

## Summertime!

Beacon Unitarian Church is now on summer hiatus but we have three opportunities to gather before we restart our regular worship services on Sunday, Sept. 13th. In addition, three of our small-group programs will continue over the summer: Film Club, Book Club, and Lunch Bunch. All are welcome to join our programs and gatherings!

Fill out the [Beacon Connecting Form](#) for more information. We look forward to connecting with you and getting to know you!



## July & August Service Descriptions

**JUL  
9**

**4:00 PM**  
**Ripples of Happiness**

*Service Coordinator: Marilyn Medén*

At four in the afternoon on July 9th, in the exuberance of John Hagen's backyard, but inside if necessary, we will experience how happiness moves from one person to another. John Hagen, Sue Sparlin, and Marylke Nieuwenhuis will provide inspirational music. We have chairs, but maybe not enough, so please bring your own if it's convenient. You are also invited to arrive early to help set up, and to bring finger food for enjoyment at the end of the service. John and Marilyn will provide beverages. (Please check the

online directory for John's address, or fill out the [Beacon Connecting Form](#) if you are a newcomer).

**AUG  
20**

**11:00 AM**  
**Summer Service in the Park**

*Service Coordinator: David Kristjanson*

Come join us for song and celebration under the trees. Bring your own lawn chair and perhaps snacks or a picnic lunch for afterwards. We will meet in Sapperton Park across the street from the Royal Columbian Hospital. There is a playground and spray park if you want to bring your kids and/or grandkids. Look for the Beacon Banner.

*Service descriptions continued on page 2*

## Summer Service Descriptions

(Continued from page 1)

**AUG 27** **10:30 AM**  
**Summer Singing Service**

*Service Coordinator:*

*Peggy Lunderville*

All ages are welcome to join us for a morning of singing/playing at Peggy Lunderville's home (please check the on-line directory for contact info, or fill out the [Beacon Connecting Form](#) if you are a newcomer). This gathering is a wonderful opportunity to connect as a community in the summer as we sing our favourite hymns from the charcoal and teal hymnbooks, as well as the "Joyce Poley" songbooks. Bring musical instruments if you wish to accompany. If you have a hymn you would like to be included, please contact Peggy Lunderville ahead of time. There will also be room for some requests at the service itself. Potluck lunch to follow (tea, coffee, juice and water will be provided). Our home is wheelchair accessible.

**SEP 13** **The Annual Water Ceremony**  
At Sapperton Hall and on Zoom

*Rev. Meg Roberts*

Beacon's program year starts again with this special service. The annual water ceremony service is for all ages: we pour water from various sources into one common bowl, symbolizing the re-gathering of this community after a summer break. If you would like to bring water from your summer experiences to put into the bowl, please do (whether from a favourite place or from your tap at home)!

## Musings by Meg

I was walking in my neighbourhood at dusk, getting out to stretch my legs after a day of working on my computer. I looked up in time to see two coyotes loping across the road, about 100 metres ahead of me—they were going from one small park across to a larger park. It was both startling and magical. This encounter reminded me that I'm actually in their living room! I have respect for them: they are part of the wildlife of this region and I adapt my behaviour accordingly.

There is something about their wildness that got me pondering. In the summertime, there seems to me to be more space for stepping out of our domesticated ways and into the wildness that is also part of our nature. I don't mean wild partying or destructive behavior! I mean connecting with the part of ourselves that encounters the natural world and knows itself to be at home. If you are able to, spend more time outside when it is warmer. Relish that time to enjoy the gifts of this season. For some of you, it is already part of your summer plans. For others, it may be something you might consider doing more of.

This poem by Mary Oliver reminds me of the insight that can arise when we are immersed in the natural world:

Who made the world?  
Who made the swan, and the black bear?  
Who made the grasshopper?  
This grasshopper, I mean—  
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,  
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,  
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down—  
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.  
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.  
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.  
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.  
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down  
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,  
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,  
which is what I have been doing all day.  
Tell me, what else should I have done?  
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?  
Tell me, what is it you plan to do  
with your one wild and precious life?

I look forward to hearing what you are doing with your life this summer. I hope it brings you a deep connection to the earth, our home. I hope it brings you well-being of body, mind, heart and spirit. And I hope it brings you some joy and playfulness, stepping out of routine when you can, and embracing the wildness that is in your very DNA.

