

Radically Inclusive

January's theme is 'Radically Inclusive', which asks us to enter 2017 welcoming education, adjustment and transformation. What vision is conjured in your mind when you think of being a radically inclusive person? I invite you bring your curiosity for unexplored places, people and ideas to the journey.

JAN 1 **Meditating on the New Year: A Simple Service of Readings and Contemplation**

Sue Sparlin and Marilyn Meden
Please join us as we turn our focus to the coming year. This is an all-ages service (no religious exploration classes for the children today). If you have a reading you'd like to share with us please contact Sue or Marilyn.

JAN 8 **Letting Go: A Fire Communion**
Rev. Debra Thorne

Through the elements of soothing water and sparkling fire we remember and release the past year to make way for the new. We will honour those we have lost and all that was unfinished and unrealized. We will celebrate small victories and major accomplishments. We will make way for the new.

JAN 15 **Polyamory**
Guest Speakers: Madeline Micheals and Melanie Ray
Service Coordinator: Marilyn Medén

As part of our spiritual development we open ourselves to a deeper understanding of the many ways in which human love is

expressed. On this Sunday we are fortunate to have two polyamorous speakers tell us of their outlook and about polyamory in their lives. We will also welcome a guest soloist, Zoey Wren.

JAN 22 **New Normal(s)**
Rev. Debra Thorne

From the outside, we can't see how brains function, but they do. Neurodiversity is the term that describes a spectrum of human functions including thinking, sensing and feeling. The Neurodiversity move-

ment suggests that there is a greater range of normal variations of brain-body function than previously understood. This 'new normal' requires a radical expanding of our hearts as we welcome—with understanding, not judgement—those who, in the past, were considered 'different'.

JAN 29 **Disability, Radical Inclusion, and Attitude Shifts**

Dave Symington
Service Coordinator: Joan Morris

This talk will explore various issues concerning disability, societal attitudes, and some radical ideas about sexuality and inclusion. Through personal experience of living with a disability for over 40 years, as well as 20 years of living without a disability, the speaker will explore systemic and social changes up to this point and possibilities for the future.

Dave Symington spent most of his career working in the post secondary system as a counselor, advisor, program manager and policy coordinator. He currently spends his time engaged in music, advocacy and volunteer work.



Minister's Message



Rev. Debra Thorne

Not everyone has the same theological questions, nor the same physical abilities, nor the same emotional sensitivities.

We know that humans come in a multitude of diversities, and we endeavour to be respectful of all. As Canadian Unitarians we affirm and promote communities that are welcoming to everyone who is inspired by our principles.

At Beacon we are thoughtful and intentional in our welcoming of every person who arrives on our 'doorstep'. We ask permission first before we hug someone, we kneel down to speak to a child so we are at their eye level, and we say our names out loud so that those who are seeing impaired know who is in front of them. We are careful though, to not be too enthusiastic in our welcoming, as we know that not everyone is comfortable with a high level of energy!

Our Beacon community is beginning 2017 with an intentionally challenging theme: Radically Inclusive. This is one of the five aspirations that the Canadian Unitarian Council members (meaning 'all of us') voted on at the last annual meeting held here in Vancouver in May of 2016: Radically Inclusive: We strive to create

hospitable, diverse, multi-generational communities.

That annual meeting took on an excitement as the wording to the proposed Vision statement was being discussed. It was one of those inspired moments when one idea popped above the rest, and without plan or expectation seemed to grow stronger and brighter. The excitement was connected to the word 'radically'. [Radically: (adverb) *thoroughly, completely, fundamentally, in essence or origin.*] Thus the vision is for Canadian Unitarians to become completely, fundamentally inclusive.

When we are committed to being radically inclusive we intentionally make ourselves aware of those who we put on the margins. It means each of us must be attentive to our thoughts and feelings so that we become aware of who we 'pass over', who we 'discount', who we treat as 'disposable'. Being radically inclusive, we are invited to practice a hospitality that as Henri Nouwen, author of *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life*, says is, 'primarily the creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy.'

Being radically inclusive is going to make us feel uncomfortable, a little fearful, a little excited!

