



Connecting,
Inspiring,
Transforming!

Welcome to Beacon Unitarian Church! Our mission is to connect with compassion and respect; inspire learning and spiritual growth; and transform through joy and justice. Our Sunday services are multi-platform: in-person at Sapperton Hall (318 Keary St. in New Westminster) and broadcasted live via the internet. Services start at 10:30 am and end approximately one hour later. There is time for socializing after the service, both in person and online. You are invited to fill out the [Beacon Connecting Form](#) for more information. We look forward to connecting with you and getting to know you!

January & February Service Descriptions

JAN 1 **Wisdom from Feminist Unitarians**
Sue Sparlin and friends

Today we start a new year. Do we have the courage to practice new ways of thinking, of being together? Over the past decades feminist Unitarians have challenged our base assumptions, have questioned whether our Unitarian structures and institutions truly reflect our values, or whether our values are rooted primarily in patriarchal biases. For this service I will focus on those feminist Unitarian writings that I find uplifting and hopeful as we re-commit to creating a community of inclusion and balance for all living beings.

JAN 8 **Out of the Flames**
Rev. Samaya Oakley
Join us for our first Fire Communion service since 2020.

Out of the flames of 2022 we rise. We rise for courage and conviction, knowing that 'being on the side of love and justice' is who we are. Out of the flames we rise with hope in our hearts

to help heal a broken world. Out of the flames we rise with love in our hearts that celebrates our shared humanity.

JAN 15 **A Brave Faith**
Rev. Brian Kiely

There have been some Unitarians and Universalists in the past who risked a great deal on behalf of their beliefs. Some even risked their lives. Those aren't problems we face today in Canada, but sometimes it still takes courage to speak out for what we believe.

JAN 22 **Bubbles of Joy**
Guest Speaker: Janet Pivnick
A focus on joy seems to be

bubbling up in many places these days. In dark times in the world, people often turn to joy as a counterbalance to the dark and a shift in perspective about worldly challenges. What brings you joy? What are recommended ways to fill our lives with joy? Going beyond talk, let's take some time to be joyful together.

JAN 29 **An Interesting UU History Part 1: Europe**
Rev. Brian Kiely

Did you know, Unitarianism was once the national faith of a country? Or that a Unitarian god missed being official doctrine by a narrow vote? Or that a very early Universalist was condemned as a heretic more than a century after his death? UU history is full of interesting characters.

FEB 5 **An Interesting UU History Part 2: North America**
Rev. Brian Kiely

The odd stories of our tradition are not just confined to the Old World. Today I will use a few more stories to highlight the history of our faith on this continent.

FEB 12 **Love, Actually**
Guest Speaker: Janet Pivnick
The title of a much-loved

Christmas movie, the themes of *Love, Actually* lend themselves well to a Valentine's Day contemplation.

February Service Descriptions (Continued)

Love shows up in our lives in so many ways: through story, song, poetry, meditation, and reflection. Let's explore this part of human life that is so complex and so beautiful.

FEB 19 **Finding Yourself First**
Rev. Brian Kiely

Many of us were taught that prayer was something that went from you to... somewhere or someone else. But the American preacher and activist Howard Thurman held that prayer was really an inward journey. Before we can work for the world, we have to find ourselves first.

FEB 26 **"Happy Birthday to Us!"**
Rev. Brian Kiely

It's Beacon's 40th birthday. Let's reminisce and look forward as well. And for you who can make it to Sapperton Hall... there will be cake!

Minister's Message

January 1st again. It seems that the last few January firsts have been fraught with uncertainty. Things cancelled; then events gradually returning and maybe cancelled again. Do I mask or not? Should I go to that event or not? Can I get back to some of the things I have missed? Or do I just go with the things I learned to like over the past two years?

In my recollection (that of an optimist, I confess) January 1st meant looking ahead with a degree of positivity. What new adventure lies ahead? What can I hope for or look forward to? I don't know about you, but I'm not there yet. Stuff still feels unsettled.

I don't even know how long I will be working for the Beacon community! My contract has already been extended... twice. I dearly hope it's not for a third time. That's not a knock

on Beacon, but rather a fervent wish that Meg is well enough to resume her ministry. I know you have missed her... so have I. Meg being able to resume duties is a wonderful New Year wish.

But nothing has been certain these past two years and we aren't quite confident about the future yet, are we? For this year, at least, I guess it's not a January 1st for diving in headlong (like a polar bear swim, brrr). Perhaps it's one more year when we can only step in gingerly, with hope, with good will, but also with the harshly-learned wisdom that nothing is guaranteed.

