

December service themes:

Christianity & Judaism... Love... Fire...

In our September newsletter Rev. Meg wrote: "Inspired by our Unitarian Universalist sources and by the elements of water, fire, earth, and air, we will explore what grounds us, what we value, and how we want to be together this year." For December, the element theme is "fire", the value theme is "love", and the wisdom sources we are highlighting are "Christianity and Judaism".

Please join us online!

All services are online at this time. We meet at 10:30 am on Sundays unless otherwise noted. [Please register to attend on Zoom](#)—enter your name and email address, and the Zoom link will be emailed directly to you. We are using the same Zoom link from week to week, so you only have to register once to be able to attend all the Sunday morning services.

Many of our small groups meet via Zoom. For those Beacon groups and events that want to meet in person, please follow the link below to learn about how to do that within Beacon's updated Communicable Disease plan (effective as of Sept. 10, 2021): <http://beaconunitarian.org/index.php/covid-protocols/>. If you would prefer the PDF be emailed to you as an attachment, email Rachael at adminsupport@beaconunitarian.org

DEC 5

Responding to Adversity

Guest Speaker: Ahmed Khan (a multi-faith series video)

Life is essentially comedy and tragedy. These are the two great stages humans find themselves repeatedly entering. In an age of political divisiveness, social justice activism, and mass shootings, what is our response to these tragedies? In this reflection video, Ahmed Khan explains the Islamic perspective on responding to adversity through the tribulations of the Prophet Muhammad.



Bio: Ahmed Khan is a writer, keynote speaker, and lecturer with a special focus on Islam. He previously served as the

President of the Simon Fraser University Muslim Student Association where he acted as a chaplain and community

leader. He has conducted lectures at prominent institutions such as SFU, Capilano University, and the Muslim Association of Canada. During his spare time, Ahmed loves to read, spend time with family, write poetry, and practice Jiu-Jitsu.

DEC 12

The Latke Who Couldn't Stop Screaming: A Christmas Story

Service Leaders: Ashley Cole and Susan White, with all-ages participation

Join us for our annual all-ages pageant. Our tale this year, adapted from the story by Lemony Snicket, and told by a core group of narrators and actors, is about an irate latke at Hanukkah that escapes from being cooked in a hot frying pan. During his escape he runs into various Christmas characters who are unfamiliar with the customs of Hanukkah. Come and join the fun!

Service descriptions continued on page 2.

DEC
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What Would Jesus Do?

Guest Speakers: Revs. Debra Faulk and Samaya Oakley (a multi-faith series video)

Service Leader: Glenn Wootton

What are the gifts from our Christian heritage that would help us to answer the question: Who are we called to be? In this season that highlights the Christian tradition, let us explore this question.



Bio: Debra Faulk, Minister Emerita, recently retired after serving Calgary Unitarians for eleven years. She is a life-long Unitarian

Universalist and has served the wider denomination since her youth. She has degrees in Psychology and Anthropology from UVic and a Masters degree from the Vancouver School of Theology. Her passions include interfaith collaboration, community organizing, and gardening. She is now into a new venture of home co-ownership in Victoria.



Bio: The Rev. Samaya Oakley serves as the Minister for the South Fraser Unitarian Congregation. After

attending the North Shore Unitarian Church, she quickly became active continentally through the Youth Office of the UUA. She also is a facilitator for all levels of the Our Whole Lives program. She was a member of the team that prepared the Canadian Unitarian Council's Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Reflection Guides—five age-appropriate reflection guides for use in Canadian UU congregations.

DEC
24

Friday, Dec. 24, 7 PM A Child is Born

Join South Fraser Unitarian Congregation for our online Christmas Eve service. In our lessons and carols service, we'll take time to remember the ancient story of the birth of Jesus—and what it means for our lives today.

Note: Pre-registration is required. Please

fill out the form at: <https://surreyunitarians.ca/worship/access-our-online-worship/>

DEC
26

Our Truths!

Service leaders: Marilyn Medén and Susan White

We are nearing the end of the year, and we look back, even over our lives, and try to make some sense out of existence. Do we refer to outside sources? Do we look to our own experiences? What ideas influence our human selves, those lives that are always in the process of becoming? Marilyn Medén will use ideas from Steven Pinker and Scott Barry Kaufman, then she and other Beaconites will speak of some beliefs we have and maybe even live by. Truth can be difficult to pin down! But we will try.