We are being called to the intentional inclusion of every person. Each

of us will be asked to reflect on what would be 'radically inclusive' for us, for our families, for Beacon? We will be asked to consider if there are limits to who we include and exclude, and on what basis would we exclude? Does inclusion require us to do more than respect another? Does being radically inclusive mean we endorse another's point of view or does it mean that we truly value engagement with diversity? Does radically inclusive mean we are being asked if we will love this person even if we see the world differently? Does being radically inclusive mean we will stand up and be committed to making sure this community and this world includes all this gorgeous diversity?

'Radical' was the word in the CUC ACM meeting that flew up into the room and would not be ignored. The idea of 'radical' shook us up, it meant that we were adopting an aspiration that pushed us out of our comfort zone, it brought a fearful excitement into the Canadian Unitarian movement, and I trust that Beacon too will bravely plunge into a radically inclusive, warm and joyous, 2017.

Our journey together is more than the destination.

With respect, Rev. Debra Thorne

Note: The CUC Vision Statement and the 5 Aspirations can be found at <http://cuc.ca/vision-and-mission/>



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**Deadline for the February issue of
The Beacon: January 15, 2017**

Freedom, Healing and Abundance

It is with great humility and gratitude that the Board and I share with you the news that for the third year, an anonymous donation has been offered to Beacon to increase the minister's half time contract to three-quarter time. The extra hours allow me to meet the needs of supporting and leading the Beacon community and to do all that I dream of doing.

That being said, this past year has been a real challenge for me personally. Starting with my mother's stroke this time last year, and ending with Casey and Lucy's father's death in October, I find myself mentally and emotionally in need of some recovery time.

The Board has accepted my proposal that I defer acceptance of the additional time for the first three months of 2017. The fourth month, April was already in my contract as a planned time away. For January, February and March I will be available for all meetings, groups and face-to-face visits in the first and third week of each month. In the other weeks I can be contacted through email and by telephone.

I will return to the enhanced time (three quarters) in May, just in time to begin planning the 2017-18 church year which I am excited about!

I want to especially thank the Beacon Board and the Committee on Ministry for their thoughtful and loving support through this past year.

Warmly, Rev. Debra



Thank you Renée!

Renée Spakowsky has been part of the Caring and Concern committee, sending cards of support and providing gifts to Beacon people over the years. She has retired from this position, and we at Beacon thank her for her kind words and thoughtful action.

Board Bitz



Happy New Year!

Your Board of Directors is busy doing mid-year contract discussions with our contract staff and also working on a new Covenant of Right Relations, and policies on conflict resolution and disruptive behaviours. See the following draft of the Covenant of Right Relations.

Most importantly, we wish you all a grand new year and look forward to our time with you in 2017.

—Audrey Taylor, President

Below is the draft of a new Covenant of Right Relations. The Minister and the Board invite your feedback. If you have any comments or suggestions, please direct them to Rev. Debra or Audrey Taylor.

Beacon Unitarian Church Covenant of Right Relations DRAFT

We, the members of Beacon Unitarian Congregation, acknowledge that this covenant of Right Relations exists within a spiritual community, based on the Seven Principles of Unitarianism. We covenant:

1. To respect each other, honouring the diversity of opinions in the congregation.
2. To honour both the abilities and disabilities in the congregation
3. To practice civil communication, which is courteous and considerate.
4. To participate with trust and commitment.
5. To challenge our assumptions and expectations.
6. To bring our goodwill, and hear through our hearts.
7. To encourage laughter and the giving of care.

Recognizing that we are imperfect human beings, we will strive nonetheless to meet the intentions of this covenant. (If the covenant is broken, we turn to the supportive policies on Conflict Resolution and Disruptive Behaviour.)

Connecting, Inspiring,
Transforming!

Let's Connect



Festive appetizers, wonderful meals and great ideas for conversation and entertainment made the December 4th dinners ones to remember.

From Judy Villett & Michael Scales:
As hosts for the last Circle Dinner, we wanted to say what a pleasure it was! Our six guests all brought great contributions and a feast seemed to effortlessly materialize! The conversation was equally rich and varied, with lots of jokers in the crowd. Thanks to everyone for joining into a game of Quiddler to satisfy Judy's word-nerd craving! Interesting to note that the conversation continued to flow during the game, right up to the final good-byes in the parking lot.

