

January Service Theme: Play

Beacon enters 2016 on the theme of PLAY! From the most serious 'playing with fire' to the 'play's the thing', to the 'divine comedy', our month will be filled with thoughtful laughter and the exhilaration of risking the unknown through play.

**JAN
3**

Letting Go: A Fire Communion

Joan Morris, Nancy Rupert,

Rev. Debra Thorne

The Fire Communion will be a creative and flashy letting go of 2015, so as to make room for all the surprises, gifts and learnings that await us in 2016. Through contemplation and visual art we gather up our experiences of the past year and prepare to release them.

**JAN
10**

Playing God

Rev. Debra Thorne

When the ancient Greek actors put on their masks and walked onto the stage at Delphi, they were quite literally transformed into Gods and Goddesses. Where do the Gods play today? When do we transform into creatures of divine power?



**JAN
17**

To play's the thing...

Don Hauka

Playing: kid's stuff. Waste of time—not enough time. Life's too busy. "Play" isn't taken seriously, even in the dictionary: "Play: engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose." But you can achieve a lot just by horsing around and not being afraid to have fun. Don Hauka leads you on a journey of discovery of the power of play in a creative process peppered with epiphanies. Join us on January 17 and have your game-face on!

- Choir sings

**JAN
24**

Our Unitarian Ancestors Part 1

Rev. Debra Thorne

The history of Unitarianism is filled with men and women who have stood above the crowd through brave and principled action. Some spoke truth to power, while others saw an opportunity to fight injustice. Many were also quite eccentric personalities! Today you'll meet a few of them. There will also be a new member ceremony and the choir sings.

**JAN
31**

Divine Comedy

Ryan Gunther

Coordinator: Marilyn Medén

Comedy and religion are polar opposites in terms of tone, but often serve the same fundamental purpose: to help us deal with the parts of life that are horrible. This will be a serious discussion of comedy, a light-hearted look at religion, and an exploration of the many ways the two overlap. Well known in the stand-up comedy field, Ryan Gunther will entertain and enlighten.



**Beacon
Unitarian
Church**

Sunday worship services and religious education classes are held at the Sapperton Pensioners Hall, 318 Keary Street, New Westminster. Services start at 10:30 am. More info at www.beaconunitarian.org.

Deadline for the February issue of The Beacon: January 15th, 2015
Please send to: Newsletter@BeaconUnitarian.org

From the Minister's Desk



It has been one of those years when a little bit of everything happened. The Beacon community has lost and gained. It hurt my

heart to lose David Hamilton and Anita Hagen this past summer. My heart soared with joy to see so many wonderful new faces, to hear deep stories of courage and growth and to witness the open generosity of Beaconites as they prepare for a refugee family. This is what it means to live in community: we share each other's moments of loss and we share the moments of celebration.

I pray that Beacon continues to grow in spiritual depth and in its commitment to changing lives wherever and whenever the need arises. I wish you another year of accomplishment interspersed with many moments of playfulness.

—Warmly, Rev. Debra Thorne

Beacon Congregational Birthday Dinner Celebration

You are invited to "Share the Love"

Saturday, February 6, 2016

**5:30 pm to 9:00 pm
Sapperton Hall downstairs**

Everyone is welcome – friends, family, congregants

Tickets go on sale Sunday Jan 24th and Jan 31st

Child Care Provided

Come and have fun with fellow congregants.
Celebrate Beacon's Birthday. Write some love notes.

Can you help with the organization, set up or clean up?
Contact Sue Sparlin.



**Beacon
Unitarian
Church**

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Board Bitz

Today's Board Bitz entry will be a bit of an anomaly. Rather than telling you of Board initiatives in the past month, I will be saluting you, the congregation, for accomplishments that you began, independent of the Board. Around the beginning of the month, in quick succession, Beaconites first signed up to be a co-sponsor of Vancouver's Global Climate Change March, which was held on November 29, to demonstrates citizen commitment around the world for the meeting of world leaders, starting the following day, to work towards developing agreements to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and climate change.

The march began with welcoming speeches by a number of Indigenous leaders, which I found highly appropriate, as we were standing on unceded First Nations land, in front of Vancouver's Art Gallery. Also, it is

increasingly clear that legal action by First Nations, who have been denied meaningful consultation, is becoming one of our best methods of halting industrial mega-projects that lack public support. The day was cool, but brilliantly sunny. Marchers from Beacon brought our new flag, which served well as an effective re-grouping focus, whenever we became separated by the surging crowd. We stood by our colleagues from Unitarian Church of Vancouver, North Shore Unitarian and South Fraser Unitarian.