Have the happiest New Year you can. —Rev. Brian Kiely



Rev. Brian Kiely

Perhaps it's one more year when we can only step in gingerly, with hope, with good will, but also with the harshly-learned wisdom that nothing is guaranteed.



Please Support the Share Food Bank!

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.

Rising Together

Rising Together Connects Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) UU Youth (14–19 yrs) and Emerging Adults (18–24 yrs)

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.

Board Bitz

Come sing a song with me.

Those are words from one of my favourite Unitarian hymns. I love singing it. More than that, I love singing it together in community.

As we entered 2022, Beacon had not been together in person, worshipping and singing, for almost two years. Some in our community were content meeting virtually. Others missed the connection that being in person provides. Being able to meet both of those needs was a major focus for the board. When Beacon began multi-platform services in September it was a huge accomplishment. We were together again in the hall on Sundays! Seeing each other and giving each other, if not hugs, at least elbow bumps. Distanced? Yes. Masked? Yes. Singing with joy and delight? Yes!

Our transition to multi-platform services went very smoothly. For those in the hall it was a return to semi-normalcy. For those on Zoom, it was a way to join in and participate. It may have looked like magic to combine both, but peek behind the curtain. Time and talent were put in during the spring and summer to make it happen. Deepak Sahasrabudhe and Tyler Ewasiuk provided that time and talent, the magic ingredients that made our entry into the multi-platform world possible. Many thanks for the expertise and effort they gave. It was a gift to Beacon that we have been blessed to receive.

In October 2022, Meg started a graduated return to Beacon. The board and congregation were so pleased to have her back. It has been a challenging year for Rev. Meg, and Beacon. Many of us were able to be present in the hall for her service, and many others attended via Zoom. Coming together to sing was of course part of that service, and singing with

heart we did do. Unfortunately, in November, Meg's doctors advised that she was not able to continue with her return to work. She must focus her energy on the goal of strengthening her health. Our thoughts and best wishes are with Rev. Meg during the holiday season and into the New Year.

Come sing a song with me is the message that choir members received in December. Seven of them responded. In this COVID landscape, music and choir are still in the process of feeling their way. Things are different.

In 2023 we will be coming together to create again—this time with a new focus. We must think about what makes Beacon important and special to each of us, do some re-visioning, and fashion a financially sustainable path that continues to connect and nourish us.

Distance and masks are the new reality, at least for now. Even with that, singing together is a joyful experience. One singing session was held in December, with a second planned for January. Singing while distanced and masked is a challenge. But one thing Beacon has shown since COVID is our willingness and ability to take a challenge and find a way of working through it.

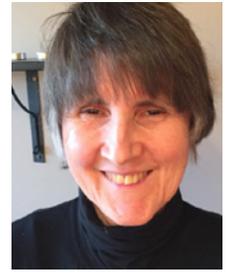
Our pledge drive theme this year came from another song: "To (Re) Build the Common Good". David Kristjanson led the pledge drive team. He is a man of many hats at Beacon and the board is appreciative of his time and skill in leading the pledge

drive. We also acknowledge and thank all those who pledged. It is because of you that Beacon continues.

With 2023 we are entering into a new year. But I think my song will stay the same: Come sing a song with me. In 2023 we will be coming together to create again—this time with a new focus. As was said at the December 4th budget meeting, Beacon needs to re-examine the path we're on. We must think about what makes Beacon important and special to each of us, do some re-visioning, and fashion a financially sustainable path that continues to connect and nourish us. With that in mind, the board will be organizing congregational discussions in the spring. We will be coming together and talking and listening to each other, hearing what each of us has to say, as we go through that process.

2022 has been another year of challenge, but Beacon has been a wonderful community to be part of as we worked to **Connect, Inspire, and Transform**. Together, let's see what we can achieve in 2023!

—Susan Tarras, Board Co-President



Susan Tarras
Co-President



Living with Less Plastic NEW WEST

Mind Your Plastic

I've discovered another organization working to eliminate plastic pollution: *Mind Your Plastic* ([mind yourplastic.ca](http://mindyourplastic.ca)). "*Mind Your Plastic* creates change by advocating for Canadian businesses to take impactful steps towards eliminating their plastic pollution footprint, driving towards implementation of changes with government, producers, recyclers and consumers and supporting and implementing programs to clean our coastlines."

