

Welcome to Beacon Unitarian Church! Our vision 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!

May & June Service Descriptions

**MAY
7**

The Wisdom of Chief Inspector Gamache

Rev. Meg Roberts

I'm a big fan of Louise Penny's detective novels. Her protagonist is Chief Inspector Armand Gamache. With all his new recruits he shares four statements of wisdom that were passed down to him. Come explore how this wisdom relates to the wisdom given to you, whether from your elders, your favourite novel or film.

**MAY
28**

Grounded in Song

Rev. Meg Roberts with guests The Sacred Web Singers

What is our relationship to the earth? Join Rev. Meg Roberts and the Sacred Web Singers, with choir director Susan Summers, as we become grounded in song. They'll share music and readings about how we connect to this beautiful blue-green planet we call home.

**JUN
4**

'You Want Me to Feel Curious and Compassionate About Them?!'

Rev. Meg Roberts

In the loving kindness meditation, one aspect of it is to cultivate compassion for a difficult person. That's not always easy. I find becoming curious helps me access compassion in a way that has integrity. Come find out how.

**JUN
18**

Flower Communion Ceremony

Rev. Meg Roberts

You are invited to bring a sweet piece of summer for this special Flower Communion service. If you are joining us in person at Sapperton, bring your flower to share

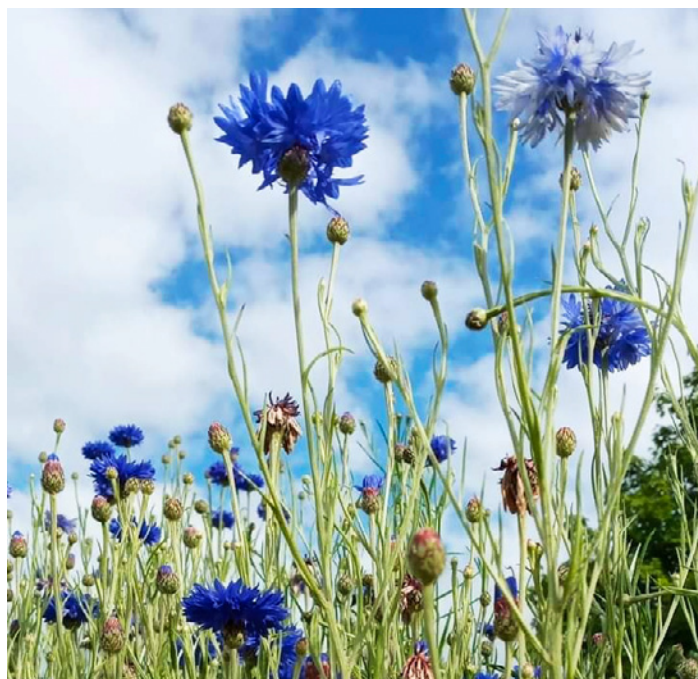


Photo by Kirstin

with others. If you are joining us online via Zoom, have your flower there to be part of the ceremony—then you can choose to share it with someone in your life after the service or keep it to enjoy in your home. Whether you bring the flower from your yard, or buy one, or even draw one, it is welcome. As we navigate this multi-platform experience, the flower in your heart is more than enough if you show up without a flower. As we close out this church year, let us celebrate each other and the gift that Beacon is in our lives.

Please check the weekly e-bulletin, *Beacon this Week*, or the Beacon website for further May and June service descriptions as they become available.

Musings by Meg

When I hear on the news just how far we still have to go in responding to the climate emergency, it is easy to feel despondent. That's why I enjoyed being part of the Metro Vancouver Unitarians Ecochallenge in April. There are always so many things to learn and ways I can practically make a difference.

One of my goals was to do my carbon footprint. I used Climate Hero Carbon Calculator: climatehero.typeform.com.

It helped me see where I could improve my impact on the climate. Some were known to me:

- Use more public transportation, plus walk and bike more to do errands close to me
- Eat less meat and more vegetarian and vegan meals

- Go on a plastic diet (reducing even more the single use plastic that I am still using, learning from Teresa Morton's tools that she has shared)

One of the new things was:

- Prioritizing wood and bamboo products in my purchases

One of the most sobering things was:

- "Each flight (round trip) longer than 8 hours adds more

than **2 tons CO2e** to your carbon footprint, which is your entire sustainable climate budget for a year. Choosing to spend your vacation on your own continent instead of going across the world is the single most powerful intervention to reduce one's carbon footprint."

