

January Service Theme: Risk

We begin 2018 with the theme of RISK! As a community we will explore some of these questions: How do you live a life of healthy risk? Do you risk telling your truth to those you trust? Do you risk trusting those you love? Do you risk asking for help when help is needed? Do you risk sharing your fears? When is it risky to say 'yes'? When is it risky to say 'no'? What is the danger and what is the freedom in risk?



**JAN
7**

Raven Brings the Light— Fire Communion Service

Rev. Debra Thorne

In a time when darkness covered the land, a boy named Weget is born, who was destined to bring light back into the world. 'Raven Brings the Light', the classic west coast Indigenous story, will support our Fire Communion as we honour the flames of insight and rebirth and enter the new year together, as an interconnected community.

**JAN
14**

When All Life is Risk

Rev. Debra Thorne

Special Guests: Fazineh Keita & Ava Vanderstarren

Fazineh Keita grew up in Sierra Leone during the country's civil war. As a former child soldier, Fazineh is using



Ava Vanderstarren and Fazineh Keita

his experience to bring awareness to the realities of war. Since graduating from the Vancouver Film School, Fazineh has used his skills to tell stories, educate youth and to help people find healing through art. He and Ava created 'Innocence Lost Foundation', a project to rehabilitate former child soldiers in Sierra Leone.

**JAN
21**

Better Than Chocolate

Rev. Debra Thorne

What could be better than chocolate? What about safe and loving intimate relations? What about fully alive sensory experiences? What about healthy bodies exploring trustworthy relationships? What about really good, clear communications with those who you care for? What about spiritual deepening through love and vulnerability? This month we'll risk talking about sex, sexuality and love. Oh, and there'll be a chocolate meditation!

• Beacon Choir sings.

**JAN
28**

A Quiet Risk: Living an Undivided Life

Special Guests: Kimiko

Karpoff and Rachel Yordy

Service Leader: Janet Pivnick

Showing up as ourselves, daring to live authentically, aligning our public selves with our inner life are risks that the soul takes moment by moment, without fanfare or notice. *Circle of Trust* approaches, based on the work of Parker Palmer, provide an opportunity to be in community to support each other in the difficult work of listening and acting upon one's soul call.

Janet is joined by Kimiko Karpoff and Rachel Yordy, all of whom have experience with *Circle of Trust* approaches, to share principles and practices of this powerful work.

• Beacon Choir sings.



**Beacon
Unitarian
Church**

Sunday worship services and religious exploration 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.

Minister's Message



Rev. Debra Thorne

Yikes! What happened to 2017?

What happened was a lot! For many, 2017 was a year when we could not believe what was happening south

of the border and despaired with our American Unitarian friends and family—all of us shaking our heads as one piece of democracy after another was challenged and appeared to be dismantled. More serious than even this, was entering a world where truth was no longer found in fact. Such a bedrock of reality being undermined could only be described as disturbing.

Politics aside, the world was filled with both joys and sorrows, globally and within our families. I lost my mother at the beginning of the year and I know of others at Beacon who also lost family, both the two and the four legged ones. For us, grief has been our companion this year.

At Beacon, we lost long-time member Joyce Hale in the fall. We also celebrated the inspiring lives of Beacon's over 80 elders: Helen McVey, Anne McLeod, Ev Morris, John Hagen, Ivy Hubbard, and Denis Probst.

Beacon has had many wonderful achievements and experiences to celebrate in this past year. The original settlement team has wrapped up their

responsibilities to the Al Rabaai family. The Al Rabaai children are adjusting to Canadian school and they have begun to explore the Lower Mainland. The family has had many challenges but with the settlement team's guidance, and Beacon's financial support, each obstacle has been met and surmounted. This year the Settlement 2 team was created to support bringing four more members of the Al Rabaai family to Canada. The Settlement 2 team had a wonderful craft and bake

For this I am so very, very grateful and humbled by your encouragement of my ministry.

sale and raised almost a thousand dollars. Needless to say, the Al Rabaais feel both hope and joy for the future of their family and are deeply grateful for Beacon's support.