From Helen McVey:
I really enjoyed our circle dinner. As I had Anne McLeod as my cohost that immediately helped me relax. As host, I suggested that we use the December theme as a source of conversation. I asked that we each think of an expectation for a Christmas when we were



Circle dinners another success in bringing Beacon members and friends together!



Dinner at Phil and Elizabeth Campbell's home

children. That turned out to be fun and gave everyone a chance to talk.

A big thank you to all of our hosts for the fine evening... and to all the guests who gathered, bringing food and enthusiastic appetites and great conversation.

We hope to hold a couple more

Circle Dinners in the 2017 so watch for information about future dinners in the next newsletter.

—Joan Morris, on behalf of
the Connections Committee: Jean
Donaldson, Susan Tarras, Joyce
Gudaitis, Phil Campbell, Rev. Debra
Thorne and Donna Hamilton (Circle
Dinners)

Religious Exploration Program for January

Welcome to 2017! I hope this winter season found you all wrapped up warm and surrounded by love and chocolate!

First of all I want to give a HUGE thank you to all who made our winter pageant a grand success! I especially want to thank Nancy Rupert and Michael Jenkins who were instrumental in helping make the pageant a reality. Also a big thank you to all the children and youth who participated and helped create that warm holiday cheer. Thank you all so very much!

The new year brings with it some exciting projects already underway. As most of you know, through the fall season, both the youth and the children have been doing some fund

raising for a 'social action project' and now is the time to put those fund raised dollars to good use, so on **January 8th** we will be kicking off the new year with a **welcome back RE party** and spend our Sunday morning time together filling donated backpacks with some much needed items that will be distributed to youth in need in the New West area.

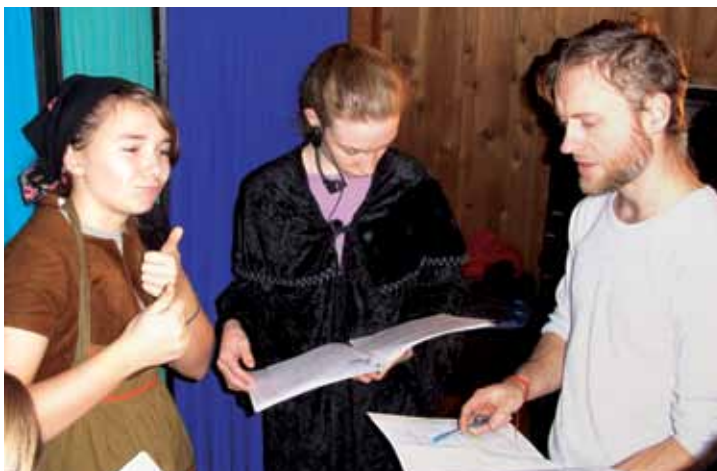
Our volunteer teacher for the month of January is Bette Good who has already done so much for the Religious Explorations (RE) program by being on the RE committee. Through the month of December Bette also baked goodies from the RE cookbook to advertise its awesomeness! A big thank you to Bette for all her help!

And finally, beginning in February Secret Buddies is back! A chance for folks of all ages (5 and up) to get to know each other a little better and have some fun in the process! If you choose to participate you will be matched with one of the many wonderful children in the R.E. program and over the month of February exchange letters, jokes, puzzles, book/movie recommendations or whatever you can imagine—things that help you to get to know each other with the added twist of not actually knowing each others identities until a big reveal at the end of the month! For more information or to sign up please speak to me. Cheers and warm wishes!

Ashley Cole, Director of R.E.



A Common Light was performed by Religious Exploration students and Beacon members in December.



Beacon Events

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

Soul Matters Groups delve into the monthly sermon themes—“Radical Inclusiveness” for January. Part personal sharing, part spiritual deepening, the groups meet monthly either at 1 pm or 7 pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Contact Rev. Debra Thorne: minister@beaconunitarian.org.

