

## Curiosity

The theme for May is curiosity, which could be a DNA component of most Unitarians. Asking questions, wondering, exploring and delving into life experiences is the pastime of a curious person. This month we'll ask questions about this religion, about life transitions, and how curiosity can keep us engaged when we're feeling uncomfortable.



### MAY 5 **Becoming Unitarian?**

*Rev. Debra Thorne*

How does one become a Unitarian? There is no creed we all agree to believe and not everyone likes coffee! There are principles that most people think are pretty fine. There will be a New Member Ceremony today.

- The Choir sings.

**Children & Youth:** The children and youth will explore the various rituals and traditions of May.

### MAY 12 **Staying Open to the "Other"**

*Guest Speaker: Nancy Rupert*

*Service Leader: Janet Pivnick*

As Unitarians, we value diversity, but what does this mean in practice? How can we learn to become more aware of our assumptions in order to stay open to others? There will be a Lay Chaplaincy Installation today.

**Children & Youth:** The children and youth will focus on what they appreciate about Beacon.

### MAY 19 **Coming of Age**

*Rev. Debra Thorne,  
DRE Ashley Cole*

Transitioning from childhood to youth is a time of excitement and confusion. To risk new activities on our own, to question family traditions, and to begin to think for ourselves requires reflection and courage. As part of their 'Coming of Age' year-long program, two of Beacon's youth reflected on their beliefs. We'll hear their credos today as we recognise their evolution.

- The Choir sings.

**Children & Youth:** The youth will be leading the service, the children will be downstairs continuing to explore what they appreciate about Beacon

### MAY 26 **The Grace of Years**

*Rev. Debra Thorne*

We are always 'coming of age', but there has never been such a large cohort of healthy, vital and engaged elders in history. Rev. Debra

asked Beacon Elders to share their experiences and wisdom to questions like: What is the evolutionary purpose of long life? What does freedom look like at ninety? What does authority look like at eighty-five? What insights, what knowledge do you have that younger generations need?

- During the service there will be a Naming Ceremony for Eamon Burns-Scott.
- The Sharing-our-Plate Recipient, Camp Kerry, will be presented with Beacon's donation.

**Children & Youth:** Spirit Jam Sunday



# Minister's Message

## “Beacon Unitarian Congregation inspires learning and spiritual growth.”

This is the second line of Beacon's vision statement created five years ago. It has been my honour and my passion to have contributed to the learning and spiritual growth for the Beacon community.

Over the years we have deepened together in our listening to the life of the heart and the soul. The small group ministry program built on Chalice Circles, evolved into the *Soul to Soul* program, which evolved into *Soul Matters*. The thread through all these programs has been 'deep listening'. A significant shift away from intellectual debate and discussion toward an encouragement to explore life experience in terms of self-awareness and soul maturity. I know through years of group facilitation that we learn and grow far more from each other's trust and vulnerable sharing in a group than by ourselves alone. There is a significant power in small group ministry that is greater than the sum of its parts.

In a two part class called *Building Your Own Theology* we mused on the meaning of our values, the meaning of human nature, ultimate reality, history

and ethics. Weaving what we knew about truth and authority, justice and suffering, death and immortality and the concept of the beloved community, we developed our personal theology, and wrote our credos. It was a joy to hear the diversity in the group and see the respectful curiosity that was offered to each participant.

In another group some of us explored a modern prayer practice that had us creating gorgeous prayer beads symbolizing the four types of prayer according to Rev Walker-Wikstrom. Another group discovered the meaning in the favourite UU song 'Spirit of Life', line by delicious line. There was practical and serious learning about the necessary preparations for our death in the series of workshops called *Advanced Care Planning*. There we learned about some legalities and personal wishes that could become important during our final days of life. We compared hospices to hospitals and practiced writing our own wills, obituaries and memorials.

Beacon offers many more programs, some lay lead, to fill the mind and stretch our world views such as the Humanist Group, the Book Club and *Truth, Healing and Reconciliation*.

All in all, and with the commitment of so many, the second line of the Beacon Vision statement has continued to grow this vibrant community, rich with curious and searching souls.

It is an honour to serve, explore and play with you.

—Rev Debra Thorne



Rev. Debra Thorne

## Summer services...

can take a variety of forms—a discussion, sharing of stories, poems and readings, community singing.