The Beacon congregation ended the year with a hugely successful Pledge Drive that came in \$10,000 over the basic budget for 2018. Across almost the entire community, Beacon members found themselves able to raise their pledge amounts so that the minister's time could be raised from half time to 5/8 time. For this I am so very, very grateful and humbled by your encouragement of my ministry.

Since the budget meeting and the passing of the 2018 budget I have

been told that another two designated donations have been received by Beacon to raise my time to $\frac{3}{4}$ time. I can only say again, how deeply thankful I am to be able to do good work for people who welcome it and choose to support me in this concrete fashion. Having a $\frac{3}{4}$ time contract means I have the time to support you in times of pastoral need, to create trainings for service leaders, and programming to deepen your thoughtful journeys, on top of my ongoing worship services and support of the board and committees.

Looking ahead to 2018, I am very excited to announce that Margaret Smith and Rev. Samaya Oakley will be offering a one and half day *Our Whole Lives* workshop called 'Better Than Chocolate', exploring sexuality, relationship communications and sexual health for adults. (See the article on page 8.)

I am also looking forward to the Vancouver Regional Gathering on Saturday April 7th, where Unitarians from the four lower mainland congregations will come together for a day of workshops, singing, sharing of food and worship. So, please mark your calendars!

As we enter 2018 I wish you each a very Happy New Year—may the sorrows in your life be gently met, and may the joys be many.

—Warmly, Debra



**Beacon
Unitarian
Church**

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

Board Bitz

Happy New Year!

Your board of trustees hopes you have had a wonderful holiday. With the new year comes planning all the exciting things that happen at Beacon. This will start with the coordinating council meeting on January 16th. The coordinating council is made up of the chairs (or designates) from each committee, plus board members who can attend, to plan the half year ahead, make sure there are no big conflicts in the calendar/schedule, and generally talk to each other about what is going on in the church. (And just a sneak peek at what is coming: in February, it will be Beacon's 35th Birthday. There will be a party after church one Sunday—stay tuned!)

Speaking of exciting things that happen at Beacon, we have just engaged a new choir director, Angela Zhang, who comes to us with lots of experience and qualifications. Due to her previous commitment on Tuesdays, choir rehearsals will temporarily be moved to Monday nights, but will revert to Tuesdays in April.

Also, we are excited to report that in response to the congregation's generous pledges in October, two anonymous donors have come forward to top up Debra's ministry to 3/4 time for 2018.

The board and the Religious Explorations committee (RE) have started discussing how we can make Beacon an even more family friendly congregation. We welcome your ideas on what this might mean and how we can let the wider community know that we are a great place to bring their families. This will be a bit of a theme for 2018.

Another theme for 2018 will be communications, both within the congregation and with the general public. The board is starting to investigate how we can use modern technology to let people know about our exciting and inspiring church. Again, any ideas are welcome and appreciated, especially from younger people in the congregation who are much more familiar with social media.

The new year also brings volunteer



David Kristjanson



Donna Hamilton

opportunities to help make us the welcoming community that we are. We especially need people to help with coffee hour, from making coffee before the service to cleaning up afterward. This has been falling on the same few people for a very long time. All it would take is 4 or 5 new volunteers to take this on once a month or so. It is a lot of fun and a great way to meet people and to give back to the community. This would be a very fulfilling new year's resolution. To volunteer, or get more information, please email board@beaconunitarian.org.

Wishing you all the best in 2018.

— David Kristjanson and
Donna Hamilton, Co-Presidents



New choir director, Angela Zhang, leading the choir on December 17th.



Beacon
Unitarian
Church

OUR VISION

CONNECT

With Compassion & Respect

INSPIRE

Learning & Spiritual Growth

TRANSFORM

Through Joy & Justice

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to
celebrate the worth and dignity of all people and
to live in conscious relationship with the earth.

For inspiration, we draw on the world's
great scientists, artists, humanists and theologians,
as well as on our personal experiences.

So we are inspired to create greater equality,
greater justice and greater hope for our world.