Humanist Discussion Group meets the last Sunday of the month at 7:30 pm at *The Astoria Retirement Home* (2245 Kelly Avenue, Port Coquitlam) to discuss a wide range of current topics. **Sunday, January 29:** John Slattery will lead a discussion on Unitarianism. As a religion (if it is one) what is its role, and what is the role of other religions in the modern, more science oriented world? What is their future? Contact Marilyn Medén for more information: m.j.meden@telus.net or 604-469-6797.

Join the Beacon Choir for musical fun and skill development. Rehearsals are every Tuesday at 7:30 pm at Miller Park School in Coquitlam (but not Dec. 20th and 27th). Contact Charlene Dubrule, choir director, at 604-464-3992 or char4myc@shaw.ca.

Lunch Bunch meets every Thursday at noon, year-round. Bring your own

lunch and share in lively and topical conversation. Contact John Hagen 604-521-1335. See below for more information.

Book Club meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of each month at 7 pm. For location details contact John Hagen ajhagen@telus.net). January 26: *Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver

Beacon Writers' Group meets the third Saturday of the month, and shares what is meaningful for us, on the theme of the month, which for January is Radically Inclusive, or on a topic which is on our mind. Newcomers are welcome. Bring writing to share. You are also invited to bring writing prompts for our February theme—Love and Justice. Contact Marilyn Medén or Janet Pivnick for more details. m.j.meden@telus.net 604 469 6797, or janpivnick@gmail.com.

Attend a Circle Dinner and connect with other Beaconites in a relaxed setting. The next Circle Dinner is planned for Saturday, February 18th. For more information contact Joan Morris, joanmorris@telus.net.

Attend a 'Getting to Know U' session to meet other newcomers and deepen your knowledge of how Beacon functions and what Unitarianism is. Please contact Joan Morris

Food Bank Sunday will be January 8, 2017.

Speakers' Workshop on January 22

TED Talk Tips and the Mic.

On January 22, after the service, Sita Sahasrabudhe, TED talk graduate, will share speaking tips from the extensive tutoring TED talk speakers are given. This opportunity is for you if you do, or aspire to do, any public speaking. We will also have the use of the microphone for an extra hour, so there will be a chance to become familiar with our Beacon mic. You can find Sita's talk on YouTube by searching “tedx Sita”.

(joanmorris@telus.net) or Rev. Debra (minister@beaconunitarian.org) if you are interested in attending the next meeting.

Youth Group: The youth group (ages 13–18 yrs) is open to new members! Contact Lisa Girardi at lisa.m.girardi@gmail.com.

Help out on Sunday mornings as a Coffee Host (contact Glenn Wootton, woottongg@gmail.com), **or sign-up as a Sunday Morning Greeter** (contact Susan Tarras: starras@telus.net).



The Lunch Bunch

The Lunch Bunch is an informal weekly gathering of people who like friendly conversation along with their lunch. Various regulars host each week, meeting every Thursday at noon. Participants bring a brown-bag lunch and the host provides tea. If your work schedule allows it, drop in! New people are always encouraged. The host for the week is either in the Sunday order of service or announced at the end of the service.

New Member Profile

On December 4th, Beacon welcomed Gail Thomson as a new member.



Gail Thomson

I was born three score and five years ago in the, then, isolated BC coastal town of Powell River. Life in that community nourished in me a deep, lifelong passion for learning, reading, music, the ocean, outdoor activities and a desire to explore the wonders of this world. My travels have taken me to most continents. My readings have taken me to worlds both real and imagined. I have worked in libraries in New Zealand and Canada; recently retiring from more than three decades of service as a childrens and teen librarian with the Vancouver Public Library. It is a joy to have more time to spend with my son Steve (who lives nearby), my daughter Lisa (who lives far far far away), family, friends and my granddaughter, Eleanor. My exit from work life dovetailed surprisingly well with Eleanor's entrance into our lives. When not curled up on the sofa with a book or stirring a pot in the kitchen, I can be found paddling an outrigger canoe with the Lotus Sports Club on Indian Arm or endeavouring to not embarrass myself in front of Pete on the golf course.

Youth Group Social Action Project

Squid Squad Backpack Project



Lisa Girardi

Thank you everyone for your support of the bake sale and the donations to the Squid Squad backpack project so far... this would not be possible without YOU!!!