## Summer services...

are informal, taking place in living rooms, in parks or any place that allows a dozen or so people to gather.

If you have an idea and would like to create and coordinate a simple service, contact Janet Pivnick, Worship Services Committee Chair by end of May: janpivnick@gmail.com.

## 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.



**Beacon Unitarian Church**

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info@beaconunitarian.org

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minister@beaconunitarian.org

**Lay Chaplain:**  
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604-469-6797  
ceremonies@beaconunitarian.org

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Angela Zhang  
choirdirector@beaconunitarian.org

**Board Executive:**  
**Co-Presidents:**  
David Kristjanson and  
Donna Hamilton;

**Treasurer:** Heather Brown;  
**Secretary:** Janet Pivnick;  
**Members at Large:** John Hagen, Elizabeth Campbell, Karen Greenland.

**Connections & Membership:**  
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**Religious Exploration Director:**  
Ashley Cole,  
dre@beaconunitarian.org

**Beacon Newsletter:**  
newsletter@beaconunitarian.org  
Production: Laura Redmond  
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**Deadline for article submissions** is the 15th of the month, for inclusion in the following month's newsletter.

## Board Bitz



David Kristjanson



Donna Hamilton

**T**hank you all for attending Beacon's AGM on April 28th. It is good to see so many members and friends interested in the governance of our wonderful community.

New on the board this year are Karen Greenland and Heather Brown. Karen has been an active volunteer at Beacon for many years and has been on the board in the past. Heather is taking over as treasurer, and actually joined the board in February to start learning the position from Carol Woodworth. Returning to the board are Janet Pivnick, who is taking on the

job of Secretary, John Hagen, Elizabeth Campbell, Donna Hamilton and David Kristjanson. Our first board meeting will be on Sunday, May 5th.

A big thank you to Gail Thomson, Michael Scales, and Carol Woodworth for all the hard work that they have done while on the board over the last couple of years. We will miss them on the Board, but while they are stepping down, they will continue to be very active at Beacon.

The board continues to work hard on the Ministerial search. The Congregational Record has been completed and posted at the UUA and CUC. The board has struck a Board Ministerial Search Sub-Committee consisting of Janet Pivnick, Donna Hamilton, David Kristjanson, and Carol Woodworth. We will be updating everyone as things start happening.

Coming up on June 8th, from noon to 4 pm, at the Lunderville's house, is the Co-ordinating Council meeting. The Co-ordinating Council

is made up of one (or two) representative from each committee, task force, group, as well as the board presidents, some board members, and the minister. More information will be available in *Beacon This Week*, later in May. Anyone is welcome to come. Talk to Donna Hamilton or Rev. Debra Thorne for more information.

— *David Kristjanson and Donna Hamilton, Co-Presidents*  
[board@beaconunitarian.org](mailto:board@beaconunitarian.org)

### 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](mailto:davidhardy@telus.net).

May 31 - June 2, 2019

**YOUR GREAT ESCAPE**

CAMPSASAMAT.COM

Choir Workshop w/  
**Kathryn Nicholson**

Speaker  
**Gabi Harvey**  
Tale of a South American Traveller

## Living with Less Plastic – New Westminster



Teresa Morton

limited to the Church members. We can start to include others who share our concerns about the role of plastic in our lives. Watch for more info on

Now we are an ‘affiliated organization’ for Beacon! That means that ‘Living with Less Plastic – New Westminister’ is associated with the Beacon Unitarians but not

our ‘startup’... Let people know about this fledgling group and the work we have done so far!

We have connected with Choices Market on 10th Avenue & with the Save-On Foods on Columbia. The next grocery stores on our list are Donald’s Market at the New West Quay and one of the Safeway stores. We introduce ourselves, share our concerns about the amount of plastic used in grocery stores, express our hopes for reducing Single Use Plastic (SUP) and ask a lot of questions.

‘What are the roadblocks to reducing plastics in your business? What can customers do to help speed the transition to a post-plastics food supply? How is your store distinguishing itself in the environmental area?’ Please let us know if you can help with this work!