Let's Connect: Behind the Scenes with the Worship Services Committee

What makes you decide to attend church on any given Sunday? Does it make a difference what the service description says? What, in your mind, makes a good service?

These are questions the Worship Services committee ask themselves as they plan our weekly services. Under the leadership of Janet Pivnick and Rev. Debra, they explore all the elements of a good service with the hope that each week you will find something of value when you arrive on a Sunday morning.

Have you ever thought about how the service is put together each week?

The Worship Services committee (made up of Rev. Debra, Janet Pivnick, Susan White, Marilyn Medén, Nancy Rupert, and Heather Brown) works hard to organize the content and the details of each Sunday service.

Before the church year ends in June, the committee begins planning for the next year, first by brainstorming monthly themes, then reaching out to guest speakers. At monthly meetings they work on the details needed for each week's service. As you will have noticed, Rev. Debra prepares and gives two to three services each month and the members of the committee organize the remaining services. Beacon members, guest ministers or other community members are invited to speak on those alternate weeks.

Several months before the service, based on the monthly themes and discussions held at the monthly meetings, a speaker is invited to make a presentation. Once he or she has confirmed, the service coordinator builds the elements of the service using the topic and month's theme to select opening words, a children's story, readings, songs and closing words. The order of service (OOS) is



Worship Services members Nancy Rupert, Janet Pivnick, Reb. Debra Thorne, and Heather Brown (absent Marilyn Medén and Susan White).

"Thank you to each and every one of you on the Worship Services committee for your passion, creativity and hard work that ensures we have quality worship services every Sunday."

prepared by the coordinator or Rev. Debra (on her Sundays) and by Friday of the service week is sent to the printers. There is also planning with the choir director, the accompanist, the director of Religious Exploration and the technical support team.

The Shared Ministry schedule (you may have noticed the long list on the back page of the order of service) reminds us that over 17 people are needed to create every Sunday morning.

Early Sunday morning the Sapper-ton Hall is transformed from an empty space into a colourful warm worship space. Volunteers begin arriving at 9:30 when a board member opens the hall and set up begins: putting out the Beacon street signage, the tables for the greeters, the colourful screens and the Beacon banner. All together, these create a welcoming space. If the choir is singing, the choir director, accompanist and singers arrive by 9:40 a.m. to rehearse for a half hour. Meanwhile the sound technician sets

up the sound board and microphones, and the video technician sets up the screen and projector. The nursery is set up for the infants and toddlers upstairs, and downstairs the space for the older children is prepared. The aesthetics organizer prepares the worship table with cloths, flowers, chalice and candles for *Joys and Sorrows*, creating a more sacred space. When the prelude begins at 10:15, and the story quilts have been laid out on the stage, a calm descends over all and the next worship service begins! You might consider coming early one Sunday morning to experience the wonderful energy of this transformation.

Some of the committee members shared what drew them to the worship committee:

- Marilyn Medén commented that she began with an interest in how ideas for services were developed. And she found she could, "delve into subjects more deeply than if there was no responsibility to do so", and she "had the opportunity to develop my

ability to speak in front of a group, something I had rarely done before.”

- Janet Pivnick said “I was drawn to the committee because I had watched Debra create such beautiful, moving, masterful services. I was interested in being part of the creative process of pulling together a service—finding the right elements and creating a cohesive whole that would bring meaning or inspiration or heart or depth for people who showed up on a Sunday morning. I never dreamed at the time that I would be chairing the committee or leading services—but I have found it to be an honour and pleasure to do both. The service leader training that Debra has offered this year has been a rich experience, providing deep thought and conversation about the intent of worship and how the various components contribute to creating a meaningful service.”

Thank you to each and every one of you on the Worship Services committee for your passion, creativity and hard work that ensures we have quality worship services every Sunday.

If you are interested in serving on the committee, have a chat with Rev. Debra or any of the committee members. It is a wonderful opportunity to connect in a rich, creative process with Rev. Debra and other Beacon members dedicated to producing quality worship services.

