

Freedom

This month the theme we will explore is Freedom. There is the right of religious freedom, to believe in and worship a deity or a philosophic system of your choice. There is personal freedom to choose your own life's direction and to freely express one's identity. There is political freedom, to choose the governing model that aligns with one's values. And there is the basic question that asks: How do you know if your choices are truly free?



**MAR
3**

The Privilege of Freedom

Rev. Debra Thorne

It's been 102 years since women were able to vote and hold office in British Columbia. This year five and half million women in the Indian state of Kerala stood along the road, hand in hand for the freedom to enter a holy temple. Last month three young women who went to fight for ISIS now want to return to Canada. In the week of International Woman's Day let us take stock of freedoms won and the shifting sands of responsibility that comes with freedom.

- Choir sings.

**MAR
10**

Is Freedom only Fantasy?

Rev. Debra Thorne

Are we truly free or are we stuck in a reality TV show, like the dystopian series *Hunger Games* where everything is a manipulation? Can we be sure if we really have the freedom of choice? Living in Canada today with our rule of law, and Charter

of Rights and Freedoms, in relative peace and safety, are there any freedoms we would fight for, or die for?

**MAR
17**

Seeds of Survival

Rev. Debra Thorne

The Spring Equinox (March 20th) marks the perfect point of balance between day and night, and the reawakening of seeds in the warming earth. The wheel turns and the maidens rise from the darkness and clothe themselves in the colours of spring. It is time for dancing, as hope and renewal ascend from the winter of our lives.

- Choir sings.

**MAR
24**

Finding My Spiritual Path

Guest Speaker: Karl Perrin

Describing Unitarian religion often focuses on what it isn't. For me, what makes us religious is our gentle encouragement of a variety of collective and personal "spiritual" practices, broadly conceived. I'll

describe some of mine, and how I grew into them. Perhaps our paths will cross.

Karl Perrin is a life long Unitarian. He learned activism at Sunday school in Detroit, and has been an environmental activist since 1993. Currently he is helping to stop the second dilbit pipeline to Burnaby. In 2012, he wrote an anti-pipeline divestment resolution passed by a wide majority at the Unitarian Church of Vancouver.

**MAR
31**

Free to be Wise

*Guest Speaker:
Allegra Sloman*

Service Leader: Marilyn Medén
Using the wisdom research of Dilip Jeste as a starting point, writer and entertainer Allegra Sloman will tell you that you're free to be wise, examine both the appearance and source of wisdom, and consider what wisdom might best be applied to.

Minister's Message



Rev. Debra Thorne

"Ministers come and go, but the church, this church, goes on." So said two of Beacon's founding members, Ivy Hubbard and Anne McLeod.

These two formidable and inspiring women have seen many ministers arrive and depart the congregation. They will tell you that no two ministers are the same, that each have different strengths and weakness, different personalities and of course, different styles. They'll tell you that there are three areas of ministerial work: pastoral, administrative and worship, and that most ministers are strong in two areas and weaker in the third.

I am the 10th Beacon minister following after Jane Bramadat (Student Intern Minister UCV), Robert Latham (Minister at Beacon's Charter Sunday), Kate Rohde, Gil Gilmartin, Harold Rosen, Frances Buckmaster, Brian Kiely, Ev Morris, and Katie Stein-Sather. It is a special joy for me and a blessing for Beacon to have two of its past minister's continue to hold

membership; Katie and Ev. Today there is anticipation in the air as the Board prepares to find the next minister to serve Beacon. I am excited for you. The Beacon congregation would be a wonderful community for any minister lucky enough to serve you.

Ivy and Anne told me that Beacon has survived all kinds of ministers and conflicts that almost tore the congregation apart. But neither minister nor conflict has stopped Beacon being a joyful, dedicated and resourceful congregation. I think this is important to remember in this transitional time.

Unitarian congregations exist because of the people who are its members. It is the membership and the committed friends of Unitarian congregations who—through their covenant to the Principles, their faithfulness to liberal religion, and their investment in democratic leadership—keep our worldwide movement alive and thriving.

It is the membership that is the core of Beacon's existence.

*Warmly,
Rev. Debra*



**Beacon
Unitarian
Church**

Join the Beacon Board!

Your Nominating Committee is hard at work, considering Beacon members for a position on the Beacon Board. Being a Board member would take your time and talent but is a rewarding way to contribute to church life, while growing into the leader that you are! If the idea of being on the Board inspires you, and you'd like more information, talk to Committee chair Donna Hamilton, our Minister Debra Thorne or anyone on the Nominating Committee (Rebecca Burns, Nancy Rupert or Rob Warner), preferably by the end of this month.