—Teresa Morton  
[teresa.a.morton@gmail.com](mailto:teresa.a.morton@gmail.com)

## Climate Action Letter Writing Campaign

In April, Teresa Morton and Rev. Debra arranged a letter writing campaign for Beaconites. Please consider adding your signature to the following letter:

**There is a Climate Emergency here in Canada and around the world.** The Federal Government report released this week by the Environment and Climate Change Department says that Canada is warming at twice the global rate. 2018 was the worst year on record for devastating wild fires in British Columbia. The Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard Jonathan Wilkinson says the report, “underlines the need for urgent climate action in Canada.”

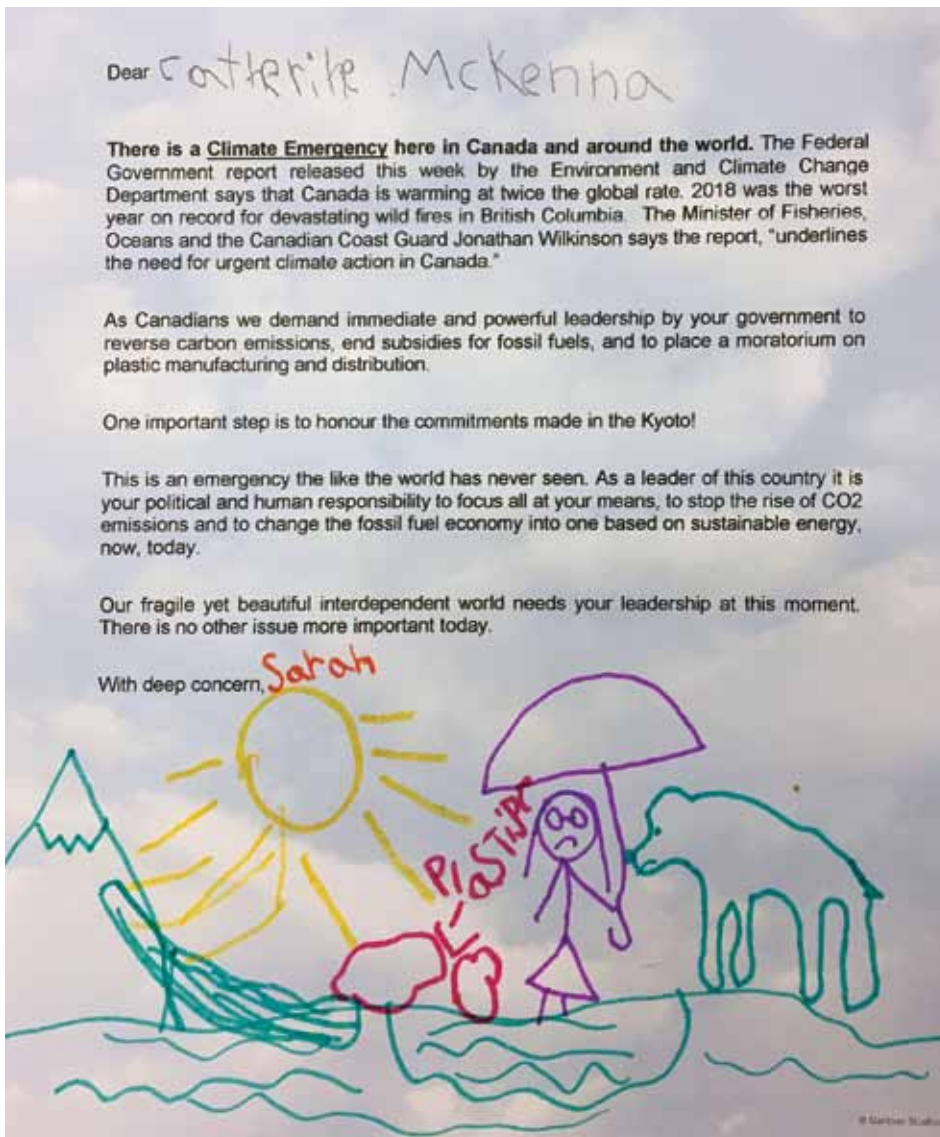
As Canadians we demand immediate and powerful leadership by your government to reverse carbon emissions, end subsidies for fossil fuels, and to place a moratorium on plastic manufacturing and distribution.

One important step is to honour the commitments made in the Kyoto!

This is an emergency the like the world has never seen. As a leader of this country it is your political and human responsibility to focus all at your means, to stop the rise of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and to change the fossil fuel economy into one based on sustainable energy, now, today.