Coffee Hour

After the Sunday services, we are pleased to offer an online coffee hour (as we did last year). We hope you can stay to join us for small group conversation: the **first round** is a brief check-in; a **second round** allows you to choose to be in general conversation in the main room, or be in a separate conversation room as a follow up to the Sunday service topic so that there is time to deepen into that exploration and how it applies to our lives. We are looking for people who might like to learn how to host or co-host a coffee hour from time to time. If you're interested and want to learn more, please contact worship@beaconunitarian.org. Training will be provided.

Dear fellow Beaconites and friends,

By now you have read Rev. Meg's notice to the congregation in Beacon's November newsletter. Her recovery is taking longer than we first expected. Meg will return to Beacon on January 5, 2022. We encouraged her to focus on her health; Beacon's Caring Quilt is with her. If anyone would like to send her a card, please address it to Beacon's mailbox: Beacon Unitarian Church, #414 – 552A Clarke Road, Coquitlam, BC V3J 0A3. The cards will be forwarded to her when she returns.

The board has finalized the details for our ministerial support. Rev. Debra Faulk will provide administrative and pastoral support. Debra has recently retired and moved to Victoria. We are grateful that Debra is able to assist us through Zoom.

Rev. Brian Kiely, Rev. Samaya Oakley and Rev. Debra Faulk will assist the Worship Services Committee by leading Sunday services and being involved in preparations.



Regina Ogmundson
Co-President



Susan Tarras
Co-President

These three ministers have much experience, and we will benefit from their wisdom. We continue to receive assistance and comfort from our pastoral support team.

The board members work for our Beacon community. We are especially pleased that many Beacon members have submitted pledges. Thank you to the pledge drive team for their hard work on the campaign.

Yes, we will miss Rev. Meg, but Beacon includes a caring community of hard working volunteers, and we will remain a loving extended family. We learn from each other, and we support each other. Thank you for your patience during this time of transition.

—Regina Ogmundson and
Susan Tarras, Co-Presidents,
Nov. 18, 2021

For assistance with Beacon matters during this time:

- **For practical and administrative matters**, please contact Rachael Greenland, Beacon's admin support person: adminsupport@beaconunitarian.org.
- **For congregational matters**, please contact the board co-presidents Susan Tarras and Regina Ogmundson, president@beaconunitarian.org.

For pastoral care:

In addition to Beacon's pastoral support team, Rev. Debra Faulk is available and willing to offer pastoral support virtually. To set up either a phone or Zoom appointment with her, please call 403-702-6486 (long distance) or email (dfaulk@uuma.org).

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
- needing help with errands
- if you, or someone you know, would like us to drop off one of the Beacon Caring Quilts

We will do our best to be of use in ways that meet Beacon's Communicable Disease Plan protocols as well as being within BC's Provincial Health Officer's guidelines for social contact. To reach the whole team:

pastoralcare@beaconunitarian.org or contact one of us directly:

Judy Villett: 604-521-1191,

judyvillett@gmail.com

Laura Redmond: 604-939-9310,

lauraredmond2@telus.net

Susan Millar: soomillar@gmail.com

Joys and Sorrows Virtual Cork Board

The Pastoral Support Team wants to expand our ways to hear from one another this fall. In case you are unable to attend a Sunday service online, and want others to know about your joy, sorrow or milestone, **please post by Saturday at 6 pm to be shared the next day**. Alternatively, you can visit the corkboard if you missed the Sunday service and want to catch up on the joys and sorrows shared by others (if they have given their permission for us to post their message).

We invite you to post your joy, sorrow or milestone on our virtual cork board using the private link provided in the weekly *Beacon This Week*. If you're not yet receiving our weekly e-news update on Thursday and want to, OR if you just want the link to that cork board, please contact: adminsupport@beaconunitarian.org.

Board Bitz

What a month we've had this November—record rainfalls, severe flooding, mudslides, supply shortages and most tragically, loss of life, both human and animal. All of this reminds us that our province and the whole world is on the verge of a climate catastrophe, and we do everything in our power to change the trajectory of climate change and renew our commitment to our seventh principle. At the same time, the many stories of people who stepped out of their own comfort zones to help those who were impacted by the weather remind us to be prepared to act in these times of crisis.

A storm of another sort caused turmoil within Unitarian Universalism in the weeks and months leading up to November 27—the controversy surrounding the 8th principle. After much discussion the board arranged for a meeting on November 24 to give our members a final opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of the 8th principle and to give our delegates, Sue Sparlin and Teresa Morton, direction on how to vote at the CUC meeting on November 27.

