


March Service Theme:



**We affirm
the inherent worth
and dignity of every person.**

Following are the tentative topics for this month's on-line Zoom meetings. Please check the website closer to the date in case any changes have been necessary. Services take place on Sunday at 10:30 am unless otherwise noted.

**MAR
7**

Singing Our Way Through

Guest Song Leader:

Rev. Wendy Luella Perkins

Service Leader: Susan White

When the first lock-down happened back in March 2020, singer-song-writer and UU community minister Wendy Luella Perkins pivoted her in-person singing meditation practice, Soulful Singing, to an online one. She has been singing every morning with folks since then. Today Wendy Luella will look back at this most difficult and unusual year through the lens of some of the songs she has written over the last twelve months. This will be a highly participatory, song-filled service.

Wendy Luella is committed to creating spaces where folks can access and liberate their voices. In her Soulful Singing over the last 19 years, she has seen again and again the power of song

to support folks to heal, grow and step more fully into their own authentic power. Her song "We Give Thanks", #1010 in Singing the Journey and her seasonal song "Every Night a Holy Night" are sung and shared in UU congregations around the continent.

**MAR
14**

One Year Later on Zoom: How are you doing?

Beacon's Pastoral Support

Team: Rev. Meg Roberts, Laura Redmond and Judy Villett

It's been one year since we've been doing Sunday services and other programming online. Although it's not the same as being in person, we're grateful we're still connecting and supporting one another as best we can. How are you doing in the midst of the ongoing pandemic? What have you learned? What will help support you in the coming months?

**MAR
21**

Finding Balance in Our Lives

Service Leader: Janet Pivnick

Part spring concert, part learning exchange, today's service provides a contemplation of balance as we celebrate the equinox. Beaconites have diverse ways to bring balance into their lives from music to writing to dance to communing with nature. Some of these gifts will be shared today as we hear about and participate in a variety of spiritual practices.

**MAR
28**

Foolish Sunday

Service co-leaders: Rev. Meg Roberts & Friends

On this Sunday closest to April Fool's Day, we'll share music, storytelling, and playful joy. Although we live in difficult times, we can keep our sense of humour. Bring a joke to share and come join the fun!

Musings by Meg

Our March service theme is the Unitarian Universalist principle: We covenant to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

We are now over one year into the restrictions due to the pandemic in this part of the world. That can be dispiriting, frustrating, and bring many other feelings. When we are under stress, especially over a period of time, it can be easier to let these feelings affect our relationships with others and with ourselves.

- Our verbal filter may not be as active, and hurtful words can be said.
- We may have thoughts about others as we go about our lives that show prejudice and judgment.
- We may be more critical of ourselves.
- We may just want it all to be over and so, retreat into ourselves.

These things happen. We are fallible humans. It is what we do in response that makes the difference.

I invite you—the next time something like this happens—to pause,

Please Support the Share Food Bank!

During COVID, donations to the food bank need to be mailed to John Hagen for forwarding to *Share*, or mailed directly to *Share Family and Community Services* at number 104 - 3020 Lincoln Avenue Coquitlam BC, V3B 6B4. Phone: 604-540-9161. Thank you for supporting neighbours in our community through your donations to our local foodbank.



take a deep breath and say to yourself “that person has worth and dignity, just as I do.” And then consider what to do next.

**I invite you to pause,
take a deep breath and
say to yourself
“that person has worth and
dignity, just as I do.”**

- Is an apology in order?
- Do I need to note internally to myself how my upbringing embedded unconscious biases, and I’m learning to recognize those and educate myself? If I have said or done something that has had a negative impact, I can acknowledge my mistake and apologize, and commit to doing better in future (rather than try to justify my actions or my intentions).
- If I am having a hard time connecting with someone because of their opinion, can I see what things I have in common with them as humans?
- Can I bring a more compassionate voice to myself (as I would with others who are under stress)?
- Can I reach out to others in my community, both to let them know they matter to me as well as ask for support when I need it? None of us needs to struggle through this alone.

Living our principles is not easy. We will never achieve it 100% of the time. I think of them as spiritual practices—things I commit to learning how to live out in my words and actions—and when I miss the mark, to take a deep breath, recognize it, forgive myself, make amends as appropriate, and try again.

It takes courage to reach out when we need help. It takes humility to

admit when we’ve made mistakes. It takes renewing community connections to help us affirm both our worth and the worth of others.



Rev. Meg Roberts

I look forward to hearing how this month goes for you, and the experiences you have practicing this important core principle of our community. It is a beautifully inspiring one, much needed at this time in our world.