—Your Beacon Connections

Team: Phil Campbell,

Jean Donaldson, Joyce Gudaitis,

Joan Morris, Susan Tarras,

Rev. Debra Thorne

Religious Explorations (RE)



Ashley Cole

First of all I want to send out a giant THANK YOU to everyone who helped organize and participated in our December Pageant! Thanks to all of you it was a HUGE success! This is my second year involved with it and I must say I continue to be impressed with the joy and care of this community. So once again thank you! See page 6 for a few pageant photos.

And now we welcome in 2018! I hope that you are well and had a lovely end of year and a celebratory new year.

January 7th is our first gathering back together for the year.

It will start with an extended time for all ages upstairs in the service and will continue downstairs with a casual welcome back party in which we will share food, our joys and sorrows—and if any time remains, a few games.

Now that the pageant is behind us we will be continuing with our regular RE programming. And I have included a brief description of both to remind us of what they are.

The younger group will be engaging with an 8 session multi aged curriculum called *Miracles*, “This eight session program, designed for a wide age span of children, provides a prolonged encounter with awe and wonder with frequent opportunities for scientific exploration. Through stories from our Unitarian Universalist sources, and hands-on activities, children engage in defining and discerning the miraculous and discover their own agency for miracle-making.” For a look at the sessions visit: <http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/multigenerational/miracles>.

And the junior youth will be working through a *Tapestry of Faith* curriculum called *Riddle and Mystery*, a curriculum designed to assist in a search for asking and understanding big questions. For more information check out the *Tapestry of Faith* section of the UUA website found here: <http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/riddle>.

And continuing from this past fall we will be welcoming a Beacon member once a month to share with both age groups a skill, talent or passion in what is called a *Spirit Jam*. So far we have had Jane Shoemaker share her experiences in Mexico during the Day of the Dead festival, and Judy Villet teach us how to make fabric Christmas cards that we sold as part of the craft and bake sale fundraiser for the Settlement 2 efforts. So if you have a skill, passion or talent you would like to share with us please contact me for more information. We will warmly welcome you into RE and are excited to learn alongside you.

Well that is all for now, cheers!

—Ashley Cole, Director of
Religious Explorations

sundayschool@beaconunitarian.org



Lighting the advent candles on Dec. 17th.

Christmas Pageant 2017

Photos by Jane Shoemaker



THANK YOU to everyone who helped organize and participated in our December Pageant! Special thanks to newcomer Sherry Knotte who helped out behind the scenes during the month of December, with pageant rehearsals and preparation. Thanks to all of you, it was a HUGE success!

Beacon Programs

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. Part personal sharing, part spiritual deepening, the groups meet monthly either at 1 pm on the 3rd Wednesday, or 7 pm on the 3rd Thursday of the month. Email minister@beaconunitarian.org for more information.

The Humanist Discussion Group meets the last Sunday of the month at *The Astoria Retirement Home* (2245 Kelly Avenue, Port Coquitlam) to discuss a wide range of current topics. See the sidebar below for the January topic and time.

Join the Beacon Choir for musical fun and skill development. Rehearsals are every Monday at 7:30 pm at Miller Park School in Coquitlam, switching to Tuesday evenings in April. Contact choirdirector@beaconunitarian.org.

Lunch Bunch meets every Thursday at noon, year-round. Bring your own lunch and share in lively and topical conversation. Contact Anne MacLeod at 604-524-2434.

Book Club meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of each month at 7 pm. For meeting location details contact John Hagen, ajhagen@telus.net.

Book Line-up:

January: *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman; **February:** *History of Love* by Nicole Krauss; **March:** *The Japanese Lover* by Isabel Allende.

Settlement 2: The Settlement 2 task force is organizing the sponsorship of four further members of the Al Rbaai family. Please contact Peggy Lunderville for meeting times and dates: prlunder@gmail.com. All are welcome.

Attend a Circle Dinner and connect with other Beaconites in a relaxed setting. For more information contact Donna Hamilton (donna-h@telus.net) or 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 Rev. Debra (minister@beaconunitarian.org) if you are interested in attending the next meeting.

Youth Group: The Beacon Youth Group is reforming. If you would like information contact Ashley Cole downstairs most Sundays.