One of their important programs is the Circular Economy Ambassador Program, which supports students to share the circular economy philosophy and to carry out community cleanups. A circular economy is an economic system based on the reuse and regeneration of materials or products, especially as a means of

continuing production in a sustainable or environmentally friendly way. Check out the website and perhaps subscribe to their newsletter!

I also enjoyed their blog about a plastics free Christmas: <https://mindyourplastic.ca/how-to-have-a-plasticfree-christmas/>

Plastics Ban

Effective December 20, 2022, the manufacture and import for sale of the following harmful single-use plastics in Canada will be prohibited:

- checkout bags
- cutlery
- foodservice ware made from, or containing, problematic plastics that are hard to recycle
- stir sticks
- straws (with some exceptions)

The ban on the manufacture and import of ring carriers (the packaging

that links together canned beverages) will enter into force in June 2023.

Over the next decade, this world-leading ban on harmful single-use plastics will result in the estimated elimination of over 1.3 million tonnes of hard-to-recycle plastic waste and more than 22,000 tonnes of plastic pollution, which is equivalent to over one million full garbage bags.

Envirobee

Envirobee will continue in 2023! Join Teresa after the service on January 8th and February 12th. The on-line Envirobees will be hosted by Mary Bennett. Join us for conversation about anything and everything environmental!

Teresa Morton
(Check in Breeze for my contact info!)



Teresa Morton

'Sharing the Plate' Program

Every year, the congregation chooses a local charity to support through our weekly collection. This year (2022–23) the *Sharing the Plate* recipient is the Maida Duncan Women's Drop-in Centre in New Westminster. Now the *Sharing the Plate* committee is asking for your nominations as to who we should support for the coming year, 2023–24! Think about the organizations doing good work in your community and nominate them using the form linked to the Beacon website: [\[Sharing-the-Plate-Nomination-Form-2023-24-fillable.pdf\]\(http://beaconunitarian.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Sharing-the-Plate-Nomination-Form-2023-24-fillable.pdf\)](http://beaconunitarian.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/</p></div><div data-bbox=)

The *Sharing the Plate* committee is also looking for an additional person to meet once or twice in February, to review the nominations and prepare for the congregational vote in April.

The committee will be guided by the following criteria when developing the short list of potential *Sharing the Plate* recipients. Each charity:

- must be registered with the Canadian Revenue Agency (i.e. have a charitable tax number);
- have its principal activities in the

Lower Mainland;

- be a "smaller" charitable organization – one which will be positively impacted by the amount of the *Sharing the Plate* contribution;
- must do work which furthers the realization of Beacon's mission to "strive for justice, equity, and compassion among all peoples, and harmony with our environment";
- must be willing to come to Beacon to tell us who they are and describe their work; and
- must not have a formal affiliation with a religious organization.

Beacon Programs

We invite you to explore these great ways to connect to the Beacon community and to 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. As a group we welcome different points of view and discuss a wide range of ideas. We meet the last Sunday of the month at 7:30 pm, via Zoom.

January 29: Facilitated by Earl Morris. **Topic: The twelve traditions (not the steps) of AA.** A brilliant framework for enforced simplicity and continued focus for small groups.

February 26: Facilitated by Luc Beaudoin. **Topic: Sam Harris | #294 - Status Games (A Conversation with Will Storr).** Note that we are invited, and encouraged to listen to the podcast before the meeting.

If you would like to receive regular emails from the Humanist Group, please contact Marilyn Medén at humanist@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 enquiries, please contact John Hagen bookclub@beaconunitarian.org. See box on page 6 for more information.

Film Club (Online and in person) meets online the first and third Fridays at 7 pm. See the box on page 6 for more information.

Lunch Bunch (Online) meets every Tuesday from noon until 2 pm, 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 resumed on an informal basis. We are member-led and are meeting in New Westminster to teach and learn songs from each other. Please contact choirdirector@beaconunitarian.org for more info.

'Getting to Know Beacon' New to this community? Want to learn about our Sunday services and other programs? Join members of the Connecting Committee for a one-hour short introduction. You can ask questions and meet other newcomers. Contact

the Connecting Committee chair, Sue Sparlin, at connecting@beaconunitarian.org.

'Getting to Know You' If you've been to a few of our services and want to get more involved, we look forward to getting to know you, and you us. Meet with other Beaconites to learn about Unitarianism and various ways to be part of this community. Contact our Connecting Committee at connecting@beaconunitarian.org.