In the spirit of life,

—Rev. Meg Roberts

How to reach me:

Because I’m working 1/2-time from home, here’s how best to reach me:

- Mondays and Tuesdays are my regular days off.
- My regular Beacon days for meetings are Wednesdays and Thursdays. To support emotional connection and physical distancing, I’m available for appointments via Zoom or phone.
- On weekends when I lead Beacon’s Sunday service, I also work Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays—focusing on service preparation those days as well as other work. I will respond to emails and phone calls on those days as well. (This month, that is March 12–14 and 26–28.)
- I can be reached via email: minister@beaconunitarian.org and on my cell at 778-870-9015. (If it’s an emergency, please leave a message on my phone.) I will respond as soon as I’m able.
- **From March 1–9**, I will be on study leave. If you need assistance during that time, please email board@beaconunitarian.org or if you would like pastoral care support, please email pastoralcare@beaconunitarian.org.

I look forward to connecting with you.

Board Bitz

Welcome to March 2021. I was just looking back at our March 2020 newsletter and noticed that the theme for the month was COURAGE. There was even an image of a name tag that said “Hello, I am... LEAVING MY COMFORT ZONE”. What a premonition!

It is hard to believe that it was a year ago this month that we stopped having in-person Sunday Services at Sapperton Hall because of a global pandemic. At first, we thought that it would only be a few weeks, but it soon became clear that we would be in it for the long haul.

After missing only one Sunday last March, Rev. Meg and the Worship Services committee created a whole new way of doing church and we haven't looked back since. Beacon, being Beacon, still meets every Sunday to **Connect with Compassion & Respect, Inspire Learning and Spiritual Growth, and Transform through Joy and Justice.**

January 2021 started out with the sad news that we had lost one of our most cherished members, **Jean Donaldson**, after a short stay in the hospital. Rev. Meg created a very moving Celebration of Life service for Jean at the end of January that was attended by Jean's many, many friends. Jean will be sorely missed.

In January we also lost **Bob Thompson**. Bob and Kay Thompson started attending Beacon a few years ago when they moved here from Kamloops. Kay became a Beacon member in May of 2019. Bob's Celebration of Life was held on February 13th. Rev. Meg again created a beautiful service with lots of readings

and songs from Bob's large and loving family.

This year has not been all sadness though. In February we celebrated **Beacon's 38th birthday** with lots of people in attendance. It was a wonderful service. We all shared our favourite personal stories about Beacon by breaking into small groups during the service.

A highlight of the celebration was a video of our Poet in Residence, **Denis Probst**, (98 years young), reciting the poem **Invictus**. It had us on the edge of our seats.

Moving forward, in anticipation of **Beacon's AGM** coming up on April 25th, we ask that each committee chair email their year-end report to Rachael at adminsupport@beaconunitarian.org by March 21st. 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 your report tight.

If you have not already submitted

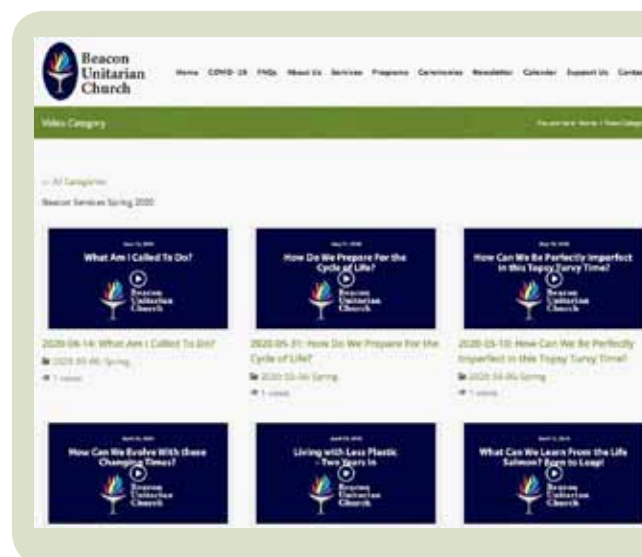
your nomination for *Sharing the Plate*, please do so quickly. The deadline is February 28th, but we will always accept a nomination if it is only a few days late. You can print a nomination form from the Beacon website. Go to www.beaconunitarian.org, then “About Us,” and scroll down to “Governance”. You will find it in the list of Beacon documents. You can email the completed form to Rachael at adminsupport@beaconunitarian.org. Many thanks to John Hagen and the *Sharing the Plate* Committee for all the hard work you do every year to make this happen.