As a result of our meeting, and in order to honour and respect the diversity of opinions within our congregation, we agreed that one delegate would support a motion to postpone a vote on the 8th principle indefinitely and the other delegate would vote to approve the motion for the 8th principle. Ultimately the CUC voted to approve the 8th principle by 95%.

These results will leave some people unhappy and perhaps even doubting their commitment to Unitarian Universalism. However, wherever we stand on the 8th principle, we realize that we all want to make positive changes and do the right things even though we may differ on how to go

about them. Recall now the words of John F. Kennedy: "What unites us is far greater than what divides us."

Looking to the future, CUC leaders, including Michael Scales, are acting now to build a more consensus-based form of governance that makes sure every voice is heard and accounted for on future issues.

Beacon has been in existence since the 1980s, and over the years we've accumulated **a lot of "stuff"**. We've rented a storage locker for the time being, but have committed to emptying it by the end of December. Some of it we'll need to keep, so if you have an empty closet or cupboard or a corner of a room in your house to store some boxes, please email board@beaconunitarian.org. If you are particularly good at getting rid of things, the board will be organizing several purging sessions at the storage locker and would appreciate all the help we can get.

In December we enter the season of returning light. The telephone committee and pastoral care will be calling in early December to check in, tell you about upcoming Beacon events and invite you to share your news. If you know of a community event that might be of interest to

Beaconites, either share it with your caller or email the news to Rachael (adminsupport@beaconunitarian.org) for *Beacon This Week*.

Thanks to the generosity of our community and the hard work of our amazing pledge drive team—Carol Woodworth, Nancy Rupert, Karen Hamilton, Janet Pivnick, and David Kristjanson—we raised more funds than last year, and the board has already proposed a budget that will be presented to the congregation for approval, likely on December 12th.

We ended our last board meeting on notes of hope, enthusiasm, and anticipation. We'll be working hard in the new year to reach out to our local communities and other congregations to find ways to grow and strengthen our Beacon community. We'll be assessing our communication strategies and making sure our social media accounts are both respectful and exciting. We invite members of the congregation to join us as we reach out to achieve these goals.

—Joyce Gudaitis, Member at Large



Joyce Gudaitis
Board Member at Large

Beacon has heart!

This amazing community has pledged **\$95 756** for the 2022 church year!

Many thanks from your Pledge Drive Team!

David Kristjanson, Nancy Rupert, Carol Woodworth, Karen Hamilton and Janet Pivnick



People's Ecochallenge and Drawdown, Another Ecochallenge Event

The 2021 People's Ecochallenge is over! The MetroVan Unitis team had 19 members from Beacon and the Vancouver Church. Together we amassed 5681 points and ended up with a rank of second in Canada! Our work translates to, among other things: 12 pounds of CO₂ saved, a whopping 3,710 minutes exercising, 322 meatless or vegan meals served, and 286 gallons (1144 litres) of water saved. THANK YOU everyone for being part of the Ecochallenge 2021!

The other news on the social action front is that Mary Bennett (UCV) is hosting an ecochallenge-style event during December called Drawdown. This particular Drawdown is about food and food waste. I have joined and have invited the

participants of the Metro-Van Unitis Ecochallenge Team to participate. If you are interested, look at www.drawdown.ecochallenge.org and

Together we amassed 5681 points and ended up with a rank of second in Canada!

browse the action categories. Mary's Drawdown project is focusing on the category of food, agriculture and land use. Some of the actions are associated with reduced food waste, for example, serve smaller portions, learn about expiry and best before dates, as well as zero-waste cooking. I chose three one-time actions as well as three

daily actions. Don't forget, you also earn points for things you already do such as composting or mulching trees!

The team for this drawdown challenge is Metro Van Unitarians, similar to the team we put together for the people's ecochallenge. Let me know what questions you have!

The month of December is a very interesting time to be thinking about food and food waste; it is traditionally a time of plenty, with special seasonal foods making their annual appearance. The trick is to have enough but not too much...!