Message from the Lay Chaplaincy Committee

One of our Lay Chaplains, Judith McLean, has resigned her position. We wish her all the best and thank her for her service. Marilyn Meden continues as Lay Chaplain until the AGM in April.

The LCC is making plans for the future, which includes hosting a "Celebration of a Living Life" for one of our senior members. If you would like to learn how to create a ceremony such as this, you are welcome to come with us on this journey. More news to come. Stay tuned!

*Sue Sparlin, Janet Pivnick,
Marilyn Meden, Rev. Debra Thorne
Beacon Lay Chaplaincy Comm.*



**Beacon
Unitarian
Church**

www.beaconunitarian.org
info@beaconunitarian.org

Mailing Address:

#414, 552A Clarke Road,
Coquitlam, BC V3J 0A3

Consulting Minister:

Rev. Debra Thorne
minister@beaconunitarian.org

Lay Chaplain:

Marilyn Medén,

604-469-6797

ceremonies@beaconunitarian.org

Choir Director:

Angela Zhang
choirdirector@beaconunitarian.org

Board Executive:

Co-Presidents: David Kristjanson and Donna Hamilton; **Treasurer:** Carol Woodworth; **Secretary:** Gail Thomson; **Members at Large:** John Hagen, Janet Pivnick, Michael Scales, Elizabeth Campbell, Heather Brown

Connections & Membership:

Joan Morris
joanmorris@telus.net

**Religious Exploration
Director:**

Ashley Cole,
dre@beaconunitarian.org

Beacon Newsletter:

newsletter@beaconunitarian.org
Production: Laura Redmond
Proofreading: Donna Hamilton

Deadline for article submissions is the 15th of the month, for inclusion in the following month's newsletter.

Board Bitz

The board has been learning more and more about finding a new minister over the last month. On January 25th the whole board met with Joan Carolyn from the CUC at John Hagen's home, where we had a wonderful pot luck dinner and then went over the process of finding a new minister. Our plan to find a 2-year interim minister at first seemed a bit of a daunting task. However, we learned at a subsequent meeting with Keith Kron of the UUA Transitions Office, that a minister at 2/3 time, which is what we are looking for, would be considered a contract minister, not an interim minister, making this a much more informal search—like the process we used to find Rev. Debra. The board will be discussing all of this at our next meeting, after the congregational meeting on March 3rd when we will bring you up to date and get some input from the congregation on what we are looking for in a new minister.

While the search for a new min-

ister will continue to be on the top of our list for the foreseeable future, Beacon's business does go on. So, in anticipation of Beacon's AGM coming up on April 28th we are asking that each committee email their year end report to Gail Thomson at gailhthomson@gmail.com by March 29th. Ideally your report will be ½ a page or less, but definitely not more than ¾ of a page. We know that this may be difficult because of all the work you do over the year, so we thank you in advance for keeping it tight.

Thank you to everyone who stayed after church on February 24th to discuss the proposed By Law changes and the Resolutions that will be voted on at the CUC AGM on May 11th. Thank you also to Michael Scales for volunteering to be a delegate for that meeting. The board is seeking an additional delegate to attend that on-line meeting, contact Donna or David if you can participate.

Many thanks also to Eden and PJ



David Kristjanson



Donna Hamilton

Patton who have done such a wonderful job as our Religious Exploration Support Teachers. Unfortunately for us, Eden's full time work has become much more demanding and they are unable to continue working for us on Sundays. We wish them both all the success in the world. They have set a very high bar for the next R.E.S.T. person. We are now looking for someone new to fill that position, so if you think that you or someone you know might be a good fit please email us at board@beaconunitarian.org.

— David Kristjanson and
Donna Hamilton, Co-Presidents
board@beaconunitarian.org

Plastics in supermarkets?

Greenpeace Canada has an Action Toolkit <https://act.greenpeace.org/page/22385/petition/2#toolkit> that includes reducing single-use plastic (SUP) in supermarkets. One of the actions recommended is to unpack the groceries before you leave the store and take all the plastic to the Customer Service counter, letting them know that you want plastic-free options. Another action suggestion is to take as many re-usable containers (jars, cans, bags) as you can. (This can be tricky since some of the chains have internal policies that preclude use of your own containers. Marilyn M. found this problem with Thrifty Foods.)

What do we want supermarkets to do? (from the Greenpeace Action Toolkit)

1. Create a single-use plastic reduction policy and transition plan that includes social responsibility considerations
2. Phase out single-use plastic packaging (e.g. plastic bags, products like plastic bottles, sachets, etc.)
3. Invest in reusable packaging and new delivery systems
4. Extended Producer Responsibility - Take full responsibility (social and environmental) and demand the same of suppliers, for the entire lifecycle of the product and its packaging.