I will be working the first part of July, then will be off the last two weeks of July and the first two weeks of August. I hope to see you at one of our August summer services or in September when we re-gather. All the best 'til then.

In the spirit of life,



Rev. Meg Roberts

—Rev. Meg Roberts

## Board Bitz

Summertime is here. The days are longer, giving us more time to read, walk or garden.

Rev. Meg has increased her work hours and Beacon members have benefitted. Our board meets on Zoom monthly, and many tasks are accomplished between meetings.

On June 4th during the service, Janet Pivnick was installed as a Lay Chaplain. It was wonderful to see so many people in person. Sue Sparlin, Marilyn Meden (Lay chaplains), Susan Tarras (Beacon Board), and Rev. Meg Roberts participated in honouring Janet. The ceremony was evocative.

The Beacon Board appreciates the hard work of the Congregational Conversations' team (Peg Hinkley, Susan Tarras, Teresa Morton and Phil Campbell). Data is being analyzed and a further congregational conversation will be held in the fall. The information is valuable and the results will be shared in a timely, thoughtful manner.

The Worship Services team and Rev. Meg have created some lovely services. A highlight was the service exploring the writings of Rev. Ev Morris. Rev. Everett Morris is a member of Beacon and a retired Unitarian minister who served Beacon from

**In June we presented a cheque for the amount of \$4400 to the Maida Duncan Drop-in Centre. Thank you Beaconites for being so generous.**

1998–2002. Due to Parkinson's disease, Rev. Ev was unable to lead this service himself so David Kristjanson and friends presented LIFE: My Sense of the Holy, from Rev. Ev's book. This thoughtful celebration honoured Rev. Ev Morris and it was meaningful to many people. How lovely that so many previous Beaconites were able to attend, online and in person.

The Maida Duncan Women's Drop-In Centre was Beacon's *Sharing the Plate* recipient until May. In June we presented a cheque for the amount of \$4400 to the centre. Thank you Beaconites for being so generous.



Regina Ogmundson  
Co-President

Although we don't hold regular Sunday services during July and August, there are other opportunities to gather. In July Marilyn Medén will host a service. In August we will have a service in the park on New West Pride weekend. Perhaps Beacon members might participate in the New Westminster Pride event? Peggy Lunderville will host a music service on August 27.

Please remember to check your inbox for Beacon emails for the exact details. Susan Tarras and I hope that your summer will be restorative and relaxing.

—Regina Ogmundson  
Co-President, Beacon Board

## Summer Pastoral and Lay Chaplaincy Support

While Rev. Meg Roberts is away July 17–August 15 (on study leave and vacation), Beacon's Pastoral Support Team and Lay Chaplains are available to provide you with the care and support you need during this time.

- If you need a pastoral call or visit, contact Laura Redmond or Judy Villett at [pastoralcare@beaconunitarian.org](mailto:pastoralcare@beaconunitarian.org).
- If any Beacon member needs a memorial ceremony or a wedding, or any of the many ceremonies that we can provide, please send a message to Lay Chaplain Janet Pivnick, and she will follow up: [ceremonies@beaconunitarian.org](mailto:ceremonies@beaconunitarian.org) or call her at 604-544-7907. Between August 7–20, please contact our other lay chaplain, Sue Sparlin: [ceremonies@beaconunitarian.org](mailto:ceremonies@beaconunitarian.org) or call her at 778-319-7827.



Sue Sparlin



Janet Pivnick



Laura Redmond



Judy Villett

## Congregational Conversations (CCs): An Update

June 18, 2023

Over the last four months, the Congregational Conversations have gathered a lot of valuable information and an abundance of wonderful ideas. Thank you to all who have participated! FOUR main themes have emerged: Community, Spirituality, Music, and New Members (not in any particular order).

We received a wide diversity of ideas from participants, ranging from staying the course with existing programs, to creative and innovative new ideas. A summary of the results of the conversations—the discovery phase—will be coming out shortly. The team considers that the discovery phase of the process is mostly complete.

We're calling the next phase the discernment, or evaluation, phase. We'll be using the ideas from the first phase and asking: What do you want for and from Beacon? Which ideas and alternatives will bring joy to our Beacon community AND be sustainable?