I must confess that I hogged the flag but, truth be known, I didn't even notice its weight, given my deep pride at Beacon's energy and integrity.

Only a week later, at a congregational meeting, our members unanimously chose to sponsor a refugee family. Once again, you all placed my buttons in severe danger of pride-driven popping. That project, too, is



Audrey Taylor,
Co-President



Terry McComas,
Co-President

off to a roaring start. I urge anyone interested in fund-raising to speak with Susan Millar. If helping with settlement is more to your taste, Nancy Rupert will be delighted to sign you up.

I am attracted to the teachings of both Tibetan Buddhism and Unitarianism. You all regularly remind me, Buddhitarian that I am, of what attracts me to Unitarianism—our devotion to having our actions mirror our stated values. Well done, Beacon!

—Terry McComas, Co-President

Let's Connect



newsletter.

Rev. Debra will be having a special welcoming tea for these new members at the new office in the home of the Lundervilles early in the new year.

The new directory is out along with an insert with corrections and additions. Please be sure to pick one up at the greeter's table if you haven't received your copy.

Circle dinners have been so successful we have had people let us know they don't want to miss the next one

A New Year is upon us! Lots is happening this year. We have a number of new folk who are planning to join Beacon at the special joining ceremony on January 24th. Be sure to attend church that day to help welcome them into our midst. We'll make sure that their bios are in the February

which will be March 5th (with the Beacon Congregational dinner happening in February, we have put the Circle Dinners off until March). Hosts have told us they have really enjoyed the experience of meeting a group of friendly faces who each contribute to the dinner with yummy additions. And participants have had a good time getting to know other Beaconites in a warm homey setting. A heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you for taking part.

We will be beginning to organize for the March dinners in mid January so if you would like to host a dinner, please let Donna (donna-h@telus.net) or Joan (joanmorris@telus.net) know.

Your Connections and Membership Committee,

—Joan Morris, Jean Donaldson, Susan Tarras,
Joyce Gudaitis, Rev. Debra Thorne

What's going on in Religious Education Classes

In December we held our annual *Night Tree Party* at the Lunderville residence. A number of families and Beacon members attended this annual all-ages event. We enjoyed a delicious potluck dinner. We made ornaments for birds and animals out of peanut butter and bird seed, popcorn and cranberries, and oranges. We listened to Rob Warner read *The Night Tree*. Then we decorated a tree in the park. Although it was raining, our spirits weren't dampened and a good time was had by all.

At the time of writing we are still hard at work on our holiday pageant. This is a big undertaking each year for the teachers, children, parents and other participants. We always enjoy the opportunity to involve other members of the Beacon community in our production, building connections and having fun together (see photo page 5).

In January, there will be a big change in our community. After many years of nurturing Beacon's children as Co-Director of Religious Education, Laura Redmond will be stepping down from her position. As we mentioned in the last newsletter, Casey Thorne Stainsby (Debra's eldest daughter) will be joining the RE program and leading the *Seekers*. Casey has been a DRE at the Lakeshore Unitarian Congregation in Quebec for the past few years (see her bio below). We extend a heartfelt thank-you to Laura, and a warm welcome to Casey.

In September, we had an excellent response to our call for adult members of Beacon to spend one Sunday this year in church school. Our goal isn't just to have more adult



Night Tree Party 2015, making gifts for our feathered and furry friends.

help downstairs, it's to build connections and community between children and adults. No experience or planning is necessary—you just have to be there! We will be repeating our call for volunteers to help through the winter and spring. Look for our table downstairs on January 10th or email me at amber@strocet.com. —Amber Strocet



Casey Stainsby

Casey Stainsby is a born-and-raised UU who is passionate about providing safe and inspiring environments for young folks to question themselves and the world. Her experience working with children comes from being an animator for an after-school tutoring, art and cooking program for over three years, being the SE (Spiritual Exploration) Coordinator at Lakeshore Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Lachine, Quebec (just outside of Montreal) for four years and of course, babysitting. She has been extremely active in the UU youth and young adult worlds. Some highlights: sitting on the CUC's Board as the Youth Observer, being on staff for GoldMine Youth Leadership School in the PNWD and Eastern Canada, and coordinating the Children's Programs for the 2014 CUC ACM. Casey just recently became the giddy new Coordinator for CanUUdle, the national youth conference. Although her home congregation is the Unitarian Church of Vancouver, Casey spent the past five years in Montreal. Having just completed a BFA in Theatre and Development and Sexuality Studies at Concordia University, she's just moved back home and is very much looking forward to working with the Beacon community.