Our fragile yet beautiful interdependent world needs your leadership at this moment. There is no other issue more important today.

With deep concern,



Sarah, a young participant in the letter writing campaign, illustrated her concern over the melting icecap in northern Canada, and the plastic pollution of our oceans.

## Getting to Know U

This month the Connections and Membership committee held two Getting To Know U gatherings. Four new families who have been attending Beacon for a bit joined in to share stories and learn something about Unitarianism. Rev. Debra led the discussions which began with a wonderful sharing of each person's story of how they arrived at Beacon and Unitarianism. She then gave a brief but fascinating history of Unitarianism from its beginnings in Transylvania through its transformations over the years, to current times.

Beacon members Joan Morris and Donna Hamilton told their Unitarian histories, as well as a little of Beacon's early years in the Tri-Cities and New West area.

Bob and Kay Thompson, who have had 20 years with the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Kamloops, hosted the first meeting. For the sec-

ond meeting, Peggy Lunderville hosted a family gathering of three families for a delicious homemade pizza lunch. Peggy, Joyce Gudaitis and Damian Gryski cared for the kids, helping them make their own pizzas. The Gryskis (Allison, Damian and their two children, Madeline and Connor), the Kobayashis (Sarah, Toshi, and their two children, Naomi and Kenji) and Amalia Mamani, her daughter Sarah and son Simon attended the gathering. They would love to have you say hello when you see them at church.

We are very excited and pleased to be welcoming Teresa Morton, Kay Thompson and Amalia Mamani who will become new Beacon members on May 5th.

### Circle Dinners

Our next Circle Dinners will be held Saturday May 4. This is a super way to meet others in a casual, social setting

where groups of 6-8 people meet in Beacon homes (up to 5 or 6 homes). You will probably get to know someone you haven't known well before and enjoy a delicious food produced by all those attending. You will enjoy thoughtful conversation, stories and opinions on a variety of topics. You may even play games or focus on a particular thought provoking question.

If you have attended a dinner before, you will receive an email invitation. You sign up for a dinner by responding to that email. If you haven't received an invitation, please email Donna Hamilton (donna-h@telus.net) or call 604-944-3113. You will be sent dinner details by your host a week before the dinner.

Hope to see you at a Circle Dinner!

*Your Beacon Connections Team*

—Phil Campbell, Joyce Gudaitis,

Joan Morris, Susan Tarras

Donna Hamilton (Circle Dinners)

## Religious Explorations

Hello from the RE community, and a very happy spring time! Looking back over what we got up to in April, I realized that we were quite busy, and May looks just as full. In April we had a special Spirit Jam, led by Rev. Debra who shared the stories of her minister stoles with us, and showed us how to make wonder and worry boxes. We also hosted our annual Easter egg hunt and participated in a whole church service.

In May, we welcome Alex Dragan, who you may know from the Nursery. A big thank you to Alex who has agreed to support us in RE for the remainder of the church year, until we can find a permanent replacement for the Religious Exploration Support

Teacher Position. I also want to take this opportunity to thank all the parents and volunteers who have stepped up or offered support in some way to the Religious Exploration program. Beacon recognizes the vital contribution families make to a healthy congregation and we strive to provide a fun, welcoming and safe environment for them. Sometimes the work and time that goes into making that a reality is not always acknowledged, so I just wanted to take a moment and say THANK YOU!

So what does May have in store? We will be working as a group to explore our own community and what we appreciate about it, and I am very excited to share that on May 19th the youth (along with Debra and I) will

be leading the service as they share of their experiences in the *Coming of Age* program they have been working through over this past year. To close the month off, we will have a Spirit Jam Sunday!

I hope you are all enjoying this shift into warmer weather and seasonal blooms. May the promise of spring's rebirth and warmth live in your heart as you move through this month.

—Ashley Cole (she/her pronouns)

Director of Religious Exploration,

Youth Coordinator

[dre@beaconunitarian.org](mailto:dre@beaconunitarian.org)



Ashley Cole

## 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, 7:30 pm at *The Astoria Retirement Home* (2245 Kelly Avenue, Port Coquitlam) to discuss a wide range of current topics.

**April 28:** Earl Morris will introduce a discussion on Jesus of the Jesus Seminar. Was Jesus as brilliant as his admirers think? Or are they projecting their own ideas on how one understands his sayings? All this from a Humanist point of view! Please contact Marilyn Medén if you would like any further details.