Thank you to everyone for keeping us all together after the whole world changed a year ago. This March brings us warmer weather and the promise of vaccines. We are all looking forward to the day we meet again in person at Sapperton Hall, and that day will come, but until then, Beacon remains the strong and vibrant community it has been for the last 38 years. Happy Spring.

— David Kristjanson, President



David Kristjanson



Beacon Zoom service recordings now online

Visit <http://beaconunitarian.org/index.php/video-category/> for a selection of videos recorded since March 2020. **Much gratitude to Deepak Sahasrabudhe for editing and posting these videos.**



Canadian Plastics Pact: plasticspact.ca

Finally...!! Some solid commitments, with reasonable timeframes, in the fight against plastic pollution. Please visit the site plasticspact.ca to see what these Canadian companies, non-profits and foundations are committing to do in the next four years.

The group has four distinct goals for 2025:

1. **Define** a list of plastic packaging that is to be designated as problematic or unnecessary and take measures to eliminate each of them;
2. Support efforts towards **100%** of plastic packaging being designed to be reusable, recyclable or compostable;

3. Undertake ambitious actions to ensure that at least **50%** of plastic packaging is effectively recycled or composted;
4. Ensure an average of at least **30%** recycled content across all plastic packaging (by weight).

At our February Enviro-Bee, someone asked, 'What do they mean by composted? Does that just mean the plastic breaks down into smaller pieces?' I have taken on the task of finding out exactly what they are committing to in this area.

I was heartened to read the list of partners, which includes David Suzuki Foundation, Save-On Foods,

Loblaws, Canadian Tire, Environment & Climate Change Canada, plus Metro Vancouver.



Teresa Morton

As an update, the letters about Single-Use Plastic which we sent in January have resulted in one response so far, from Loblaws. Their reply focussed on the transition away from plastic grocery bags, rather than addressing the use of Single-Use Plastic in their stores overall.

And lastly, the **Enviro-Bee** for **March** will be after the service on **Sunday March 14th**. Come with your environmental questions, celebrations or concerns; after a brief check-in we will tackle some of your questions and issues.

—Teresa Morton

lessplasticnewwest@gmail.com
or 778.855.1704

Children and Youth Religious Exploration (CYRE)

Hello! Thanks to all those who participated in the postal service version of Mystery Buddies! My hope is that sending and receiving mail helped folks feel connected with our community during this time of remote and virtual interactions. We will be hosting a buddy reveal celebration over Zoom for early March—so stay tuned for that.

As for Religious Exploration programing, I will continue to send out monthly program newsletters to registered families. Each newsletter includes guiding questions and suggested activities for families to engage in, based on the principle highlighted

that month—activities that invite you to engage through head, heart and hands. These program newsletters are also available on the Beacon website under the programs tab for children and youth.

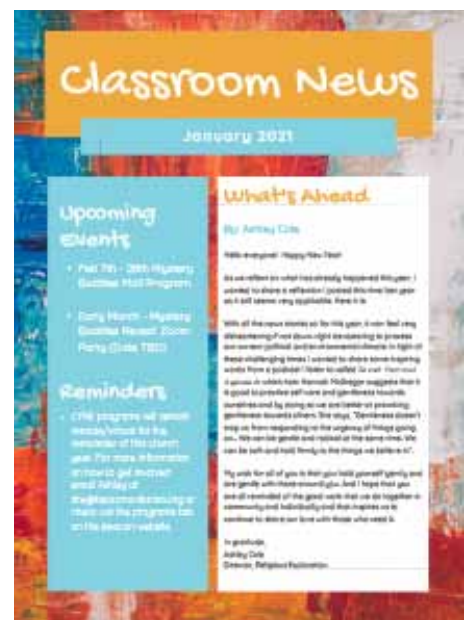
I am happy to connect with any folks who have questions or ponderings for the Religious Exploration program. You can reach me at dre@beaconunitarians.org.

Happy March,

—Ashley Cole (she/her pronouns),

Director of Religious Exploration,

dre@beaconunitarian.org



Beacon Programs

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

The Humanist Discussion Group (Online) likes to think about and discuss our common humanity, and our place as individuals and collectives in this dance of life. We are a group that welcomes different points of view and discusses a wide range of ideas. We meet the last Sundays of the month at 7:30 pm, via Zoom. **On March 28 the topic is Reverse-engineering the Human Mind.** Luc Beaudoin will lead a discussion of an integrative design-oriented (IDO) approach to understanding ourselves and each other, illustrated by IDO explanations of sleep onset, insomnia and of perturbant emotions. He will suggest that Jordan B. Peterson's approach to psychology can be understood in IDO terms. Peterson is perhaps the greatest psychologist of our times. The Zoom link will be in the *Beacon This Week*.