On January 8th, the youth group (Squid Squad) and Beacon children will be filling 40 backpacks for the homeless youths in our community. Just before, the Squids will get together to make a little lunch to add to the backpacks, along with some friendly messages.

Below is list of suggested items for the backpacks.

We are looking for anything that would help our young people living on the streets in their everyday lives. Some items (eg. soaps, shampoos & feminine products) have already been donated, so please touch base with Lisa if you have other ideas (lisa.m.girardi@gmail.com). In addition, cash or cheques (made out to Beacon) are most welcome!

Suggestions for Backpacks:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Socks | Pull-tab ready to serve soups (Chunky) |
| Gloves, Toques, Scarves | Mr Cup of Noodles or anything you can add boiling water to (eg. hot chocolate) |
| Brushes & Combs, Hair Accessories | Nuts |
| Toilet Paper | Chips |
| Small Towels | Juice Boxes |
| Underwear (unisex) | Gatorade |
| Toothbrush | Plastic Spoons/Forks |
| Toothpaste | Pens |
| Deodorant | Notebooks |
| Razors, Shaving Cream | Batteries |
| Gum | Can openers |
| Dog Bones | |
| Granola Bars | |



2017 Hungry Choir Tour and Unitarian Pilgrimage

In 2010, twenty-five Unitarians (including 16 singers and choir director Alison Nixon from the North Shore Unitarian church) enjoyed a truly life-affirming trip to Hungary and Transylvania, the birthplace of Unitarianism. It's time for another trip!

The dates for the next tour are Friday, May 26 to Monday, June 5, 2017. The itinerary includes Debrecen, Eger, Kolosvar (Cluj), Torocko (Rimetea), Hodmezovasarhely, and Deva. Costs are not yet finalized but expect to be in the range of US \$1,300 to \$1,500 for the basic tour with all transportation, accommodation and most meals included on arrival in Budapest. Return airfare from Vancouver is additional.

Please contact Brian Welwood (604-988-1135) or Alison Nixon (604-947-0120) about this tour.

CUC Activities for 2017

News from Joan Carolyn, our CUC Congregational Development staff for the Western Region

1. There will be no Adult Regional Gathering in 2017, but there will be a Youth Con: May 19, 2017 to May 22, 2017 – CanUuddle XVII is being hosted by the Unitarian Church of Edmonton. Young Adult Justice Con. Westwood Unitarian Congregation, Edmonton, Alberta.

2. 2017 Shared Event Options:

a) **Share Your Story: A Homily Writing Workshop** – Saturday,

March 18, 9:30 am–3:30 pm. At the First Unitarian Church of Victoria. Rev. Meg Roberts will show you a process to support your creative expression. She will share various resources, as well as provide tips on effective public speaking that touches the head and heart. Two online group coaching sessions will follow one month and two months after the workshop. *Cost: Early Bird special to Jan. 31 \$40 (includes lunch) as of Feb. 1,*

\$50. Registration deadline is Feb. 15. For more information and to register, contact Anna Isaacs isaacs.anna@gmail.com 250-472-0117

b) **May 13, 2017, CUC AGM** – look for upcoming announcements for creative new ways to link up to join special activities related to the AGM.



Answering the Call of Love: From Canadian Unitarians To Our Siblings in Spirit in the USA:



At many Unitarian Universalist gatherings around the globe, a chalice is lit as we come together. It is a symbol of our faith that combines two archetypes—a drinking vessel and a flame. Cups, goblets, and chalices have been used throughout history to symbolize the “partnership way” of being in community - sharing, generosity, sustenance and love. The flame symbolizes witness, sacrifice, testing, courage and illumination. The two were joined as a Unitarian symbol by an Austrian artist, Hans Deutsch, in 1941. It was an underground symbol in occupied Europe - a promise of assistance for refugees escaping Nazi persecution. We use this symbol with honour and pride.

Our chalice flame is not spontaneous. It requires lighting. It requires determined people to step forward and strike the match. It takes whole communities to sustain that fire. We have entered a time of isolationism and nationalism in many parts of the world, an age where racism, bigotry and hate speech are becoming acceptable.