We began these sessions because Beacon is currently not on a sustainable path. Our human resources and financial resources are stretched. Our

expenses, if we wish to continue with our pre-Covid programs and multi-platform services, cost more than we raise in pledges.

We want to involve everyone because we want all the creative energy of our community to re-vision our current path and create a sustainable one.

**Sustainability is about finding a way, within the values that are important to us, of getting our programs and services to connect more effectively with the wider community around us.**

Beacon has some surplus funds that accumulated during Covid. For the next two years Beacon has the opportunity either to continue with the familiar, or to try some new and innovative ideas. Sustainability for Beacon is about finding a way to let the wider community know who we are and how to join us. It's about finding a way, within the values that are

important to us, of getting our programs and services to connect more effectively with the wider community around us. It's about finding a way to grow our Beacon community.

Beacon's surplus funds are not sufficient both to continue with all our existing programs and to try some new things. But we are very fortunate. For the next couple of years, we do have those funds, and we have those couple of years with which to make choices, and to look at what might give us the strongest possibilities of getting us to where we want to be: a growing community—vibrant, thriving, joyful.

In the fall's Congregational Conversations, we will be examining one area at a time with the following question in mind: How to create joy at Beacon AND do so sustainably? Integration is key, and we will need to consider everything at Beacon that people care about.

Have a great summer and see you in the fall.

Question? Comments? Contact the team!

—Susan Tarras, Peg Hinkley, Teresa Morton, and guest Phil Campbell

## Environmental Challenges and Ideas

### Peoples EcoChallenge

In April, 'Earth Month', members of our four Lower Mainland Unitarian congregations worked together to establish new habits, to conserve water, to learn more about specific environmental issues and to share accomplishments! The Team spent 3,545 minutes outdoors and had 29 environmental conversations. Yay team!

### July plastics challenge

Another opportunity to work with other Unitarians; Peoples Ecochallenge is hosting a month-long Plastics Challenge. Learn how to submit plastics for appropriate recycling, deal with the 'Unrecyclables' and advocate for an end to plastics pollution. Let me know if you want to participate!



**Living with Less Plastic**  
NEW WEST

### 'Envirobee's start again in September

Our Envirobees are over for this church year and will start up once more in September. Thank you to all those who brought questions, thoughtful challenges and success stories! You've given me a lot to ponder over the summer.

—Teresa Morton (check on Breeze for my email!)

### 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.

Our next meeting will be on September 24th. We have not yet a topic for September, so if you think of

one, and especially if you would like to lead it, please let me know. If you would like to receive regular emails from the Humanist Group, please contact Marilyn Medén at [humanist@beaconunitarian.org](mailto: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](mailto:bookclub@beaconunitarian.org). See below for more information.

**The Beacon Film Club** will not meet on Zoom during the summer. We will have some in person excursions during July and August and begin Zoom discussions in September. For more

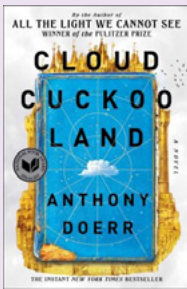
information, please connect with Marilyn Medén: [filmclub@beaconunitarian.org](mailto:filmclub@beaconunitarian.org).

**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. Our next meeting will be in September. Please contact [choirdirector@beaconunitarian.org](mailto:choirdirector@beaconunitarian.org) for more info.

### Beacon Book Club (online)

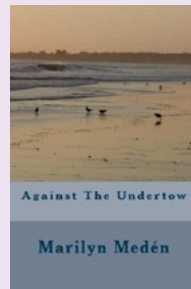
**Thursday, July 27, 7–9 pm**



**Cloud Cuckoo Land: a novel** by Anthony Doerr  
Scribner, c. 2021, 626 pages  
**Presenter:** Marilyn Medén  
**Genres/Subjects:** Fiction, Magic Realism, Libraries, 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)

**Thursday, August 24, 2023, 7–9 pm**



**Against the Undertow: a novel** by Marilyn Medén  
c. 2013, 298 pages  
**Presenter:** Elizabeth Hamilton  
**Genres/Subjects:** Fiction, Dementia, End-of-Life  
**Book Summary:** Marilyn Medén has spent many summers on the shores of Lake Huron. She now lives in Port