Congregational Conversations in February and March

Watch for news in the new year! The board will host meetings in the spring, details to be shared in the *Beacon This Week*. The meetings will be opportunities to collaborate with other Beacon members, to share what is important about Beacon, to explore what calls us to this spiritual home. We hope to see you there.



Beacon Film Club

1st and 3rd Fridays, 7 pm (Online)



The Film Club has decided to meet on Zoom on the first and third Fridays at 7 pm during January and February. View the film in advance, then come to the Zoom meeting to chat about it. We also plan to meet in person at theatres (dates and times TBD).

The Zoom-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.

For more information, please connect with Marilyn Medén: filmclub@beaconunitarian.org. The Zoom link is in Thursday’s *Beacon This Week*.

January Films

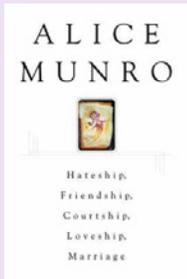
Jan 6: *A Man Called Ove*, introduced by John Hagen
Jan 20: *Where The Crawdads Sing*, introduced by Elizabeth Campbell
TBD: *A Man Called Otto*. Michael Scales will organize an in-person event when we know the theatre dates.

February Films

Feb 3: *Babette’s Feast*, introduced by Marilyn Medén
Feb 17: *Pleasantville*, introduced by Donna Webb

Beacon Book Club

Thursday, Jan, 26, 7 pm



Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage: Stories by Alice Munro

McClelland & Stewart, c2001, Book: 321 pages. Audio: not available. NOTE: Republished in 2007 by Penguin Group as: *Away From Her*
Presenter: Sylvia McDonald

Genre/Subjects: Short stories, Canadian (English) — 20th century. Women, Fiction, Canada, Social life and customs.

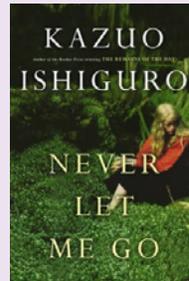
Book Summary: A collection of short fiction explores the complexities of human relationships and emotions in stories about a housekeeper entering old-maidhood whose life is transformed by a practical joke and a lifelong philanderer who finds the tables turned. — Burnaby Public Library Catalogue

As always, Alice Munro surprises us. While the nine stories in this new collection could not be written by anyone else, they are subtly different.

In this great book by one of the world’s great writers, the settings may be Vancouver Island, small-town Ontario, Toronto, or Vancouver, but the stories are universal, and the characters – no, the people in the stories – are unforgettable. —Amazon

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

Thursday, Feb 23, 7 pm



Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro
Knopf Canada, c. 2005, 263 pages.
Audio 9 hrs, 43 min.

Presenter: Marilyn Medén

Genre: Psychological fiction

Subjects: Women, human cloning, organ donors, boarding school students, England

Book Summary: Hailsham seems like a pleasant English boarding school, far from the influences of the city. Its students are well tended and supported, trained in art and literature, and become just the sort of people the world wants them to be. But, curiously, they are taught nothing of the outside world and are allowed little contact with it. Within the grounds of Hailsham, Kathy grows from schoolgirl to young woman, but it’s only when she and her friends Ruth and Tommy leave the safe grounds of the school (as they always knew they would) that they realize the full truth of what Hailsham is. *Never Let Me Go* is a gripping mystery, a beautiful love story, and also a scathing critique of human arrogance and a moral examination of how we treat the vulnerable and different in our society. In exploring the themes of memory and the impact of the past, Ishiguro takes on the idea of a possible future to create his most moving and powerful book to date.

A New Year's Message from the Canadian Unitarian Council's Executive Director

As we close out 2022 and head into 2023, I thank you all for being part of our national Unitarian Universalist (UU) community. The last two years have been challenging, and at times, being a Canadian UU has been more difficult than ever. We haven't always been in agreement, and yet, most of us have found ways to remain together.

As a staff team, we've learnt lessons as well, in relationship with you, our congregations and friends. We know that when times are rough, we need to be gentle, nurturing and compassionate with each other. We also know that there are times to stand our ground, even when it is challenging to do so, to reach towards our goal of "a world where our interdependence calls us to love and justice."