5. Increase transparency by measuring and reporting on plastic reduction and waste production and undergoing audits.



Teresa Morton

Like any other campaign, it is important to learn (what has been successful elsewhere?), share (social media, Beacon newsletter, emails), organize (perhaps make a presentation to the store management?) and celebrate (give kudos to the businesses that take steps to reduce SUP)! — Teresa Morton

Let's Connect: Special Feature from the Connections survey

A Sunday morning at Beacon as the service is about to begin: A distinctive voice is heard at the back of the church as the elevator arrives. With a warm smile, Debra acknowledges that Denis has arrived. She calls out "Hello Denis!" and while Jane pushes Denis up the aisle in his wheelchair, Debra lights the chalice.

Did you know that Jane Shoemaker is the force behind the arrival of Denis Probst (one of our long time, revered elders) on Sunday mornings? She has made a commitment to make sure Denis remains a part of our Beacon community despite his current mobility challenges and blindness by giving him weekly rides to church and Lunch Bunch.

In her response to the recent *Let's Connect* survey, Jane told us she has been a member of Beacon since 1994 and has served on the Board as secretary and member at large, newsletter editor for 4 years in the late 90's, and has been a valued member of Lunch Bunch, Humanist Group and the Beacon Food Bank Team over the years.

You may have noticed the large display of past Ministers and Founding members at the Beacon Birthday party last month. Jane keeps the Beacon archives and can answer many questions about our history.

Jane describes a unique experience with Beacon's Partner Church in Transylvania (Beacon had a partnership with the Unitarian church in Kobatfalva Transylvania for about 15 years until about 2010.)

Jane writes: *In 2001 I travelled as a Beacon representative to Kobat-*

falva, Transylvania, to visit our partner church. After a marvellous experience there, I was Beacon's Partner Church

*Committee until about 2004. No one else wanted to join, but Renée Spakowsky went with me to Seattle to a regional Partner Church gathering. I maintained communication with our partner church, and helped organize a couple of Hungarian dinners, and presented two or three services telling about the Partner Church program and about our own partner church.**

It takes a community to run a church and, of course, Jane is only one of many of you who have made Beacon the vibrant church it is. We would love to hear from you through the "pink form" and the "message with 5 questions", if you haven't already sent them in.

We will keep you all updated about the Survey results over the next few months.

—*Connecting and Membership Committee: Joan Morris, Phil Campbell, Joyce Gudaitis, Susan Tarras and Rev. Debra Thorne*

**The many ethnically Hungarian Unitarian churches in Transylvania were brutally persecuted by the Romanian dictator Ceausescu until his execution in 1989. North American Unitarians took the initiative to partner church-to-church with Transylvanian churches, and send them funds and other support to help them recover. In return we gained a rich understanding of our Unitarian history in eastern Europe.*



Jane Shoemaker

From Beacon's Archives

If you have read the *Let's Connect* article you will have learned a little about the Partner Church initiative that Beacon took part in during the 1990's and early 2000's. Here is a short account of Beacon's involvement and former members' experience of a Circle Dinner with a Transylvanian theme after their visit to the Unitarian church in Kobatfalva, Transylvania.

Our Partner Church

Walter and Shelagh Frith

What a wonderful evening the Transylvanian circle dinner was! The theme was well adhered to with many scrumptious Hungarian dishes such as Paprika Chicken, Hungarian Goulash, Korosot, and Poppy Seed Cake to eat. We even enjoyed some of that infamous Hungarian drink Palinka! Eva Perjes entertained us with songs of Hungary before we joined her in a traditional Unitarian sing-a-long.

A wonderful assortment of school supplies, candy, toys and medical supplies were donated by our membership for the church in Kobatfalva. These supplies are unavailable in the village. Because of your generosity Reverend Nyitrai is now teaching two classes of English to the children in two villages. Thank you everyone for your contributions.

The October 31st Partner Church Collection will also assist other projects such as the completion of the new bell tower. The committee requested a portion of the monies be used for medical treatment for Rev. Nyitrai's wife, Ildiko, whose cancer has returned. We thank you for your continuing support.

Come spring the committee hopes to have Rev. Nan Geer speak to us of her experiences as a minister visiting Romania. Watch the Beacon for more news!