It is once again time for our chalice light to bring hope to those who are suffering, to serve as a rallying beacon for those who would promote our values and Principles. It will not be easy. There will be times when our light will go out and will need others to rekindle it.

As Canadian Unitarians, we envision a world in which our interdependence calls us to love and justice. We assure you that **you are not alone** – that we are with you. Together we can answer the call of love shoulder to shoulder - arm in arm with a desire for justice, equity and compassion. Together, we can be ever vigilant, lending moral and practical support to those who will suffer from extreme policies, laws and practices. We embrace and reclaim our flaming chalice as a powerful symbol of our proud tradition. We will stand strong, expressing our Unitarian Universalist values to all who ask, answering the call of love in every way we can.

Together let us keep our chalice light burning bright in North America and the world!

In faith from the Canadian Unitarian Council National Voice Team

Keith Wilkinson | President Board of Trustees
president@cuc.ca

Vyda Ng | Executive Director
executivedirector@cuc.ca

Rev. Samaya Oakley | President UU Ministers of Canada
soakley@uuma.org

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Environmental Protection... Environmental Justice... and RAVEN

As we know, environmental protection is a key issue for all Canadians, and perhaps most importantly for the Indigenous People of Canada. Their lands and waters are often at risk from 'development' associated with mining, oil sands, fracking, pipelines or tanker traffic. Supporting the First Nations in their legal actions to protect tribal lands is an excellent way to further reconciliation with our Indigenous Peoples and to enhance the environmental protection cause.

RAVEN, Respecting Aboriginal Values and Environmental Needs, is an organization that does just that; support first nations in their legal battles. They have five current cam-



paigns across the country, including one dealing with the proposed Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion (Tsleil-Waututh Nation vs Kinder Morgan).

If you have been looking for a way to financially support the First Nations people—and to contribute

to environmental justice—as I have been, please consider RAVEN. You can check out their values, actions and previous work on their website www.raventrust.com.

—Teresa Morton,
Social Justice Coordinator

An Update from the Settlement team for the Al Rbaai family

The Al Rbaai family was unable to attend our Beacon pageant as planned, so Nancy Rupert and Carol Woodworth delivered some special gifts on behalf of Beacon members on the evening of December 20th.

Bette Goode prepared a wonderful basket of goodies for the family (mainly foods from Urban Gate, a Persian grocery store in Coquitlam) and gifts for the children (art supplies for Raneem and some sporty toys for Mohammad). They were very pleased to open their presents.

Then we presented the two quilts you see in the photo. Carol Becken spearheaded this project with the Dogwood Quilting Sisters. The bright red quilt was made by Yvonne MacIntosh, who recently moved to Coquitlam from Chilliwack. She loves making quilts out of scraps and small



pieces. The other quilt was a group effort of many members. It was the idea of Jean Lee who saw the patterns in a book. Mohammad claimed the bright quilt, and Raneem and her

parents are currently negotiating who gets the other quilt, as they all love it!

Submitted by Nancy Rupert on
behalf of the Settlement team

Beacon Calendar: January 2017

Note: Calendar entries are truncated—view the complete entries on the Beacon web site calendar page.

Jan 2017 (Pacific Time - Vancouver)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Theme: Radical Inclusiveness 10:30am - Worship Service	2 7pm - Spirit of Life Workshop	3 7:30pm - Choir practice	4 1pm - Worship Committee	5 12pm - Lunch Bunch	6	7
8 10:30am - Worship Service @ 1pm - Board meeting	9	10 7:30pm - Choir practice	11	12 12pm - Lunch Bunch	13	14
15 10:30am - Worship Service @	16	17 7:30pm - Choir practice	18 1pm - Soul Matters Afternoon 7pm - Soul Matters Evening	19 12pm - Lunch Bunch 1pm - Connecting and	20	21 1pm - Beacon Writer's Group
22 10:30am - Worship Service @ 11:30am - Speaking Tips 7:30pm - Humanist Meeting	23	24 7:30pm - Choir practice	25	26 12pm - Lunch Bunch	27	28
29 10:30am - Worship Service @	30	31 7:30pm - Choir practice	1 1pm - Worship Committee	2 12pm - Lunch Bunch	3	4