**May 26:** John Slattery will moderate a discussion on our 2nd principle: Justice, equality and compassion in human relations.

**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, until May 14th. 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

### Settlement 2 Preliminary Planning Meeting: **Thurs, May 2nd, 7 pm**

The settlement two task force is excited to let the congregation know that the next four members of the Al Rbaai family are expected to come from Jordan in the near future, no precise date is known at this time. As there are many details to welcoming them we hope that anyone able to help will attend a preliminary planning meeting at 7 PM on Thursday, May 2 at the Al Rbaai home at 911 Kent St. Downstairs at the back. Feel free to contact Peggy Lunderville at 604-812-5939, prlunder@gmail.com, or Terry McComas terry\_mccomas@yahoo.ca for further details or if you wish to help and can't come to the meeting.

on this month's book. For meeting location details contact John Hagen, ajhagen@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.

**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). More details on page 5.

**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).

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

### Transition Listening Circle **May 26, 12–1 pm**

After the service there will be a Transition Listening Circle hosted by the Pastoral Care Team. Meet in the Nursery Room at 12 noon for one hour. This is an opportunity to speak about your feelings and response to Rev. Debra leaving Beacon. To encourage freedom of expression, Debra will not be in attendance at the circle.

### Co-ordinating Council meeting: **June 8th**

The Co-ordinating Council is made up of one (or two) representative from each committee, task force, group, as well as the board presidents, some board members, and the minister. Join us on June 8th, from noon to 4 pm, at the Lundervilles' house.

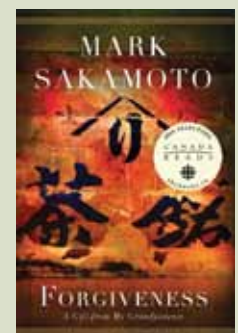
### The Book Club meets on Thurs., May 23 at 7 pm

#### ***Forgiveness: a gift from my grandparents***

by Mark Sakamoto

Discussion Leader: Susan Tarras

Heart-rending true story of Ralph MacLean and Mitsue Sakamoto as the Second World War rips their lives and their humanity out of their grasp. But somehow, these two brave individuals surmounted such enormous transgressions and learned to forgive. (Source: BPL)





## Beacon Theology Pub

May, June

We'll meet on third Sundays in the Back Room of the Sapperton District Taphouse (known as "The District") at 421 E Columbia, just a few blocks east of Keary St.

We'll aim to start at 12:30, hoping to have orders in and discussion started by 1 pm. The meeting room has one small step at the entry. Menu can be found at <https://www.sappertondistricttaphouse.com/>.

Talks will be based on our Beacon themes for each month: May 19 – Curiosity; June 23 – Celebration. Mark these dates and invite anyone you think might be interested. Contact Franci Louann at [flouann@telus.net](mailto:flouann@telus.net) or 604-837-7613 to express interest.

July and August could be different, when we won't have services...maybe in a different location, maybe weekly, depending on interest and other planned Beacon activities.



## CUC Virtual Roundtable

**The Road Forward: Registration:**  
April 27 – May 22

Watch the film and read the materials:  
May 22 – June 5

Reflection Group: Wednesday, June 5, 7-8:30 EST and Saturday, June 8, 12:30-2 EST

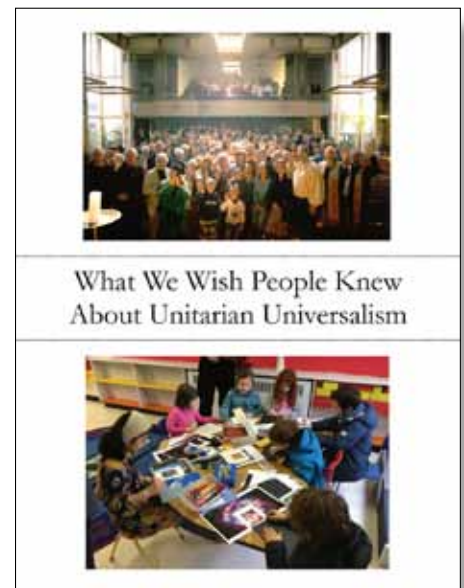
"*The Road Forward*, a musical documentary by Marie Clements, connects a pivotal moment in Canada's civil rights history—the beginnings of Indian Nationalism in the 1930s—with the powerful momentum of First Nations activism today. *The Road Forward's* stunningly shot musical sequences, performed by an ensemble of some of Canada's finest vocalists and musicians, seamlessly connect past and present with soaring vocals, blues, rock, and traditional beats. A rousing tribute to the fighters for First Nations rights, a soul-resounding historical experience, and a visceral call to action." – National Film Board