Religious Explorations

In a recent sermon Debra mentioned the nature of water is to move. Never has a message hit home so strongly in one month as I learned of Debra's move to Nanaimo and then later, that Eden and PJ were resigning from the REST position. Beacon is definitely in a period of transition and the response from Beacon to this change has shown me the strength of this community. It is a community of deep strength and resilience and as we ebb and flow through these changes, it makes us stronger together.

I want to offer a heart felt thanks to Eden and PJ for all the amazing work they did here at Beacon, they will truly be missed! With that being said we are currently looking for a Religious Exploration Support Teacher (REST) to work with our Director of Religious Exploration (DRE). The REST will teach one of the two weekly religious exploration programs (preferably the younger one) based on Unitarian curriculum decided by the DRE and the

RE Committee. This is a part-time paid contract position. The compensation is \$200.00 per month. Hours are 10:00 am to 12:00 pm each Sunday from March 1, 2019 to June 16, 2019 inclusive, then from September 2019 to June 2020. There will also be a bit of prep time during the week. Attending a monthly evening RE Committee meeting is also required.

If you are interested or know someone who is, please contact David Kristjanson at davidhardy@telus.net

Thank you to all who have stepped up to help during these transitions, especially the RE Committee and the Board.

—Ashley Cole (*she/her pronouns*)
Director of Religious Exploration,
Youth Coordinator
dre@beaconunitarian.org



Ashley Cole

Beacon Pastoral Care Team

The Beacon Pastoral Care committee, headed by Rev. Debra Thorne, consists of Judy Villet, Beth Connelly, Stacy Finch, and Laura Redmond. If you or someone you know is in need of pastoral care please let one of these people know.

How do you make a community hall into a sacred space?

Every Sunday morning, we make Sapperton Hall into a space that welcomes the community and invites worship. Would you like to put your creative talents to use and be part of a team that infuses our space with warmth and touches of beauty?

Contact David Kristjanson: davidhardy@telus.net.



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 and part spiritual deepening. Group 1 meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 1 pm; and Group 2 meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7 pm. 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. **March 31:** Al Sather will introduce free will. What does it mean to have free will? Do we have it?

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.

Join the Beacon Choir for musical fun and skill development. Choir rehearsals are on Tuesday evenings, at 7:30 pm, at Miller Park School. Contact choirdirector@beaconunitarian.org. All voices welcome!

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

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 '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.

Help out on Sunday mornings as a Coffee Host (contact Joan Morris, joanmorris@telus.net), **or sign-up as a Sunday Morning Greeter** (contact Susan Tarras, starras@telus.net).

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).

Youth Group: Contact Ashley Cole, dre@beaconunitarian.org, for more information.



Beacon Unitarian Church

Getting to Know U

The Connecting and Membership Committee will host a Getting to Know U event in March.

This is an opportunity to meet others who are also new to Beacon and perhaps new to Unitarianism in a relaxed day of conversation and questions.

There'll be a few 'mature' Beaconites to share their stories with you and a little Unitarian history thrown in as well.

Contact Rev. Debra for more information.

Book Club Pick for March:
Half-Blood Blues
by Esi Edugyan, c. 2011, 311 p.
Nominated by Marilyn Meden

This is a new part of an old story: 1930s Berlin, the threat of imprisonment and the powerful desire to make something beautiful despite the horror. Ernst told them not to go out. Said don't you boys tempt the devil. But the cheap beer in his gut must have made Hieronymus think a glass of milk would be worth the risk. Of course Ernst was right, and the star player on the Berlin scene of the late 1930s, right before the war began for the second time, was taken away that night by the Boots. An easy target, being a mixed-race German. Not like the others, the Americans, Europeans, black, white and Jewish, who could hide a while longer. Fifty years later and Sidney's going back, to hear for the first time the unfinished recording the band was making, the obsession that kept them there long after it was safe. The thing that stopped them using those visas while they were still good.

(Source: Burnaby Public Library Catalogue)





New App Launch

Luc Beaudoin has published his latest CogSci Apps invention, Hook for Mac. Hook is the world's first app to *link your (digital) life*. Its simple "popup window" links related documents, so that you can instantly navigate between them. This user-friendly app enables you to "file less, search less and simply access the information that is most relevant to your current task." Hook effectively turns your Mac into a *personal* web of information.

Hook also enables you to take linked-notes about any document on your Mac in the app of your choice. You can then instantly navigate between the document and your notes about it!

Hook removes the biggest roadblock to cognitive productivity documented in Luc's two *Cognitive Productivity* books. This is a remedy for our "post-truth" times, enabling people to access and apply high-caliber knowledge.

