, which has already led one service, with more to come.

Another highlight of our Sunday mornings has been the pre-service

sing-alongs, led by rotating teams including Bill Marshall and Kate Smith, and Dominique Mamisao, Susan Tarras, Laura Redmond, and Peg Hinkley.

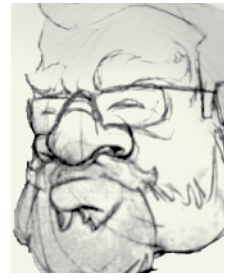
We have been delighted to welcome new members Glen and Kathy Williams to our community.

Reverend Christopher Wulff has been engaged to offer ministerial support to those in our community who are seeking it.

After many years of organizing soup lunches, Peggy Lunderville has passed the baton to Augusta

Hamilton, who has continued the tradition and made it a high-light of every third Sunday.

Our final Sunday service of the season will be June 21, when we will welcome three new members, followed by our annual picnic in the park.



Rob Warner
Board member at large

—Rob Warner

Homily Club Update!

The Beacon Homily Club presents monthly services, giving members opportunities to plan and lead. Roles range from lighting the chalice and reading opening words or meditations to shaping the entire Sunday experience. Join us on Sunday, May 17 and June 21 for club-led services.

Our second and third Homily Club services, March 29 (A Unitarian Universalist Sampler), and Apr 12th (Trees) were well presented and well-received. Each service had more than 6 participants!

In March we held our first Homily Club workshop, *Communicating from the Heart* with Rev Debra Thorne and 15 people participated.

April 18th was a workshop on writing a homily: *Getting It Done, How to Prepare a Homily* with Phil Campbell. (A second session will happen on Sat. June 13th.)

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 May 3rd and May 24th after the service. All are welcome!

—Teresa Morton



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 meet the last Sunday of the month at 7:30 pm via Zoom. Please check *Beacon This Week* for information about the May 31st meeting on the topic of **mindful self-compassion**. There will be no meeting in June. 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. Newcomers and drop-ins are always welcome! For information email John at bookclub@beaconunitarian.org.

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:

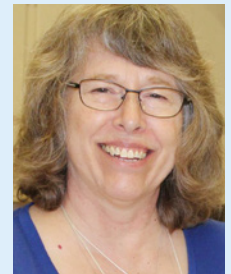
- Reflect on their personal journeys and spiritual growth.
- Navigate life's challenges in dialogue with others who understand.
- Explore topics such as relationships, identity, vulnerability, and purpose in an atmosphere of mutual respect and acceptance.
- Build meaningful friendships and a sense of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

Enviro-bees & How to be Hopeful!

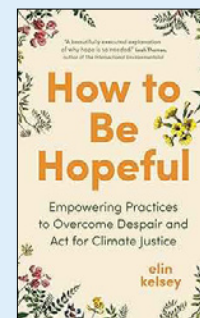
Enviro-bees are May 31st and June 14th. We have chosen a topic for our May 31st session: the environmental implications of artificial intelligence.



Teresa Morton

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.

May Series:



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 & 26, June 2nd) exploring the book and its implications for a **hopeful stance in climate**. There are five key stances and 27 practices to bolster hope. We will be highlighting the stances and exploring a selection of the 27 practices.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88621213219?pwd=weMNnGErbxoC0xfp7DXcz6jgxWiD5m.1>

Meeting ID: 886 2121 3219

Passcode: 425242

Everyone is welcome!

—Teresa Morton

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 May 14th (in New Westminster) and June 11th (to be confirmed).



Film Club (via Zoom)

View the film in advance, then come to the Zoom meeting to chat about it. 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, April 17, 7 pm



Inherit The Wind, 1960, suggested by John Hagen
[Trailer](#)

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, May 15, 7 pm



Seabiscuit, Suggested by Janene White
Available on YouTube; [Trailer](#)

True story of the undersized Depression-era racehorse whose victories lifted

not only the spirits of the team behind it but also those of their nation.

Friday, May 1, 7 pm



A Lady from Shanghai, suggested by Michael Scales
Available on You Tube;

[Trailer](#)

A seaman becomes involved in a complex murder plot when he is hired to work on a yacht. He soon finds himself implicated in the murder, despite his innocence. The film is best remembered for its climax “hall of mirrors” scene with a shoot out amidst shards of shattering glass.

Friday, June 5, 7 pm



The Testament of Ann Lee, suggested by Pauline Atwood
[Trailer](#)

The film follows Ann Lee, an 18th-century Englishwoman whose grief shapes her spiritual path as she finds a utopian Shaker community grounded in song, dance, work, egalitarianism, and celibacy.

Beacon Book Club

Friday, May 22, 1 pm



Dayspring by Anthony Oliveira. A singular, stunning debut that transcends and transfigures genre—at once a bold retelling of biblical tales and an unforgettable contemporary coming-of-age story, connected in collapsing time across millennia.

Friday, June 26, 5 pm



It’s time to give every Beaconite a chance to talk about Bill Marshall’s book, *Framed By Our Houses*. Have you

read it? Did it remind you of places you’ve lived? How did those places shape you?

We’ve waited to hold this discussion so we could gather everyone for a social evening in John Hagen’s backyard. This is a chance to connect and share about the book in a relaxed setting. Even if you haven’t read it, you’re very welcome! You’re also invited to bring a book to suggest as a summer read.

There will be a finger-food potluck. Please RSVP to Marilyn Medén (contact info is in the Breeze directory).



Beacon Unitarian Church

www.beaconunitarian.org
info@beaconunitarian.org

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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.