Moody, B.C. In *Against The Undertow* Evelyn Spence, at eighty-five, is a woman used to making her own decisions. Threatened now with dementia, she decides to use suicide to control the end of her life. She is forced to confront the deep disquiet of a wrong she has done to a daughter, the betrayal of trust from a favoured grandson, as well as her own fear and denial. Television exposure, which she envisions as a chance to immortalize herself, turns into a trial in which she is forced into honesty and atonement. Told with sensitivity and precise language, the novel illuminates the lives of three generations. (Source: Amazon.ca)

**For Zoom meeting details and all enquiries, please contact John Hagen [bookclub@beaconunitarian.org](mailto:bookclub@beaconunitarian.org).**

## Installation of Janet Pivnick as Lay Chaplain

June 4, 2023

On June 4th, Beacon held a special ceremony to install Janet Pivnick as a lay chaplain. A lay chaplain conducts rites of passage such as child dedications, weddings, memorial services, house blessings, and other services that reflect the diversity of our community's dreams and values. Janet has been affirmed as a lay chaplain since May 2021. We waited to do this installation ceremony with her until we were having Sunday services in person again and our minister was back to participate.



### 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. The next meeting will take place in September.



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

**Mailing Address:**  
#414, 552A Clarke Road,  
Coquitlam, BC V3J 0A3

**Contract Minister:**  
Rev. Meg Roberts  
minister@beaconunitarian.org;  
778-870-9015

**Lay Chaplain:**  
Janet Pivnick,  
604-880-7907  
ceremonies@beaconunitarian.org

**Administrative Support:**  
Rachael Greenland,  
778-791-7952 adminsupport@beaconunitarian.org

**Board Executive:**  
**Co-Presidents:**  
Susan Tarras,  
Regina Ogmundson;  
**Treasurer:** Carol Woodworth;

**Secretary:** Teresa Morton;  
**Members at Large:** Beth Connelly, Jane Day, Joyce Gudaitis, Peg Hinkley.

**Connections and Membership:** Sue Sparlin  
**Religious Exploration Director:**  
dre@beaconunitarian.org

**Beacon Newsletter:**  
newsletter@beaconunitarian.org  
Production: Laura Redmond  
Proofreading: Jane Shoemaker.

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



## **CONTRACT POSTING: Part-time Contract Choral Director – Beacon Unitarian Church, New Westminster**

**Start Date: Sept 15, 2023**

**Application deadline: Aug 1, 2023**

**B**eacon Unitarian is a progressive, multi-faith welcoming community with a congregational size of 75 people. Our choir is non-auditioned and pre-covid numbered 10–15 voices. For further information see [www.beaconunitarian.org](http://www.beaconunitarian.org).

The choir practices weekly (evening to be determined) for two hours. We sing in church twice a month. On choir Sundays the choir will warm up from 9:40–10:10 am. Services are Sunday mornings 10:30–11:30/45 am.

We value a wide range of musical styles from secular to sacred, classical to contemporary. We value the

- ability to plan and deliver fun and engaging weekly rehearsals
- ability to work quickly in aural and written music traditions
- ability to plan and adapt rehearsals to cater for a variety of musical and vocal abilities
- knowledge of a variety of vocal styles and musical genres

Beacon Unitarian employs an accompanist who participates in rehearsals and performances.

The choir is a community building opportunity and is primarily understood as such.

Duties include:

- Working with the music committee and minister in choosing choir music appropriate to upcoming services and the Unitarian Universalist context. (Go to [www.beaconunitarian.org](http://www.beaconunitarian.org) to learn more.)
- Leading the choir at rehearsals and performances, encouraging the development of choral skills within a nurturing and supportive environment. Ability to produce rehearsal recordings of various choral parts for members would be an asset.

Preferred qualifications:

- Minimum five years' experience as a choral director with an SATB choir. We especially value previous experience in the development and direction of a non-auditioned community-based choir.
- Minimum grade 8 piano or equivalent. Ability to play vocal parts if required.

This is a self-employed contract position with duties performed from September to May.

To apply for this position, please send cover letter and resume by August 1st to: [job@beaconunitarian.org](mailto:job@beaconunitarian.org)