If you would like to receive emails about the Humanist Group, please contact Marilyn Medén (contact info is in the Beacon directory).

Theology Pub (Online) continues to meet by Zoom on third Sundays at 1 pm—that's March 21st for this month. Members of our email list receive a little inspirational reminder (based on the current monthly service theme) just before our meetings. If you would like to join that list, contact Franci

Louann or David Kristjanson at theologypub@beaconunitarian.org.

Book Club (Online) meets the 4th Thursday of each month at 7 pm. For Zoom details contact John Hagen, ajhagen@telus.net. **Thursday, March 25: *Brave New World*** by Aldous Huxley. *Facilitator:* David Kristjanson. See box on page 6 for more information.

Film Club (Online) meets every Friday at 7 pm. See the box on page 6 for more information.

Lunch Bunch (Online) meets every Tuesday at noon, year-round, currently via Zoom. Bring your lunch and share in lively and topical conversation. Contact Laura Ramsay at 604-816-5331 for the Zoom link.

The Beacon Choir has been temporarily suspended due to COVID-19. Please contact choirdirector@beaconunitarian.org for more information.

Groove Dance (Online) is a simple and fun way to move your body. You don't need to have any dance experience. You don't need to have a particular fitness level or body type. Groove dance is for EVERY BODY. A facilitator guides you through a few simple moves, helps you to connect to yourself and the music, and the rest is up to you. Simply explore and enjoy the pleasure of moving to music your way. See the [three minute informational video](#). Classes will be held Mondays at 5:30 on Zoom. Please contact Janet Pivnick janpivnick@gmail.com to receive the Zoom link or for more information.



Beacon Unitarian Church

'Getting to Know Beacon' session: Sat. March 13, 3-4 pm on Zoom

New to this community? Want to learn about our Sunday services and other programs? Join Rev. Meg Roberts and a member of the Connecting Committee for a one-hour short introduction. You can ask questions and meet other newcomers. **Please RSVP by Tues. March 9** to Meg: minister@beaconunitarian.org or 778-870-9015 so we can send you the Zoom link.

'Getting to Know You' session: Thurs. March 25, 7-8 pm on Zoom

If you've been to a few of our services and want to take the next steps, we look forward to getting to know you, and you us. Join Rev. Meg Roberts and a member of the Connecting Committee to learn about Unitarianism and various ways to be part of this community. **Please RSVP by Tues. March 23** to Meg: minister@beaconunitarian.org or 778-870-9015 so we can send you the Zoom link.



Beacon Unitarian Church

www.beaconunitarian.org
info@beaconunitarian.org
Phone: 778-791-7952

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Sue Sparlin, 778 319 7827
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Administrative Support:
Rachael Greenland,

778-791-7952
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Board Executive:
President: David Kristjanson;
Vice-President: Susan Tarras;
Treasurer: Heather Brown;
Members at Large:

Karen Greenland,
Regina Ogmundson,
Amalia Mamani,
and Rob Warner.

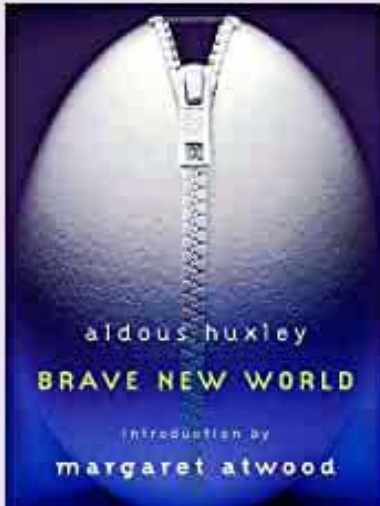
Connections & Membership: Sue Sparlin
Religious Exploration Director:
Ashley Cole, dre@beaconunitarian.org

Beacon Newsletter:
newsletter@beaconunitarian.org
Production: Laura Redmond
Proofreading: Kate Smith and Bill Marshall
Deadline for article submissions is the 15th of the month, for inclusion in the following month's newsletter.



Beacon Book Club

Thurs. Mar. 25, 7 pm (Online)



Brave New World by Aldous Huxley, c. 1932, 235 p.