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).

Beacon Writers' Group: If you are drawn to writing as a way to explore the questions that move within you, the moments that fill you with awe or the circumstances that lead you to contemplation, consider joining us. No writing experience needed. For more information contact Janet Pivnick at jpivnick@gmail.com.

Humanist Group: Sunday, January 27th, 7 pm, at the *The Astoria Retirement Home*, 2245 Kelly Avenue, Port Coquitlam



Aging with Grace

Facilitator, Joy Silver

We will discuss ideas set out by Marie de Hennezel in her book, *The Art of Growing Old*.

Progressing into old age gives us vast moments of solitude. Should we choose isolation, or could we choose a beautiful, courageous, rich and radiant journey

by finding a fountain of youth inside ourselves? Come and hear how many aging sages, artists, saints, and philosophers practice a form of solitude that is "beautiful and courageous, rich and radiant". How might you want to age gracefully?

Not a Typical Writers' Group—Beacon Writers Looking for a Coordinator

The Beacon Writers' Group meets monthly to explore questions of meaning. No writing critique takes place. No specific writing skills are needed. We are simply a group of people who use writing as a way to connect with our inner lives, and support each other in this exploration. If you have ever written in a journal, expressed deep thoughts in a letter to a friend, or worked through a life tangle by putting pen to paper, this group is for you.

We are currently looking for a coordinator. If you've thought that you might want to step into a new role at Beacon but don't have too much time to give, this might be the opportunity for you. Contact Janet Pivnick, janpivnick@gmail.com for more information.

Check out climaterealityproject.org



The Climate Reality Project is a movement to recognize the progress we've already made in responding to climate change, to galvanize people to act, and to provide realistic



climate information. Please visit climaterealityproject.org to see what Al Gore is working on, especially the '24 hours of Reality 2017: Be the Voice of Reality'. Watch for a spotlight on an Alberta-based program 'Iron & Earth' which is retraining oil sands workers in solar technology! As Gore says, "The reality we now face implores us to act."

—Teresa Morton

Delicious. Intriguing. Satisfying. THIS is Better than Chocolate! (and it's only for adults)

When was the last time you had a thoughtful and fun conversation about sexuality?

Remember your high school sex education? Ugh! Society is highly sexualized today and yet people don't REALLY understand sexuality and this robs them of deeper fulfillment. Our UU values, through the *Our Whole Lives* program (OWL), give us a unique opportunity to take a holistic look at sexuality so that you can enhance self-knowledge, clarify your values and understand your boundaries. This workshop also helps participants:

- guide their kids/grandkids towards healthy sexual relationships;
- increase physical and mental well-being as you age; and
- have greater confidence to positively impact societal issues in this area.

No, you won't have to talk about your sex life, nor hear about mine! You will have fun. There will be chocolate! Join a safe, non-judgmental group for exploration where you will learn as much from the other participants as you will from the facilitators.

Free Introductory session: Friday, February 2, 2018 7 to 9:30 pm

One day Mini Adult OWL Workshop: Saturday, February 17, 2018 9:30 am to 4:30 pm

Facilitators: Margaret Smith & Rev Samaya Oakley

Open to everyone 18 to 100. Interactive. Inclusive. Welcoming.

Sign up after Sunday Service or at minister@beaconunitarian.org by January 28th.



Margaret Smith



Rev. Samaya Oakley

THANK YOU!

A very heartfelt thank you to the whole Beacon community for their wonderful participation and help with the bake sale and craft fair in November. It was a smashing success and that is due to our whole community. Many people put out effort above and beyond. Thank you all so much! It means a lot to the Settlement 2 Team and to the Al Rbaai family.

The next Settlement 2 meeting is on Sunday, January 7 at 6 pm. All are welcome to attend. In addition, we are hoping to have a party at 3 pm on January 14 for the Settlement 2 team and the Al Rbaai family. RSVP recommended as the dates and times are still to be confirmed: call Peggy at 604-812-5939.

—Peggy Lunderville



Jane Day and the Al Rbaai children at a local ice rink.

