



DEC 1 **Advent Spiral**
Rev. Meg Roberts
Please join us for an intergenerational journey into the heart of the spiral. Celebrate the turn of the seasons and the coming of winter—time of reflection and introspection. In this Whole Church service, we'll be walking a spiral, 'lighting' candles and making wishes for the coming year, all within a very special circle of song and chant. It is a magical service! Suitable for all ages.

DEC 8 **Prelude to Christmas**
Donna Hamilton
Music is a form of prayer, uniting people everywhere, and transforming a large empty hall into a sacred space. Come for some of the favourite songs of the season. Hear the choir sing (complete with accompaniment of piano, recorder, and violin!), hear some stories and join in

singing a variety of Christmas music.
• Choir sings
Children & Youth will gather downstairs for final pageant preparations.

DEC 15 **How the Grinch Stole Christmas: No-Rehearsal Pageant**

The Religious Exploration department and you!

Join us for our annual whole church pageant in which all ages are welcome to participate in creating this well-loved story. The Grinch tries to steal Christmas from the villagers of Whoville and learns a lesson about love and belonging. Today is an opportunity to explore what Christmas means to us.

DEC 22 **The Gift of Darkness**
Service Leaders: Worship Services Committee

As we awake from the longest night of the year, the Worship Services Com-

mittee invites you to consider the gifts of darkness. As a society, we seek the light and fear the darkness—both literally and metaphorically. In so doing, imbalances can be created on a personal, societal and planetary level. Let's explore together what can be gained by entering the darkness and embracing its gifts.

• Choir sings
Children & Youth will celebrate with a holiday party

DEC 24 **Christmas Eve, 7 PM: Each Night a Child is Born is a Holy Night**

Rev. Meg Roberts

We celebrate all births and remember one in particular this evening. With inspiring stories and music of the season, we remember why these new beginnings are such a holy time. Bring friends and family to this service as well as anyone else who might like to be in a community on this holiday eve. We will gather in peace and love. Please also bring cookies to share after our service!

DEC 29 **Gratitudes and Goodbyes**
Marilyn Medén & Sue Sparlin
We move on in our lives.

Circumstances change. We change. But our history remains. Using music, we will explore both letting go and embracing our past. This will be a service of spiritual and bodily comfort. Come in your pajamas if you wish and enjoy coffee, tea, and sweetbreads before and during the service. There will not be a children's program, but we will have story for all ages and a craft table for children.

Musings by Meg

The theme for this month is adventure/play.

I admit it: I love the winter holiday season. I love the carols, the tree decorations, the lights—especially the holiday lights on people’s homes. A friend and I have made it a tradition to go see holiday lights. We make a special night of it: we bring hot chocolate in a thermos, wear warm mittens, hats and thick socks in our boots, and we walk along the streets, meandering along with others out on similar adventures. We take the time to stand in awe of the beauty of those twinkling coloured lights, as well as laugh at some of the fun decorations of Charlie Brown and the Peanuts gang, and the Grinch (one of my favourites!).

What makes this ritual so much fun is that we let the child within us come out to play. We set aside whatever challenging aspects come up about our holidays—whether it is challenging family dynamics, fears about the state of the planet, or the stresses of a busy holiday time—letting them

fade into the background for our time together.

When will you find time to let the child within you come out to play? It might be with children, grandchildren, or other young ones in your life. It might be on your own or

We take the time to stand in awe of the beauty.

with friends—doing something that brings you simple pleasure. Where could you find a fun adventure to go on in the coming month? (It could be outside or snuggled up at home reading a novel or watching a film.) I look forward to hearing about your times of adventure and play when I see you—or drop me a line. Because I’m working ½-time, here’s how best to reach me:

- My regular Beacon days are Wednesdays and Thursdays. I’m in the Beacon office, located at 8892 Armstrong Avenue in Burnaby Wednesdays between 2–6 pm. (except 1st Wednesday afternoons

when I’m with the Soul Matters Circle.) I am available by appointment at other times as well.