Facilitator: David Kristjanson

Genres/Subjects: Fiction, Totalitarianism Fiction

Book Summary: Far in the future, the World Controllers have created the ideal society. Through clever use of genetic engineering, brain-washing and recreational sex and drugs, all its members are happy consumers. Bernard Marx seems alone in feeling discontent. Harboured an unnatural desire for solitude, and a perverse distaste for the pleasure of compulsory promiscuity, Bernard has an ill-defined longing to break free. A visit to one of the few remaining Savage Reservations, where the old, imperfect life still continues, may be the cure for his distress.... Huxley's ingenious fantasy of the future sheds a blazing light on the present and is considered to be his most enduring masterpiece. (BPL)

More info about the book club at: <http://beaconunitarian.org/index.php/book-club/>. For Zoom meeting details contact John Hagen, bookclub@beaconunitarian.org.

Soul Matters Sharing Circles

During the next session we reflect on our Unitarian principle, "justice, equity and compassion in human relations" (February's theme). Soul Matters is usually led by Rev. Meg Roberts but she will be away on study leave. For this month the two groups are:

- Wed. March 3: 1:00–3:00 pm (facilitated by Laura Redmond this month)
- Wed. March 3: 6:30–8:30 pm (facilitated by Janet Pivnik this month)

If you would like to try it out, please contact Rachael Greenland for Zoom access information (adminsupport@beaconunitarian.org). The participant info packet is available on Beacon's web site ([see resources link at top left](#)). You can join via computer/smart phone/tablet or via regular phone. All are welcome.

Beacon Film Club

Fridays, 7 pm (Online)

The film club continues, very successfully, with varied films and responses. The procedure is to view the film in advance, and then come to a Zoom meeting at 7 pm on Fridays to chat about it. The Zoom link is in Thursday's *Beacon This Week*.

The films selected are all available from YouTube for a rental fee (from free to \$6.99). They may also be available for streaming from other internet sources, so if you have a subscription to a streaming service, do check there first. To rent a film from YouTube, just search for the title in YouTube and look for the video that has a blue "Buy or Rent" box next to it.

Please connect with Marilyn Meden using the Beacon directory and let me know of any concerns.

March 5: *Indian Horse* introduced by Peg Hinkley

March 12: *Magnolia* introduced by Pauline Atwood

March 19: *Reel Steel* [note that this is a change] introduced by Sherryl Swann

March 26: *Casablanca* introduced by Michael Scales

Pastoral Support Team

Beacon's Pastoral Support Team encourages members and friends to reach out and let us know if you, or someone you know, has a specific need. For example: wanting emotional or physical support of some kind; illness at home or in hospital; in self-isolation and needing help with errands. Also, let us know if you would like us to drop off one of the Beacon Caring Quilts, so that you can wrap yourself in the compassion and care of this community. We can do our best to be of use in ways that meet recommendations around social contact from BC's Provincial Health Officer. —Rev. Meg Roberts (778-870-9015), [Laura Redmond](mailto:Laura.Redmond@beaconunitarian.org) and [Judy Villett](mailto:Judy.Villett@beaconunitarian.org) pastoralcare@beaconunitarian.org



Anti-Racism Resources and Learnings

by Rev. Meg Roberts

Thirteen of us met for a six-session course on anti-racism (meeting every 2 weeks from November–January). Our main reference was *So You Want to Talk About Race*, by Ijeoma Oluo. We supplemented this useful introductory book (set in the USA) with Canadian contextual resources, including a racism survey done by the Canadian Unitarian Council – <https://cuc.ca/dismantling-racism-study-group/>. We came up with a shared covenant (I’ll include it next month’s newsletter) to guide our interesting and engaging discussions. Six participants also did optional research and presented on various areas within anti-racism work, offering ways we could engage with those issues. I’m grateful to each person for bringing their life experience, diverse opinions and understandings to this course. I look forward to learning more and also taking action together to make concrete changes—within ourselves and our society. More on that in coming months.

Here are some quotes from participants (used with permission):

- “I have made a step from assuming others are equal to myself but not realizing the full extent of the barriers they have faced; I think of this as moving from “not seeing colour” to “seeing colour” and recognizing the hardships that may entail.”
- “Racism is ingrained in our psyche and very difficult to eliminate.”
- “I always thought that if I showed warmth, a friendly greeting, or a listening ear I was not a racist. But did I get corrected on that! I am a racist unless I am actively engaged in addressing the issues pertaining to racism. I was gifted a position

of privilege by my birth as a white baby. As I have aged I have been able to secure my education, access to financial support and employment without considering the impact of my skin colour. I have been able to raise my children without having to caution them as to the dangers of being a person of colour.”