## Resource to Share Unitarianism



Rev. Steven Epperson wanted an easier way to explain Unitarianism to others. He wanted to include the richness of UUism's historical roots, the challenges of living the faith, and the benefits it offers to those who choose to do so, but in a way that is accessible to people. Epperson was inspired by a sermon he read and decided to ask his ministerial colleagues to help out. The result is "What We Wish People Knew About Unitarian Universalism" which can be downloaded from: <https://cuc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/What-We-Wish-People-Knew-About-Unitarian-Universalism-v4.pdf>

Excerpt from *What we wish people knew about Unitarian Universalism*:  
"I wish everyone knew firsthand the power of a community that puts respect of every person first. If you haven't been respected in your life, the experience is utterly transformative. If you have known respect, then it is vital that you bring it to every relationship, especially to those who challenge your perceptions and ruffle your comfort. I wish everyone knew how shatteringly foundational is the Unitarian first principle: 'the inherent worth and dignity of every person.' I wish that everyone knew that our diversity is our strength. If the people of the world are ever going to live in mutual respect of our diversity, then some people, somewhere need to be practicing how to do this. Unitarian Universalists are working on this in every congregation, every week. We are learning how to listen with respect. We are learning



What We Wish People Knew About Unitarian Universalism

how to love with understanding. We are learning to draw the circle of 'us' wider and wider. We are practicing how to live in the healthy and necessary tensions of a diverse community."

–Rev. Debra Thorne

## Renée Spakowski — one Unitarian makes a difference

In March, Beacon member Renée Spakowski initiated a petition and lobbied the provincial government with the aim of securing funding for an additional housekeeper for the United Way's *Better at Home* program. Funding was granted within one month! Below is an excerpt from the story that appeared in *The Maple Ridge News*.

### Maple Ridge senior wants more funding for *Better at Home* program

The United Way program provides services to seniors across Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows.

Renée Spakowski needs someone to help her clean her house.

The 78-year-old uses a walker and cane to get around because her left knee has no cartilage left and said she can't bend down below her waist. She is also on a fixed income.

Spakowski gets a housekeeper for a couple of hours one day every three weeks to come to her single-bedroom co-op house to help do laundry, dust, vacuum, clean her kitchen and bathroom floor. For this, she pays \$24 per visit.

However, in the past eight months, she has been bumped three times when the housekeeper either went on vacation or was sick.

"There is no plan B. There is no person waiting in the wings. When I am bumped, everybody else who is crippled and old is bumped," said Spakowski.

And when she looked to other companies to fill in for the month, the same service was going to cost her \$60.

The United Way's *Better at Home* program helps older adults to continue living independently in their



Renée Spakowski holds a letter she sent to Maple Ridge Mission MLA Bob D'Eith, asking him for more government funding for the United Way's *Better at Home* Program to hire one more subsidized housekeeper for the Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows area. (Colleen Flanagan/THE NEWS)

own homes by providing an array of home support services. It is a provincial program funded by the Ministry of Health and managed through the United Way.

The organization employs two housekeepers for Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows, and doesn't have the means to hire more.

"If someone is away, we don't have someone backup that we can call."

And the organization currently has a waiting list of clients.

Spakowski has started a petition to try to get the provincial government to fund an additional housekeeper for the local service. So far, she has 140 signatures.

"There needs to be a backup plan so vulnerable seniors are not left for five or six weeks without services," read a letter she sent to Maple Ridge-Mission MLA Bob D'Eith.

"This subsidized home care is vital for our independent living and we count on its routine dependability and excellent service."

### Aiding healing through relaxation

Laura Redmond is studying energy healing techniques and is offering free treatments to gain experience and deepen in her knowledge of this field. 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, and many find the experience very relaxing.*

Contact [lauraredmond2@telus.net](mailto:lauraredmond2@telus.net) to set up a free treatment.