- I work Fridays and Saturdays of those weekends when I lead the Sunday service—focusing on service preparation those days as well as other work.
- Monday is my regular day off and I also will be off Dec.25—Jan.1.
- I can be reached via email: minister@BeaconUnitarian.org and on my cell at 778-870-9015. I will respond as soon as I’m able.

I wish us all moments of joy, adventure and playfulness this month, as we enter into the spirit of the season. Happy Holidays—whether it is Hanukkah, Winter Solstice, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and/or New Years—may you find the blessings and gifts of love and peace.

*In the spirit of life,
Rev. Meg Roberts*



Rev. Meg Roberts

Love to sing?

Want to join our 2-rehearsal pop-up choir performing Dec. 15th?

All ages, all voices welcome!

We’re creating a band of Who-villagers for *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* pageant service to sing the “Welcome Christmas” song. Rehearsals would be Sunday, Dec.8 right after the service for 30 minutes, and Sunday, Dec.15, 9:45–10:15am (so we’re ready for the service that morning). You don’t have to read music, just the lyrics! Contact Susan White: sudwhite@gmail.com.

Hold this date for two worship services workshops:

Saturday, January 25, 2020

Facilitated by Rev. Meg Roberts

Choose to participate in one or both of these workshops:

9:30 am—12 noon: Worship Services 101:

Learning the Basics of Service Coordinating and Leading

1:00—5:00 pm: Share Your Story: A Sermon Writing Workshop

Workshop also includes one follow-up group coaching session to help integrate learning.

To register, please fill in this online form: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeMLIgnsT76sStcsBAaDWrohzmOCNYxXqWoNQTrVcl dL SmSA/viewform?usp=sf_link

Or contact Meg: minister@beaconunitarian.org or 778-870-9015



Board Bitz

Twenty-nineteen has been quite a year. In January we heard that our beloved minister of 7 years, Rev. Debra Thorne, was moving to Nanaimo to be with her true love, and by June we had already found a new minister. **Rev. Meg Roberts** has moved into our hearts and has been indispensable in helping us work through this big transition.

Rev. Meg created and led a fun and informative workshop at the Justice Institute on August 31st using Beacon's vision of **'Connect with Compassion and Respect, Inspire Learning and Spiritual Growth, and Transform through Joy and Justice'** to guide our planning for the coming year.

We had another workshop on November 16th, again at the Justice Institute, led by **Joan Carolyn from the Canadian Unitarian Council** and **Rev. Meg** along with Beacon's own **Janet Pivnick**. We talked about what we have learned from our past, what patterns we may want to keep and what we may want to change. We learned how to cultivate resilience, sustainability, and collective care to make a healthy organization and community culture. There were songs, skits, fun, as well as discussion, listening and quiet reflection. There will be another one of these **Transitional Workshops in the spring**. If you haven't been to one yet, you have really been missing out. Look for more information in the new year.

In 2019 Beacon purchased a new **database system called Breeze** to help us keep organized and **Nancy Rupert** has been working tirelessly getting it up and running. It is already proving to be a great asset. Thank you, Nancy, for all your hard work and to all the others who have worked so very hard on this.

Another transition has been **from**

one treasurer to another. At our AGM in April **Carol Woodworth** stepped down and **Heather Brown** took up the post. Many thanks to Carol for her years of dedication and for continuing to mentor Heather; and thank you to Heather for all her hard work in getting up to speed on this difficult position. It is a lot to take on, especially at pledge drive time.

Our **pledge drive** theme this year was **'Roots hold me close, Wings set me free'** and the Pledge Drive team was once again led by **Nancy Rupert**. Thank you to all who have pledged. **Because of your generosity, our community continues to thrive**. Our treasurer, **Heather Brown**, has been crunching the numbers and has created our **Budget for 2020**. There will be a **congregational budget meeting on Sunday, December 8th**, after the service, to vote on this new budget. A copy of the budget will be sent out by email, or mail, so that you can have a look at it before the meeting. The board will be there to answer any questions. Please plan on attending and remember that anyone can ask questions, but only Beacon members can vote. Make sure you bring your appetite because there will be a **soup lunch** as well.