—Teresa Morton

Teresa.at.echochallenge@gmail.com

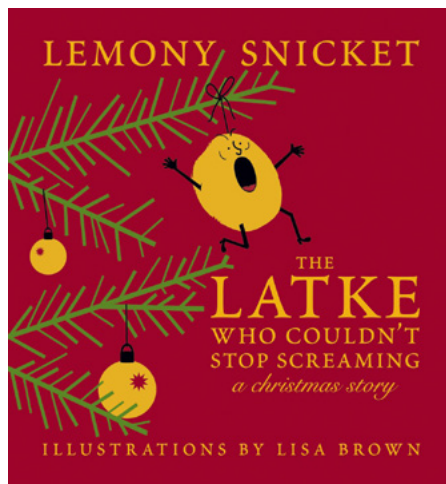


Teresa Morton

Children and Youth Religious Exploration (CYRE)

Hello everyone, thanks to all those who participated in our annual Night Tree party this year, held at a park and following all safety guidelines. It is so good to reconnect with each other after a long time away. December has some additional opportunities for connection including our annual all-ages pageant. This year we will be telling the story of *The Latke Who Couldn't Stop Screaming*, adapted from Lemony Snicket's story. If you are interested in playing a role (big or small) please reach out to me at dre@beaconunitarian.org.

This month we explore the 4th source, that as Unitarian Universalists, we are inspired by Jewish and Christian teachings that tell us to love all others as we love ourselves. Also,



this month, we explore and embrace the element of fire, welcoming its light as a guide through the darkest days of the year. So as we explore both of these themes, I invite you to

reflect on what fills you with love and what lights your fire? These are great questions to explore as we connect with family and friends, take a break from work and share gifts and stories with each other. I wish you all love and warmth in these cold, dark days. Speaking for myself, I will be away Dec. 26th and Jan. 2nd, and will return to services starting Jan. 9th.

In love and warmth,

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



Ashley Cole

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 Sunday of the month at 7:30 pm, via Zoom, however there will be no meeting in December. Please join us in the new year on January 30th, topic to be announced in the January newsletter. If you would like to receive regular emails from 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—December 19th for this month. Members of our email list receive a reminder a week before the meeting, including topic information. If you would like to join the group, contact Franci Louann or David Kristjanson at theologypub@beaconunitarian.org.

Book Club (Online) meets the 4th Thursday of each month at 7 pm. Newcomers and drop-ins are always welcome! For Zoom meeting details and all enquires, please contact John Hagen bookclub@beaconunitarian.org. See box on page 7 for more information.

Film Club (Online) meets every Friday at 7 pm. See the box on page 7 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 or

check the *Beacon This Week* email. Newcomers are welcome!

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

'Getting to Know Beacon' New to this community? Want to learn about our Sunday services and other programs? In the new year, you can 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. In January, contact Rev. Meg: minister@beaconunitarian.org.

'Getting to Know You' 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. In the new year, join Rev. Meg Roberts and a member of the Connecting Committee to learn about Unitarianism and various ways to be part of this community. In the new year, contact Meg: minister@beaconunitarian.org.



Rising Together Connects Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) UU Youth and Emerging Adults

This group gathers every two months for themed worship, discussions, and workshop-style activities. Join us for a chance to meet other BIPOC Unitarian Universalists across Canada and nurture our community with the aim of affirming each other and ensuring we have a confident voice in the broader UU community. See cuc.ca/events and email risingtogether@cuc.ca for more information or meeting dates and times.



Please Support the Share Food Bank!

During this time of pandemic, donations to the food bank can be 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.

Soul Matters Sharing Circles

Soul Matters is a small group that meets once a month (virtually at the moment) during our program year to explore and experience how Beacon's monthly theme can be woven into the tapestry of our days. For November the service themes were *Humanism, Truth and Air*. Our group will meet on December 1st, 1–3 pm, and we will explore the previous month's theme. Newcomers are always welcome! Interested? Contact Laura Redmond to receive the theme packet that we use as the starting point for our reflections: soulmatters@beaconunitarian.org. (Laura will be facilitating the December afternoon circle.)



Beacon Film Club Fridays, 7 pm (Online)

The idea behind our club is to view a 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 Medén (using the Beacon directory) for more information.

Dec. 3: *Inherit the Wind* 1960, introduced by David Kristjanson

Dec. 10: *The Sound of Metal* 2019, introduced by Lindsay Udem

Dec. 17: *Joyeux Noel* 2005, introduced by Janene White

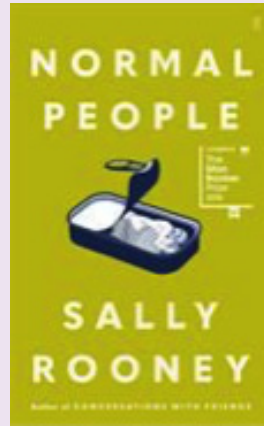
Dec. 24: No meeting

Dec. 31: TBA, will be posted in *Beacon This Week*



Beacon Book Club

Thurs, Dec. 30, 7 pm (Online)