To that end, your staff team has created and curated resources that we hope will be useful for you. Among these are:

- [Inclusivity resources](#), which give us opportunities to live into the [8th Principle](#)
- [Responsibility Covenant](#) to guide us in having challenging and sensitive conversations with each other
- [Covenant resources](#) from the 2022 National Fall Gathering (note "[Covenant Creation Resources: A Starting Point](#)")

We know, based on the commitment and care you have demonstrated, that the love you hold for your Unitarian Universalist communities will continue. The work we have

done together over the past two years has stretched us beyond our comfort zones, and engaged us in ways that made a lot of us uncomfortable. And that's ok. Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed once quoted Tim Tyson from September 2004, who said,

"...lean into it. I am talking about racial discomfort. I have certainly felt my share of it, through the course of my work, and I recommend racial discomfort to you. Lean into it. That is, doing exactly the opposite of your first instinct, which is to retreat as fast as possible, and is also perfectly logical. None of us wants to feel uncomfortable. But there is no way we can have a fruitful and candid conversation about race in an interracial setting and always feel comfortable. But it won't kill you to feel a little uncomfortable. Just go ahead, lean into it, and listen. Listen to other people, of course, but listen to your discomfort."

Our work continues. At the National Symposium in Ottawa in May 2023, we will be "Living Into the 8th Principle"—save the dates from May 19–21, 2023!

Thank you for being on this journey with us, with our deep appreciation for your commitment to Unitarian Universalism and our warmest wishes for a bright 2023.

In faith and love,

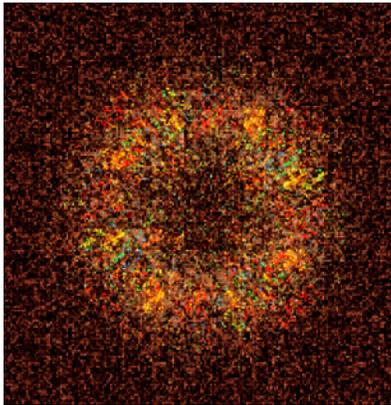
Vyda Ng, CUC Executive Director



Vyda Ng,
CUC Executive
Director



Upcoming Canadian Unitarian Council Events



Widening the Circle: Reflections on Becoming

Saturday, January 14
9 am PT (90 minutes)

Join the Widening the Circle Team for a listening circle. We'll take this time early in the new year to listen closely to one another's stories—both personal

and congregational. How have you been doing in this time of change and transition? What spiritual and self care practices have held you through it all? What has your congregational community been experiencing? How has the 8th principle process, or leadership changes, impacted the well being of the whole community? This time of centering and sharing is intended to nourish our spirits and help us connect to our larger Canadian Unitarian Universalist community. More information and registration available [here](#).

Leaders' Roundtable

Last Saturday of each month

Saturday, January 28 • 9:00 am PT (90 minutes)

On the agenda: A motion to revoke the Doctrine of Discovery; a motion to update the CUC's bylaws; and a motion to reimagine goals and strategic priorities for our national faith community. These are three proposed motions for the CUC's Annual General Meeting in May, held virtually and in person in Ottawa. Join Vyda Ng and members of the CUC Board to discuss the motions and other matters related to the AGM. More information and registration is available [here](#).

Inclusivity Action Groups: Where To Begin?

Wednesday, February 1 • 4 pm PT (2 hours)

It's time to bring the 8th Principle to life and transform our communities into beacons of diversity. The CUC has several tools and opportunities to empower your journey.

Joining an action group is a chance to meet with other people interested in co-creating inclusive spaces and experiences. Action groups introduce people with lived experience to their allies but what happens next is up to you. We'll open each of our 3 sessions with guided discussion around implementing change, followed by ample time to dialogue and plan future actions as individuals, groups, congregations and/or Canadian UUism as whole.

More information and registration is available [here](#).

National Worship Sunday Service: Covenanting through Transitions

Sunday, February 5 – 10 am PT (approx. 1 hour)

Where: Zoom and YouTube Live. Use the [bitly link](#) to join the service on Zoom, or watch live on the CUC's [YouTube channel](#).

Congregations are experiencing a lot of change these days: from ministerial transitions to implementing the 8th principle, all during a pandemic. Upheaval, loss, uncertainty, pain, aspirations, conflict: cultural shifts within and without are calling us to hold one another gently, despite our differences and difficulties.

Covenanting through Transition is a national worship service that asks us "How do we stay in covenant through all of this in our communities? How do we stay in it in a good way when it is hard and people aren't always their best selves or are disappointed?"

We encourage you to bring materials to help you participate in a creative ritual to express yourself during the service; art supplies, an instrument, findings from outside, whatever moves you!



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Deadline for submissions
is the 15th of the month
preceding Sep. 1, Nov. 1, Jan. 1,
Mar. 1, May 1, and July 1.