Along with our regular inspiring services, December brings us a few special services. Don't miss the **'No Rehearsal Children's Holiday Pageant'** on December 15th, and the **'Christmas Eve Service'** in the evening of December 24th.

If you are looking to **become more involved at Beacon** in the new year, there are lots of groups like Lunch Bunch, Choir, Soul Matters, Theology Pub, Book Club, and the Humanist Group to check out. Everything is on the website, www.beaconunitarian.org.

Volunteering is another great way to get involved and meet new friends



David Kristjanson



Donna Hamilton

at Beacon. There are lots of opportunities for adults and youth, from helping set up our **'church in a box'** on Sunday mornings to preparing coffee or being a greeter. They are all very rewarding and fun. You can also check out the possibility of helping with our **Religious Exploration program for children and youth**. Many thanks to all the **staff and volunteers** who have kept our community running smoothly in 2019.

And finally, from all of us on the board, we wish you a **Joyous Holiday Season** and a very **Happy New Year**. Thank you all for being here this year to **Connect, Inspire, and Transform**.

— *David Kristjanson and
Donna Hamilton, Co-Presidents*

Please Support the Share Food Bank!

The Share food bank is in need of extra support during the winter season when they distribute gifts for children and extra hampers at Christmas time. Over the last three years Beacon has supported the food bank very generously—on average providing \$1700 yearly to support families in need. But so far this year we have raised less than \$1000. **Please dig deep to continue that outstanding support on Dec. 1st, our last collection this year.** Remember donations of \$20 or more are tax receiptable.

Thank you, John Hagen.

Religious Exploration (RE) for December

Hello everyone! Hope this finds you well, perhaps with a warm cup of tea and even curled up beside the fire. Finding moments of rest in this busiest of seasons can be rare and I hope that you each find plenty!

December is always a busy month and this year is no exception. From

Important RE Dates:

Nov. 30th: Night Tree Party

Dec. 1st: Advent Spiral—Whole Church Service

Dec. 15th: Whole Church Winter Pageant

Dec. 22nd: RE Holiday Party

Dec. 29th: No RE programs

the night tree party to the annual winter pageant we've got a lot of fantastic programming ahead of us! So let's get to it.

Perhaps these words will get to you just on the cusp of the season as we will be gathering for our annual Night Tree Party tradition on Nov. 30th at the Lunderville's at 6 pm. Then on Dec. 1st the children and youth will join the adults for a whole church advent spiral. On Dec. 15th please join us for our annual whole church pageant in which all ages are welcome to participate in creating the well-loved story, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. And finally on Dec. 22nd the children and youth will gather downstairs for our holiday party. This will be the last program Sunday of the year as there will be no RE on Dec. 29th.



Alex Dragan



Ashley Cole

On Jan. 5th, 2020, we will gather together for a whole church Fire Celebration.

Thank you to all who have helped support the RE programs this past year and I welcome those are interested in supporting the programs in various ways to reach out to me at dre@beaconunitarian.org. Thanks all and to all a good night!

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

Let's Connect: Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour has long been a favourite way of connecting for Beaconites and Unitarians in general. It's a chance to catch up with old friends and make new ones, make visitors feel welcome and learn more about activities outside of Sunday services. Last year the Connections and Membership committee took over coffee hour organization and experimented with asking various groups who are part of Beacon (such as Book Club, the Humanist group and many others) to take a turn once a year to do set-up and clean-up for coffee. It's been a resounding success and wonderful to see so many people pitching in and creating hospitality.

Coffee hour on the other three or four Sundays a month happens with the help of a dedicated group of volunteers, some who have been

doing this for many years. They come early, stay late and make sure others can enjoy their time together. We can show our appreciation by stopping in at the kitchen, saying hi and asking if they need a hand. Often the few minutes you spend putting out snacks or setting out cups can make a real difference to the coffee hosts and give them time to get upstairs for part of the service. After coffee hour, anything we can do to help by pitching in with collecting cups, cleaning up snacks or even washing a sink of dishes is appreciated.