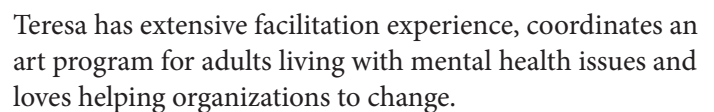
Announcing the formation of a Covenant Group convened to explore thoughts and feelings related to climate change (co-sponsored by Beacon Climate Change Task Force & UCV Covenant Groups.)

The Climate Change Covenant Group will be open for the first two sessions, however, after the 2nd session, no new members will be added.

The series will culminate in a group decision and action to carry out a project as a group.

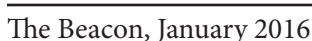
2nd Session: Principles of Active Hope, based on work by Joanna Macy & Chris Johnstone (led by Mary Bennett)

Teresa Morton attends Beacon Unitarian and is one of the three co-leaders in the Beacon Climate Change Task Force.



Mary and Teresa have been friends and colleagues for over twenty years. They meet weekly to create art together and their conversations are wide-ranging.

Wisepeople,
shepherds and
animals join Mary
and Joseph in
welcoming the
new baby.



Out in Harmony's Got Your Number

Numbers fill our lives, and, constitute a complex language filled with subtleties and beauty.

From a child first learning to count, to a lover trying to express the magnitude of their feelings, to a scientist attempting to articulate the magnitude and wonder of the Universe, numbers surrounding us provide a framework to describe what would otherwise be indescribable.

Out in Harmony's Got Your Number, and we hope you'll join us for a fantastic evening celebrating numbers, counting, mathematics and the different ways we measure beauty and meaning. How do you measure the pleasure this concert will bring?

Count down the days until you can join us for an evening of musical numbers all about numbers. We'll celebrate finding the One, raise up to the Power of Two, and count up all the way up to 1000 Beautiful Things and beyond. You can count on having a great time with your number one favourite Gay Bi Trans Queer Lesbian and Friends adult community choir!

When: 7:30 pm Saturday, January 23, 2016. Doors open at 7:00 pm.

Where: Unitarian Church of Vancouver, 949 West 49th Ave (corner of 49th & Oak).

Please note that this venue is wheelchair accessible. The nearest Skytrain Station is Langara-49th Station, and the venue is accessible by the #17(Oak Street) Bus or the #49 (49th Ave) Bus.

Tickets: Ticket prices remain only \$15, or we also have \$10 concession tickets available and children 12 and under are admitted free. (Keeping our concerts accessible in all ways is a priority for us.) Tickets may be purchased from choir members or at the

OUT IN HARMONY'S
Got Your Number

Nicola Hamilton Dan Lauterbach
DIRECTOR ACCOMPANIST

23 JANUARY 2016 | SATURDAY, 7:30 PM
Unitarian Church of Vancouver, 949 W 49th Ave.
WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE

This is a scent-free concert!
Let us be mindful of those who may have
issues with scents or perfumes. Thank you.

Tickets: Scan QR code
or go to
<http://bit.do/oihnumber>

Visit **OUTINHARMONY.ORG** for more information.

OUT IN HARMONY
Vancouver's Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer, Lesbian & Friends Choir

door via cash or cheque, or at <http://bit.do/oihnumber> using your Mastercard or Visa credit card (processing fee applies).

Scent-reduced Event: In keeping with our commitment to accessibility, this will be a scent-reduced event. Please abstain from wearing perfumes or scents so that those with allergies and sensitivities are able to come and enjoy the concert.

Volunteer & Attend Free: If you

would like to volunteer at the concert, please contact morag.wehrle@gmail.com by January 12th. Volunteers get to hear the concert for free.

More information: Visit us on facebook and at our website Outinharmony.org or see Donna Hamilton at Beacon.

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

Theology Pub patrons discuss relevant issues on religion and spirituality in a relaxed pub atmosphere. See box below for details on our January gathering. Contact Franci Louann: flouann@telus.net.

Soul Matters Groups delve into the monthly sermon themes—"Play" for January. Part personal sharing, part spiritual deepening, the groups meet once a month either at 1 pm Wednesday, or 7 pm Thursday. Contact Debra Thorne: minister@beaconunitarian.org.

Humanist Discussion Group meets the last Sunday of the month (Jan. 31st) at 7:30 pm at *The Astoria House* in Port Coquitlam to discuss a wide range of current topics. Based on the book *The Brain That Changes Itself*

by Norman Doidge, Marilyn Medén will talk about neuroplasticity—how it works, evidence of dramatic results, how it influences our lives, and how we might make use of it. Contact Marilyn Medén: m.j.meden@telus.net.

Join the Beacon Choir for musical fun and skill development. Rehearsals are every Tuesday at 7:30 pm, at Miller Park School in Coquitlam. Contact Charlene Dubrule, choir director, 604-464-3992 or char4myc@shaw.ca.