While I'm making changes in my life to reduce my footprint, I'm now considering using carbon offsets.

Choosing to spend your vacation on your own continent instead of going across the world is the single most powerful intervention to reduce one's carbon footprint.

According to the Climate Hero website, with the promises I made to change my life choices, even just for \$19/month (the cost of a pizza and a drink), I can offset the rest of my carbon footprint for the year. I don't think carbon offsets would let me off the hook for making changes. It does give me time to make those that are more of a longer-term investment (like moving from a car that uses fossil fuel to other more carbon-friendly means of transportation).

Have you done carbon offsets for your own footprint? I'm interested in hearing more and what it's been like: minister@beaconunitarian.org

Here's to learning more together.

In the spirit of life,

—Rev. Meg Roberts



Rev. Meg Roberts

Congregational Conversations (CCs)

Beacon is facing several challenges including deficit budgets, volunteer burnout and stagnant growth in membership. The Board has established a Congregational Conversations Team (Susan Tarras, Peg Hinkley, Teresa Morton, and guest Phil Campbell) to lead a process of discovering how the congregation wants to move forward considering these challenges. The aim of the process is to gather thoughtful feedback, elicit dreams and visions, and (eventually) to develop practical solutions to our problems.

We have now had three sessions of the congregational conversations (in person and on Zoom) including one hybrid session on Sunday April 16th!

The CC Team is impressed by the high level of participation, as well as the courage and honesty that participants are bringing to the often challenging questions.

The responses to the questions (on paper and in the Breeze forms) are being tabulated and the team is reviewing each and every response.



The next CCs will be informed by what the team has heard, and conversations are planned for May and June.

—Teresa Morton

Board Bitz

Similar to a groggy, early morning riser reluctant to get out of bed and get moving, spring has delayed itself this year. Beware the wise groundhog—there is much work to be done.

We are all thrilled to have our own Meg back in her ministerial seat—welcome back Meg! And a HUGE debt of gratitude to Brian Kiely for his thoughtful and thought-provoking Sunday morning messages, and his guiding hand over the last 18 months. Brian will transition away from us and back into partial retirement; we know he is a busy fellow with other family and congregational responsibilities to attend to. Meg and Brian will be riding in tandem over the next few weeks until Meg is back to her original half-time ministry.

We are all thrilled to have our own Meg back in her ministerial seat – welcome back Meg!

Beacon's 40th birthday celebration, although delayed one week due to the ground hog's predicted snowfall, was a smashing success with many former members making guest appearances in person and on Zoom. These folks, along with many current members, are still part of the Beacon fabric as they helped weave and sustain the Beacon we are still blessed with today. Although they are no longer able to participate in our little church, the work, love, and dedication they poured into Beacon in years gone by are not forgotten and are much appreciated. Their efforts endure

and they should be proud of their legacy.

Beacon has held several congregational conversations in person and on Zoom and we give a heart-felt thank-you to all who have participated.



Jane Day
Board member at large



Peg Hinkley
Board member at large

These conversations can be difficult but are necessary in helping inform us of how and where to shepherd our human and financial resources over the coming months and years. These decisions won't be made by the Board, but will be decisions made based on responses to the deep and targeted questions asked of members during these meetings.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Day and Peg Hinkley

Earth Month Challenge!

In April, the People's Ecochallenge hosted the Earth Month Challenge which is built on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

One of those goals is on climate: *Climate & Ecosystems: The UN is determined to take climate action to address the threats of climate change and its effects. Social and economic development depend on the conservation and sustainability of natural resources on land and in water to protect biodiversity, ecosystems and wildlife.*

Midway through the month, the Metro-Van-Unis Team had amassed 1345 points through study, action, and advocacy. The team included

members from each of the Lower Mainland Unitarian Churches.

Watch for the 21-day October Challenge, where the focus is on establishing more sustainable behaviours and practices!