If you like to help people feel fed and welcome, maybe coffee hosting speaks to you. If it does, please contact either Joyce Gudaitis (joyceg@asrsoft.com) or Sue Sparlin (sue.sparlin@gmail.com) and they will guide you on your way.

UU Jokes about Coffee:

- Three buildings catch on fire—a catholic church, a temple, and a UU church. The priest rushes into the burning building and brings out the crucifix. The Rabbi rushes in and brings out the Torah. And what does the UU minister save? The coffee pot.
- How many UU's does it take to change a light bulb? Hard to say. Let's discuss it over coffee.

—Joyce Gudaitis on behalf of your Beacon Connecting and Membership Team: Joan Morris, Phil Campbell, Susan Tarras, Sue Sparlin, Rev. Meg Roberts.



Joyce Gudaitis

Living with Less Plastics—Developments at the Municipal Level

When the BC Union of Municipalities met in late September, they endorsed several resolutions dealing with Single Use Products (most of which are Single Use PLASTIC). As expected, many of the resolutions request the provincial government to take action in these areas. We are awaiting the Provincial Plastics Strategy which should be out in early 2020 and will be looking for action in the following components. (If you are interested in the nitty-gritty of the union resolutions, you can visit the Union of Municipalities site at www.ubcm.ca.)

Resolution **B147** asks that the province set an environmental fee for all Single Use Plastic products, including compostable and biodegradable products. It also requests the province to create a Provincial Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy.

The next Resolution, **B148**, asks the province to allow local governments to regulate or restrict single-use items by the province's agreement,



Living with Less Plastic NEW WEST

by regulation, or by approval of the minister. This resolution was created to address the situation in Victoria, where the city's ban of plastic bags was overturned.

Resolution **B-149**, meanwhile, requests the province to ensure that compostable packaging (including single-use take-out food ware) distributed in Canada is designed to fully biodegrade, that standards and certifications for compostable packaging are aligned with composting infrastructure, and that compostable single-use items are collected and managed through an extended producer responsibility program that covers the residential and commercial sectors as well as the public realm.

BC has one of the worlds leading Extended Produce Responsibility programs, so the commercial sector is

familiar with the principles of recycling and refund approaches.

And, finally, in Resolution **B-150** they asked the province to set standards for acceptable limits of microplastics being released into marine and freshwater environments or onto land as well as a standard methodology for testing and reporting, and implementation of a governing body.

I also found Resolution **B-138** which asks the provincial and federal governments to end all subsidies to fossil fuel companies and to invest the money instead in climate change mitigation and adaptation activities being undertaken by local governments.



Teresa Morton

—Teresa Morton

Living with Less Plastic New West
Teresa.a.morton@gmail.com



Order
multi-faith
calendars by
Dec. 8th

Calendars sell for \$16, with \$6/calendar going towards a charity chosen by Religious Explorations participants.

To order, please speak to, or email **Bette Goode (604-462-7919; bjgoode@hotmail.com) by December 8th.**

Pick up your calendar on either Sunday, Dec. 15 or 22.

Singing the Season
Chalice Choir Advent Concert

featuring Charpentier's Messe de Minuit de Noel

Sunday, December 1 @ 7:30 pm
Unitarian Church of Vancouver (Oak & 49th)

Tickets: \$20 (or pay what you can)

Beacon Programs

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

The Humanist Discussion Group

usually 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. Our next meeting will be on January 26th (no meeting for December). Please contact Marilyn Medén m.j.meden@telus.net 604 469 6797 for more details.

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 Monday evenings, at 7:30 pm, at Miller Park School. Contact choirdirector@beaconunitarian.org for more info. All voices welcome! No choir rehearsal Dec. 23 or 30th.

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 (joanmorris@telus.net) 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).

Help out on Sunday mornings as a Coffee Host contact Joyce Gudaitis (joyceg@asrsoft.com), **or sign-up as a Sunday Morning Greeter** (contact Susan Tarras, starras@telus.net).