Normal People by Sally Rooney (2018, 266 p.)
Moderator: Gail Thomson
Genres: Coming of Age, Contemporary Irish Fiction
Summary: "The feverishly anticipated second novel from the young author of 2017's most acclaimed debut *Conversations with Friends*. Connell and Marianne grow up in the same small town in rural Ireland. The similarities

end there; they are from very different worlds. When they both earn places at Trinity College in Dublin, a connection that has grown between them lasts long into the following years. This is an exquisite love story about how a person can change another person's life – a simple yet profound realisation that unfolds beautifully over the course of the novel. It tells us how difficult it is to talk about how we feel and it tells us – blazingly – about cycles of domination, legitimacy and privilege. Alternating menace with overwhelming tenderness, Sally Rooney's second novel breathes fiction with new life." (Source: <https://library.smu.edu.sg>)

For Zoom meeting details and all enquires, please contact John Hagen bookclub@beaconunitarian.org.



Gathered Here is a monthly online check-in for Canadian Unitarian Universalist young adults. Join other UU 18–35 year-olds on Zoom for sharing joys and sorrows, deeper check-ins, prayerful reflections, and an opportunity to process the events of our lives with a spiritually grounded community. Next meeting: Mon. Jan. 10, 5 pm PT.

Verses on the Diversity of Contemporary Canadian Unitarians

by Franci Louann, 2007

I am a Unitarian—
Unitarians talk a lot,
did I say that?
We believe in
Freedom, Reason, Tolerance...
let's find a better word than tolerance.
We accept seven principles, or is it
eight, now?
We have six sources, or is it seven,
now?
We are a *Living Tradition*.

We Unitarians agree to differ.
We believe in religion
without dogma.
We come together because
we are enough alike, to speak with
each other,
enough unlike, to make it worthwhile.
We are a mosaic,
not a melting pot—
does that sound familiar?

We might be mystics or humanists or
both—
or pantheists and/or panentheists
and/or pagans...

Some of us are Christian,
some Buddhist;
some call themselves
Jew-nitarians;
some, Interfaitharians.
We might be agnostics—
devout agnostics,
who think about God a lot,
but are sure they can't be
sure.

We may be theists,
atheists,
or omnitheists. (I made
that last one up.)
We don't have all of the answers
but we do have *most* of the
questions—
to question is an answer.
We might be inspired by
Mahatma Gandhi
and Harry Potter,
on the same page—that has happened.

Some come to hone their consciences,
some to heal their wounds,
out of many different rooms...



Image from BuxMont Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

We endeavour to
comfort the afflicted, and
sometimes, to afflict the comfortable.
Some of us are straight, some gay—
we welcome *all*
trans-sexual, pansexual, bisexual,
asexual, etc.

We are inclusive, not exclusive.
Our circle draws in all but those
who would exclude themselves.
Our chalice is a wide one—
there is room for you and me
and all of good will.

This poem consists of reworked excerpts from *THIRTY-THREE TERCETS ON BEING A UNITARIAN*. This April 2007 “vers-ion” is a “diversion”, written to celebrate the 2007 CUC ACM at UBC, May 18-21, for which the theme is “**DIVERSITY IN COMMUNITY**”. The last stanza shown here came from the Rev. Phillip Hewett, who credits...someone else...

The January 2005 version was published as a CUC brochure, *A Poetic Look at Being a Unitarian* (www.cuc.ca). An early version was published also in the Vancouver Unitarian Bulletin. The latest update of the full version was done in March 2006. Inquiries? Write to flouann@telus.net.

About the author: Franci Louann (nee Workman) is a Vancouver-area Unitarian. This poetic credo is always a work-in-progress, much of it found in Unitarian conversations and liturgies, over decades, mostly in BC. *Truth Can't be Pickled* was her first Unitarian brochure, Toronto 1965.



**Beacon
Unitarian
Church**

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(on health leave until
Jan. 5, 2022)

Lay Chaplain:
Sue Sparlin, 778 319 7827
ceremonies@beaconunitarian.org

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Ogmundson;
Treasurer: Carol
Woodworth; **Secretary:**
Karen Greenland; **Members**

at Large: Amalia Mamani,
Jane Day, Joyce Gudaitis,
Peg Hinkley.

**Connections and
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**Religious Exploration
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Beacon Newsletter:
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Production: Laura Redmond
Proofreading: Jane
Shoemaker

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