News from the Canadian Unitarian Council

Tips for intentionally Inclusive Congregations: Part 3

Spiritual Diversity

On some level, life in a Unitarian Universalist congregation doesn't look that different than one from another faith group. And so, it is easy at times, to assume that the dominant theology in a congregation is the only theology. Some of our congregations are predominantly Humanist, others lean towards liberal Christianity and others seem to focus on eco-spirituality. Usually these dominant theologies are reflected, in an unspoken way, in the worship services and in the adult program offerings. Yet at the core of our modern UUism is a belief that each person is free to seek meaning in ways that make sense to them. Our Six Sources remind us of our rich theological heritage and the diversity we embrace. Congregations that want to explicitly send the message that they welcome this theological diversity would be wise to pay attention to the balance in their services. What seems generic and one-size-fits-all to the humanist in the congregation, may leave someone else feeling as if there is no room for them. And a eco-spiritual service that relies heavily on meditation or chanting will need some words and information in order to work for others.

AGM, CUC, APC, CRE, YA, ARE, DRE and more – Oh My!

In our congregations on any given Sunday or in the newsletter you are likely to come across one of these, or a dozen other acronyms. Even long time members may need to scour their brain to understand what is being said, "right, ARE means Adult Religious Education. Whew, got that one!" But the guest in your congregation and the brand new person will be lost. Lacking the skills of a clair-

voyant, they won't understand what is being said. Help make it easier for people to understand by avoiding insider acronyms. When you mean Canadian Unitarian Council, say so. CUC won't mean anything to newcomers. In fact even in their long form, some of these common terms may need a bit of explanation. A brief explanation, "Adult Religious Education, the programs we offer for adults to help them explore theology and meaning..." will go a long way in making sure that people aren't struggling to keep up.

What's that you say?

For many people with hearing loss, (1 in 4 adult Canadians report some degree of hearing loss) attending services at a congregation is a lot of work. They can usually hear what is being said, but it is difficult for them. There are some simple things that speakers can do to make it easier for these people.

- Pausing at the lectern for just a few seconds before speaking will allow people who need a bit of extra processing time to 'tune in'.
- Learning to use the microphone ahead of time (they aren't all the same, some are multi-directional and others aren't) will be a big help.
- **Speak clearly! People with hearing loss need you to speak in a measured way, taking care to pronounce words, so they can follow you.**
- During coffee hour, often in an noisy space, it is a good idea to make eye contact with someone before you start to speak.

The bonus? These tips will make it easier for everyone to hear and understand what is happening. For more information, visit: http://www.ucshealth.org/education/communicating_with_people_with_hearing_loss/

Suffer Little Children

So often congregations and their members declare that they would welcome more young families. The energy and hope they bring to a congregation is exciting. Yet, often parents, and particularly nursing mothers find it difficult to participate in worship because there has been little thought about what makes a comfortable environment for them. Some people are comfortable with their baby in a public space and others would prefer a more secluded space. There have been significant changes in community openness to breastfeeding in public, and some women will comfortably nurse in the pews or chairs of your congregation. Additionally, though, the breastfeeding-friendly congregation will provide a place where the service can be heard, and ideally seen, for the mother who prefers a more comfortable and somewhat more private location. All will want to know that you are aware of their needs and will appreciate the placement of the International Breastfeeding Symbol, assuring them of your welcome.

The World Health Organization and Health Canada recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of a baby's life and encourage its use beyond that. Families who feel welcome to attend are more likely to develop the habits and practice that makes their participation in congregational life possible.

(Excerpted from: <http://cuc.ca/congregational-life/tips-for-intentionally-inclusive-congregations/>)

OUT IN HARMONY PRESENTS



NICOLA HAMILTON

DIRECTOR

DAN LAUTERBACH

ACCOMPANIST

27 JANUARY 2018 • SATURDAY, 7:30 PM

Unitarian Church of Vancouver, 949 W 49th Ave. • **WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE**



Tickets: Scan QR code
or go to <http://tiny.cc/riseupoih>



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

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