Lunch Bunch meets every Thursday at noon. Bring your own lunch and share in a lively and topical conversation. Contact Sally Frith: salfrith44@gmail.com.

Attend a Circle Dinner and connect with other Beaconites in a relaxed setting. Next dinner is planned for March 5th. Please contact Donna Hamilton: Donna-h@telus.net.

Beacon Men's Group. Contact Tyler Vittie at cycleman58@gmail.com.

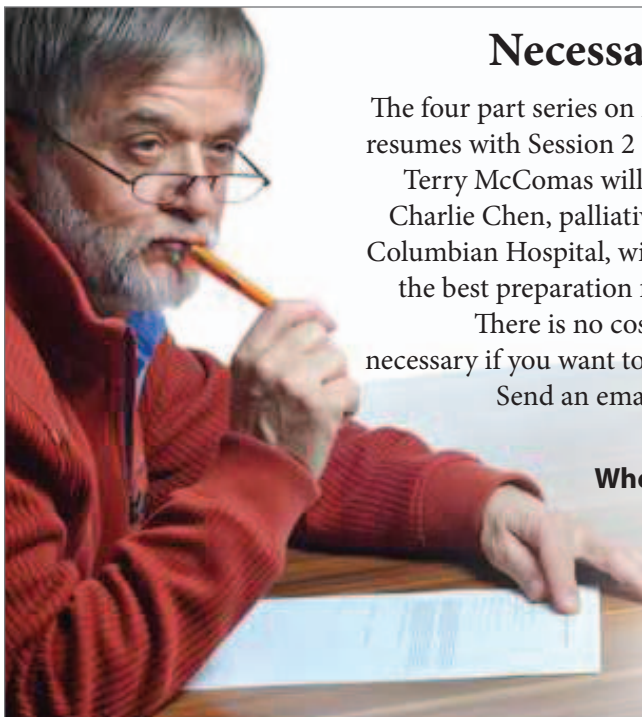


Check out the Book Club which will meet Monday January 25th from 10:30 am to 12:30. Contact Bev Lock: 604-525-6791 or lockbev@gmail.com.

The book for January is *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry.

Attend a 'Getting to Know U' session to meet other newcomers and deepen your knowledge of how Beacon functions and what Unitarianism is. Contact Jean Donaldson for future dates: donaldsj@telus.net.


Help out on Sunday mornings as a Coffee Host (contact Sue Sparlin: sue.sparlin@shaw.ca), **or sign-up as a Sunday Morning Greeter** (contact Susan Tarras: starras@telus.net).



Necessary Paperwork

The four part series on Advance Care Planning resumes with Session 2 "Necessary Paperwork". Terry McComas will talk about wills and Dr Charlie Chen, palliative care doctor for Royal Columbian Hospital, will share his thoughts on the best preparation for end of life decisions. There is no cost but pre-registration is necessary if you want to receive the paperwork. Send an email to ACPRegistration@BeaconUnitarian.org

When: Sunday, January 24
Location: Sapperton Pensioners Hall
Time: 1 pm



THEOLOGY PUB: Eat, Drink, Think.

Theology Pub will continue on Second Sundays at 1 pm, with Rev. Debra Thorne &/or Franci Louann facilitating. We'll meet again in the enclosed patio area at Gino's Mediterranean restaurant, 431 E. Columbia Street. Later we may try other locations in the Sapperton neighbourhood.

Next Session is January 10th. Gino's is wheelchair accessible, except for washrooms.

Beacon Calendar: January 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 10:30am - Worship Service	28	29	30	31 12pm - Lunch Bunch	1	2
3 January Theme: Play 10:30am - Food Bank Sunday 10:30am - Worship Service	4	5 7:30pm - Choir Practice	6	7 12pm - Lunch Bunch	8	9
10 10:30am - Worship Service 1pm - Theology Pub at Gino's	11	12 1pm - Board Meeting 7:30pm - Choir Practice	13	14 12pm - Lunch Bunch	15 Newsletter Deadline	16
17 10:30am - Choir sings 10:30am - Worship Service	18	19 7:30pm - Choir Practice	20 1pm - Soul Matters Wednesday	21 12pm - Lunch Bunch 1pm - Connecting & Membership 7pm - Soul Matters Thursday	22	23
24 10:30am - Worship Service 1pm - Advanced Care Planning	25 10:30am - Book Club	26 7:30pm - Choir Practice	27	28 12pm - Lunch Bunch	29	30
31 10:30am - Worship Service 7:30pm - Humanist Group	1	2 7:30pm - Choir Practice	3	4 12pm - Lunch Bunch	5 5:30pm - Congregational Dinner	6