Book Club meetings are usually held on the 4th Thursday of each month

at 7 pm. For meeting location details contact John Hagen, ajhagen@telus.net. *No meeting in December.*

Youth Group: Contact Alex Dragan, youth@beaconunitarian.org, for more information.

Settlement 2 Task Force is responsible for the settlement of four refugees who arrived as permanent residents of Canada in July 2019. Those wishing to help as volunteers and/or donate to the settlement fund, please contact Peggy Lunderville, prlunder@gmail.com.

Soup Lunch and Budget Meeting: Sunday Dec. 8

Please join us for this important meeting after the Sunday service in the downstairs hall.

Bette Goode (biggoode@hotmail.com) will appreciate your contributions of soup, buns, veggies, and sweets.



Notice Board



WANTED: a friendly chess player to visit Ev Morris in Fort Langley and spend an hour or so visiting and playing a game of chess with him. It could be a one time event or possibly more regular. Cookies and tea/coffee will be provided. Please contact Joan Morris by email: joanmorris@telus.net or Ev Morris by phone: 604-513-1526.

Financial Management Referrals Wanted:

Beacon member David Thomson is looking for referrals for someone who can help him with financial planning. Please email your recommendations to: thomson123@shaw.ca



Third Sundays for Theology Pub

We meet in the Back Room of the District Taphouse, at 421 E Columbia, just a few blocks walk up the street (you'll need to move your car from the hall's parking lot though.)

We have the room from 12:30 to 2 pm and may be welcome to stay later, there or in another part of the establishment.

Here is the menu - <https://www.sappertondistricttaphouse.com/food>.

Our topics these days are our Unitarian Principles and Sources, one at a time.

December 15—Principle # 7. Look them up? Carry them in your wallet? Invite others who may be interested?

Remember, Third Sundays for Theology Pub.

—Franci Louann, "T. Pub Coordinator"

newish address: francilouann@gmail.com

604-837-7613

Soul Matters Sharing Circles

We meet once a month to deepen our exploration of Beacon's monthly theme. Together, we practice guided spiritual reflection through sharing personal experiences in a supportive group that focuses on deeply listening to one another. We use the Soul Matters theme packet of materials sent out via email at the beginning of the month. The packet includes a couple of options for a spiritual exercise as well as some questions—you choose one exercise to try out that month and one question to ponder.

Led by Rev. Meg Roberts, the next session is on Wednesday, December 4 on the topic of *Openness* (November's theme)—we have two groups:

- 1:00–3:00 pm in Coquitlam
- 6:30–8:30 pm in Burnaby

If you would like to come and try it out to see if it is the kind of reflection from which you would benefit, please contact Rev. Meg Roberts (minister@beaconunitarian.org, 778-870-9015).



Invitation to a Sabbath/Holiday Celebration

December 20, 3:30—8:30 p.m.

In the Jewish tradition, the sabbath (or Shabbat) lasts from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday. As we approach the longest night of the year, Shabbat—a time of rest and ease and settling into a gentle celebration of the beauty and joy in our lives—is mercifully long. This year, the Winter Solstice (December 21), the first day of Hanukkah (December 22) and Christmas (December 25) all fall on the week after the December 20th Shabbat when sundown is at 4:15 p.m.

Beaconites and friends are invited to a Shabbat celebration with a difference. We will still have the candles, the blessings and the challah. But rather than a sit-down dinner, there will be mulled wine and mulled cider. Everyone is invited to bring an appetizer to share and a favourite game to play.

Whether you can drop by for 15 minutes or spend the evening by the fire playing games, please join us for a celebration of the sabbath and the seasonal holidays—December 20, 3:30—8:30 p.m. at Janet Pivnick's home in New Westminster. **Please RSVP by December 15** to janpivnick@gmail.com.



Friday, October 25: Celebration of the Sabbath, hosted by Janet Pivnick.

Virtual Gatherings c/o the CUC



[Connect and Deepen—Virtual Gathering](#)

**2nd Sunday of the month:
Dec. 8, Jan. 12, Feb. 9, Mar. 8,
1–2:30 pm PT**

Join us for the opportunity to discuss matters of spiritual and theological significance in small groups and connect with people across the country.