Envirobees (online & in-person discussions of everything environmental) will take place May 11th and June 18th, with Teresa leading the in-person session and Mary Bennett handling the online portion!

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



Teresa Morton

For your information:

The Pastoral Support Team would like to remind everyone that our dear Beacon member, Helen McVey, has difficulty seeing our faces. She is vision impaired, having been declared legally blind 34 years ago. She has learned to live with scarring on her retinas. She can detect who we are by our voices and other clues, but may not recognize new people right away.

Please give her your name verbally, as she cannot read our name tags. Helen is very outgoing and great fun to talk to.

—Judy Villet

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.

Sunday, May 28, 7:30 pm: Marilyn Medén will introduce the topic, “Our Beliefs: What Do You Believe?” This will be a mini Building-Your-Own-Theology session, introduced by Marilyn telling of her own beliefs.

There will not be a Humanist meeting in June.

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 5 for more information.

Film Club (Online and in person) meets online the first and third Fridays at 7 pm. See the box below 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 U

If you are new to Beacon and/or Unitarianism, we encourage you to participate in a session of “Getting to Know U”. Here you will meet new people and deepen your knowledge of how Beacon functions and what Unitarianism is. Depending on interest, and the location available for the gathering, we are planning one for either:

- Wednesday, May 24 from 7–9 pm, **or** Saturday, May 27 from 2–4 pm
- Deadline for RSVPs is Wednesday, May 17.
- The event will be in-person with masks, and refreshments will be served. If you are interested but can't do an in-person event, please let me know so we can see about holding a meeting online.

For more information and to RSVP, please contact Rev. Meg Roberts: minister@beaconunitarian.org or cell 778-870-9015.



**Beacon
Unitarian
Church**

Beacon Film Club

1st and 3rd Fridays, 7 pm (online with occasional in-person screenings)

The Film Club meets on Zoom on first and third Fridays at 7 pm. View the film in advance, then come to the Zoom meeting to chat about it. As well as our Zoom meetings, we will be planning for some in-person theatre events.

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*.

May Films

May 5: **Women Talking**, introduced by Rhea Kikkert

May 19: **Ratatouille**, introduced by John Hagen

June Film

June 2: **Aftersun**, introduced by Pauline Atwood



Beacon Book Club

Thursday, May 25, 7–9 pm



Finding the Mother Tree: a biography

by Dr. Suzanne Simard

Allen Lane Canada, 2021

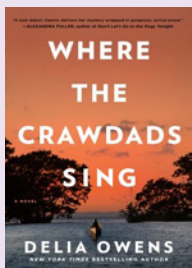
Presenter: Carol Woodworth

Genres/Subjects: Forest conservation, Forest ecology, Autobiography

Book Summary: A world-leading expert shares her amazing story of discovering the communication that

exists between trees, and shares her own story of family and grief. Dr. Suzanne Simard was born and raised in the rainforests of British Columbia and has forged a lifelong relationship of love and respect with the trees. This relationship was the driving force behind her decision to dedicate her life to better understanding the forest and the network that connects the plant life within. With humour, emotion, and the narrative drive of a lifelong storyteller, Dr. Simard takes readers on an intimate journey of groundbreaking scientific discovery. Linking her research to her personal experiences, she recounts her life's work uncovering the "Wood Wide Web," the underground mycelium network that connects all the trees and plants within a forest. It is a network that allows them to share not only nutrients, but information, all of which originates from the hubs called Mother Trees. Readers will journey with Dr. Simard into this massive experiment, from dramatic encounters with wildlife to the groundbreaking "Aha" moments in a lab, from learning how to utilize this network to promote plant growth to what this network can teach us about combatting climate change. Dramatic, funny, touching, and evocative, *Finding the Mother Tree* offers an intimate and personal look at discovery. This book is not about how we can save the trees, but about how the trees might actually save us. (Source: Burnaby Public Library Catalogue)

Thursday, June 22, 7–9 pm



Where the Crawdads Sing: a mystery

by Delia Owens

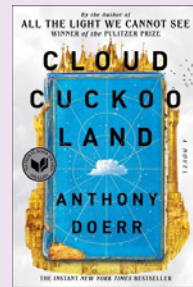
G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2018