- “My most profound learning from the workshop was that what is deemed to constitute racism is determined by the person on the receiving end of the racism, not by the perpetrator, whether an individual or the ‘system’.”
- “Through reading, presentations, discussion and role playing, the anti-racism series of meetings illuminated the ingrained biases we all have, the elusive equality of opportunity in Canada, and the difficulty of dealing with these. However, facing these facts allowed us to find ways to move forward, both within our own experience and by our influence on organizations. The anti-racism study group has been informative, thoughtful and enabling, and continues to influence my world view and personal actions.”

See the side bar for recommendations from Donovan Hayden, our presenter at the January 31 Sunday service, “Anti-racism Work as Spiritual Practice.”

Donovan is a Black activist and artist. He is currently a MA student in Theatre & Performance Studies at York University in Toronto. He spent the last year in Pittsburgh, PA, where he participated in the Black Lives Matter protests after the killing of George Floyd. Through his experiences, Donovan has had the opportunity to engage with Unitarians and anti-racism work on both sides of the border.

Intention

- Speak specifically about anti-Black racism
- Commit to small consistent actions

Attention

- Recognize visitor status
- Trust the authority of Black, Indigenous, and racialized people
- Be mindful of what you are saying and how long you are saying it

Recommendations for Congregation

- Adopt the 8th principle*
- Share and send letters of solidarity to activist groups as a congregation

Individual practices

- Read Black authors
- Read resources and articles by Black Unitarians: <https://www.uua.org/worship/collections/black-lives-matter>
- Learn about Defund the Police and alternatives to policing
 - <https://defund.ca/>
 - Congregational Action Toolkit: <https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/community-safety-campaign.html>
- Donate to:
 - Local activist groups
 - GoFundMe’s for people/families harmed by police
 - 1492 Land Back Lane <https://ca.gofundme.com/f/legal-fund-1492-land-back-lane>
- Speak Up
 - Write and call officials
 - Amplify the voices of Black and Indigenous people to your networks
 - Attend protests
 - Identify and oppose racism within your sphere

*Meg’s note: for those who aren’t yet familiar with the 8th principle, it is one proposed originally at the Unitarian Universalist Association and has been discussed by the Canadian Unitarian Council as well: We “covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.” Individuals and congregations are also encouraged to adopt it. To learn more: <https://www.8thprincipleuuu.org/>

Canadian Citizenship Ceremony!

On Wednesday, Jan 27, 2021 Raneem and Mohammad took the oath of Canadian citizenship during an online ceremony. Jane Day joined them in person, providing tech support and taking photos.

Peggy Lunderville went to the house after and met Raneem in the yard to give her a card and tulips. Marylke visited earlier and brought a plant.

Thank you to all of Beacon who made possible this family's arrival and settlement in Canada.

Photo 1: The initial pre-ceremony phase

Here, Raneem and Mohammad (far right) have logged onto Zoom and are waiting for the host to let all the other candidates into the ceremony. Their Permanent Resident cards are on the table, ready to be cut up with scissors. (When the ceremony is done in person, the PR card is obtained from applicants immediately before taking the oath of citizenship.) Raneem and Mohammad were joined by other family members for a group photo.

Photo 2: The Oath of Citizenship

Raneem and Mohammad, raising their right hands and taking the oath.

For those of you who are interested, the text of the current Oath of Citizenship is: *"I swear (or affirm) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, Her Heirs and Successors, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada, and fulfil my duties as a Canadian citizen."*

These words have been in effect for 40 years. Bill C-99, An Act to Amend the Citizenship Act, was introduced in the House of Commons on 28 May 2019 by the Minister of Immigration,



Refugees and Citizenship. Proposed new text: *"I swear (or affirm) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, Her Heirs and Successors, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada, including the Constitution, which recognizes and affirms the Aboriginal and treaty rights of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, and fulfil my duties as a Canadian citizen."*

Raneem reports that she is very

happy to be a Canadian citizen. One of the privileges of citizenship is the ability to now apply for a Canadian passport, which makes travel possible in the future.

Raneem appreciates Canada for its public school system where she has had the opportunity to be exposed to new ideas and information. She also appreciates the ongoing support that Beacon members continue to offer.

—Laura Redmond, Jane Day and Peggy Lunderville