Hook is free to try <https://hookproductivity.com>

Desperately Seeking Debra

Nancy Rupert will be collecting photos of our minister, Rev. Debra Thorne over the next weeks. If you have some personal snapshots stored away of Rev. Debra in her time here at Beacon, please pass them along to nancy.rupert@gmail.com



First-Friday Community Talent Nights

This family-oriented monthly gathering highlights a variety of talented local entertainers and performing artists!

WHEN:

March 1, April 5, May 3, June 7, Oct 4, Nov 1, Dec 6, 2019
at 7 pm

WHERE:

Sunnyside United, 15639 - 24 Avenue, Surrey

www.surreyunitarians.ca

SOUTH FRASER
UNITARIANS

Curious about energy healing?

Laura Redmond is taking the Integrative Energy Healing program at Langara College and requires volunteers to practise the treatment techniques she is learning. Here is a short description of what to expect: *Integrative Energy Healing (IEH) is a blend of ancient Eastern healing practices with Western scientific discoveries. Integral, whole-person approaches to wellbeing are the focus of the program. What happens in an IEH session? Student practitioners conduct a short intake interview. The practitioners will do an assessment of your energy field (biofield), noting any imbalances. Then they work with your energy field by way of gentle hand placements on the body (or off the body, as you prefer). The sessions are usually 60 minutes and include a focus, one somatic-energetic holding treatment, and dialogue. Clients can be seated or lying down on a massage table. Most everyone will benefit from a session. Elderly clients have shorter sessions.*

Contact Laura at lauraredmond2@telus.net to set up an appointment.



Upcoming Workshops offered by the Canadian Unitarian Council



Webinar: Worship as a Beacon for Congregational Growth

Saturday, March 30, 9:30–12:30 PT
Cost: \$35 per session (2 sessions)

Worship that emerges from the heart, mind and spirit changes lives. When it is led authentically and created with intention and skill, worship has the potential to inspire both inner and outer growth. In this workshop,

we will explore ways to create meaningful worship that engages minds, hearts, and spirits. Practical tools, handouts, and conversation will assure you bring helpful ideas back to your congregation.

Our presenter is the Rev. Dr. Barbara Wells ten Hove, currently serving as Consulting Minister at North Shore Unitarian Church in West Vancouver, BC. She earned her Doctor of Ministry studying worship and has led workshops and taught at UU seminaries on the topic for the past 15 years.

Please note: to respect presenter and staff time in planning for this event, a minimum number of participants is required to proceed. If this number is not reached six days before the date, the CUC will cancel the event and notify you. More info: <https://cuc.ca/events/worship-as-a-beacon-for-congregational-growth/>

Virtual Gathering: Hope in Hard Times

Wednesday,
March 6, 4–5:30
PT or Saturday,
March 9, 9:30–11
am PT



Arising out of common concern, voiced by religious professionals, we invite people to join in this time of reflection and sharing – looking at the ways we find Hope in Hard Times. Many of us are feeling discouraged during these challenging times. Join us to share and to hear from others. Rev. Debra Thorne, Rev. Linda Thomson and Joan Carolyn will convene these discussions. You are invited to register for the session that works best for your schedule. More info: <https://cuc.ca/events/gathering-hope-in-hard-times/>



Gathered Here is a new monthly online check-in for Canadian Unitarian Universalist young adults.

Join other UU 18–35 year-olds on Zoom (a video-conferencing platform) for sharing of joys and concerns, deeper check-ins, prayerful reflections, and an opportunity to process current events with a

spiritually grounded community.

Young adulthood can be a time of upheaval and transition and many of us struggle to maintain and build connections in the places we find ourselves physically.

While there is no substitute for in-person community, we hope that the opportunity to connect online with other young UUs will be a reminder to you that you're not alone. It's also a chance to reconnect with friends who live far away, and witness and celebrate the ups and downs of our lives alongside each other.

These are drop-in style gatherings, so you don't need to sign up in advance. On the days you want to attend, just get comfy with your internet box, sign in at the scheduled time, and bring your whole self for the hour and a quarter.

Gathered Here will generally take

place on the second Monday evening of each month at 5 pm PT; 6 pm MT; 7 pm CT; 8 pm ET; and 9 pm AT

Winter: Mar. 11

Spring: April 8, May 6 and June 10

Summer: July 8 and August 12

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1894212357364432/>

Save the Date for the 2019 Annual General Meeting!

The AGM is scheduled for Saturday, May 11 and will run from 10:00 – 1:30 pm PT at the Atrium at Centre for Social Innovation, 192 Spadina Ave., Toronto. Online participants are requested to sign on thirty minutes ahead of time to check sound and video systems