Presenter: Gail Thomson

Genres/Subjects: Coming of Age, Fiction, Mystery, Solitude, North Carolina

Book Summary: For years, rumors of the "Marsh Girl" have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. She's barefoot and wild; unfit for polite society. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark. But Kya is not what they say. Abandoned at age ten, she has survived on her own in the marsh that she calls home. A born naturalist with just one day of school, she takes life lessons from the land, learning from the false signals of fireflies the real way of this world. But while she could have lived in solitude forever, the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. Drawn to two young men from town, who are each intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new and startling world—until the unthinkable happens. In *Where the Crawdads Sing*, Owens juxtaposes an exquisite ode to the natural world against a heartbreaking coming of age story and a surprising murder investigation. (Source: Burnaby Public Library Catalogue)

Thursday, July 27, 7–9 pm



Cloud Cuckoo Land: a novel by

Anthony Doerr

Scribner, c. 2021, 626 pages

Presenter: Marilyn Medén

Genres/Subjects: Fiction, Magic Realism, Librarians, Children, Space, Istanbul (Turkey) – Siege, 1453

Book Summary: The heroes of *Cloud Cuckoo Land* are children on the cusp

of adulthood trying to figure out the world around them, and to survive. In the besieged city of Constantinople in 1453, in a public library in Lakeport, Idaho, today, and on a spaceship bound for a distant exoplanet decades from now, an ancient text provides solace and the most profound human connection to characters in peril. They all learn the story of Aethon, who longs to be turned into a bird so that he can fly to the paradise of Cloud Cuckoo Land, a better world. *Cloud Cuckoo Land* is about the power of story and the astonishing survival of the physical book when for thousands of years they were so rare and so feared, dying, as one character says, "in fires or floods or in the mouths of worms or at the whims of tyrants." It is a novel about stewardship—of the book, of the Earth, of the human heart. (Source: Burnaby Public Library Catalogue)

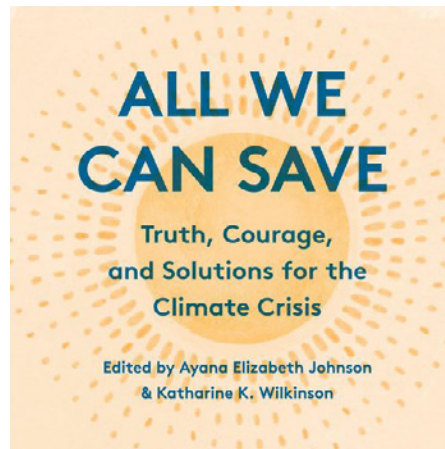
For Zoom meeting details and all enquiries, please contact John Hagen bookclub@beaconunitarian.org.

Calling all 'enviro' Beaconites!

Mary Bennett and I presented material from this book **ALL WE CAN SAVE** at the service April 23rd. There are about 15 Unitarians getting together to explore the 10-session 'Circles' book program, starting in May. A Zoom group (including one person from the UK!) is meeting on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays, starting May 13th, with the sessions running from noon to 1:30 pm. There is an in-person group meeting in Kitsilano as well. Please contact me for more information about that group.

Resources:

- The Circles web site with the discussion guide we'll be following for the book *All We Can Save*: <https://www.allwecansave.earth/circles>
 - A 2022 TED Talk in Vancouver by Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VsOJR40M0as&t=15s>
 - A 2019 TED Talk by Dr. Katharine Wilkinson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vXlJEcrinwg>
- Teresa Morton (Check in Breeze for my contact info!)



Beacon Flags!

Did you happen to notice these festive flags at Beacon's 40th birthday celebration? Judy Villet writes: "I made the flags from fabric donated by Donna Hamilton. Now I'm planning to make a storage bag for them. They can be used for future Beacon events, indoors and out." Thank you Judy and Donna for adding so much visual beauty to our celebrations and events!



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.



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: Monday, June 12, 5 pm PT



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Susan Tarras,
Regina Ogmundson;
Treasurer: Carol Woodworth;

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Teresa Morton;
Members at Large: Beth
Connelly, Jane Day, Joyce
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Connections and

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Religious Exploration

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Beacon Newsletter:

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Proofreading: William Marshall
and Kate Smith.

Deadline for submissions

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