[Rethinking UU Governance](#),
**Saturday, December 7, 2019,
12:30—2:00 p.m. ET**

Many Canadian UU congregations struggle to find ways in which our very governance, style of organization, will reflect our values and resonate with the lives of those who engage within our communities. Join us for a conversation, beginning with two powerful stories and opening for all participants to share their ideas, experiments and questions. Our two presenters will be Mr. Sanford Osler, North Shore Unitarian Church and Rev. Jessica Rodela, Grand River Unitarian. Registration deadline: Nov. 28.



The Ripple Effect: Fall Update

[The Ripple Effect](#) is doing what we had hoped it would do—it's making ripples across the country. Launched in 2018, the campaign focuses on water, and intersects with climate justice, Indigenous conciliation, and other social issues.

Staff recently received a somewhat unusual letter, delivered by owl post, from a teacher at an unusual institution: *Hello muggle Unitarian friends! I'm Professor Olivia, Divination teacher and Slytherin Head of House at Hogwarts West. This August, we held our second Hogwarts West Summer Program at the Unitarian Church of Vancouver, working around the theme of water issues. We had students from seven to twelve learn how to use various magical practices—from reading tea leaves to potion-making—to protect water. We dove headfirst into the threatened ocean ecosystems around us, exploring endangered eelgrass beds where young salmon spend their first weeks. We followed plastic waste around our church and learned a lot about plastic in the oceans, and we practiced being conscientious about our water usage in everyday life in our herbology lessons. Best of all, students got to share their experiences with their friends and families on the last day, when they put on a magical roving theatre production taking our audience through Diagon Alley! Many incredible magical discoveries were made—and I hope I see every student back next year to make even more!*

—Olivia Hall, Youth Coordinator, UCV

In future editions of our online eNews, look for updates from at least seven other congregations. Is your congregation doing work related to water, or know of other organizations who are? **We'd love to hear what you have done, or are planning to do, so we can share the inspiration.** Get involved:

- Tell us what you're doing at RippleEffect@cuc.ca, and we will feature you
 - Join / Like us on Facebook at [The Ripple Effect—CUC](#)
 - Check out [The Ripple Effect Site](#) for ideas and resources
- Let the ripples become a wave!**

—Erin Horvath, CUC Social Justice Lead

Gathered Here is now more focused on getting to know each other

Gathered Here is back! The monthly online gathering for young adults (ages 18–35) restarted on November 4th. It is picking up on the same schedule as last year, with gatherings **the second Monday evening of each month: December 9, January 13, February 10, March 9, April 13, June 8, July 13 and August 10.** Gatherings begin at 5 p.m. Pacific, 6 p.m. Mountain, 7 p.m. Central, 8 p.m. Eastern, and 9 p.m. Atlantic time, and last for 75 minutes.

This year we are focusing on getting to know each other. It can be challenging to build trust quickly when there is a different group every month, due to the drop-in nature of *Gathered Here*. To address this, we will be spending more time on each call doing activities that will help us learn about each other. This change is in response to the feedback of young adults who attended *Gathered Here* over the past year.

The feedback we received also confirmed the three main reasons young adults are coming to *Gathered Here*:

- For connection with YA community (to see old friends and meet new people)
- For spiritual grounding (rest and reflection)
- To share what's going on in my life, be witnessed and held

Gathered Here also provides an avenue for connecting with the [Young Adult Pastoral Care Team](#), staying in the loop about CUC young adult events and opportunities, and for sharing wisdom with each other based on our life experiences. It is particularly important for young adults who are not connected with a local Unitarian community.

We hope that you'll invite the young adults in your life to join an upcoming *Gathered Here* call. Together, we will find connection and create the opportunity to share what's on our hearts in a spiritually grounded and loving community. Please visit <https://cuc.ca/events/gathered-here-2020/1575921600/1575927000/>

—Casey Stainsby, Youth and Young Adult Program and Events Coordinator



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