

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!

September & October Service Descriptions

SEP 10 **The Annual Water Ceremony**
Rev. Meg Roberts
Welcome! if you're new to us and *Welcome Back!* if you've been part of Beacon's community for a while. 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)!

SEP 17 **This year's Sharing the Plate recipient: Purpose Independent Secondary School Lunch Program**
Guest Presenter: Merilynn Cook, Principal, Purpose Independent Secondary School
Hosted by the Sharing the Plate Committee
Please come and join us to learn about our *Sharing the Plate* recipient

for the 2023–24 church year. Merilynn Cook, principal of Purpose Secondary School, will tell us about the school and its lunch program. The lunch program will receive half of the open funds collected during in-person church services.

SEP 24 **Balancing Our Anxiety and Our Trust**
Rev. Meg Roberts
This summer has been suffused by the impacts of climate emergencies, as well as other anxiety-creating news in the world and in people's lives. With leaves falling and nights cooling, summer officially ends as we pass through the September 22 fall equinox. Let's explore what the natural world shows us about how to live more in balance, finding ways to manage our anxiety and foster our trust.

OCT 8 **Meaning Making in Liminal Times: Can We Give What We Get?**
Guest Speaker: Rev. Debra Faulk (recording)
In these liminal times how does our Unitarian Universalist faith sustain

us? So much loss and change has diminished our feelings of wellbeing and connection while heightening the sense of scarcity and amplifying anxiety. What commonly held values can we call on to inform our responses, motivate actions and provide some ease? Could generosity be a response that expands to reciprocity?
Speaker Bio: Rev. Debra Faulk, a lifelong Unitarian Universalist, retired in 2021 as Minister Emerita after 11 years with Calgary Unitarians. She received a BA in psychology and anthropology from UVic and a Master of Divinity from Vancouver School of Theology. Currently she is one of the two BC reps to the CUC (Canadian Unitarian Council) Board of Trustees. Debra, as a single mom, raised two children who have blessed her with 5 grandchildren. Currently she is excited with the adventure of co-ownership of her new home in Victoria, building community and being close to family.

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

Musings by Meg

Introducing a few things that I would like to offer this year

When early September arrives, I have always had mixed emotions:

- anticipation about re-gathering in community—whether at church or earlier in my life, at school. Looking forward to the learning and connections that come with the fall programs.
- sadness from leaving behind the relaxing days of summer—trips to the beach, ice-cream cones eaten on hot summer days, vacations visiting family and friends and having adventures, and taking a break from regular routine.
- nostalgia thinking about other Septembers in my life—from childhood, youth, young adulthood, and as an adult (at various times and places).

The beauty of coming together as a Unitarian community is that it connects us with those who share our values. This year, creating community brings the potential to try new things and deepen connections—to ourselves and to each other. Whether you are new to us or have been part of the congregation for a long time, we can create ways to live our Beacon mission that address the needs of today (in our post-pandemic world). Our Beacon Unitarian Congregation:

- *Connects* with compassion and respect;
- *Inspires* learning and spiritual growth; and
- *Transforms* through joy and justice.

How will we do that in the coming program year in ways that meet core needs of those who are here as well as those who might want to be part of a caring community like ours?

We know that the pandemic has impacted all our lives, including the life of our congregation. We are

learning and experimenting with ways to support one another and reach out to others. And we are still figuring things out.

Susan, our co-president, shared an interesting article with the board about the fact that in the 21st century church attendance is in decline. It's called "The Misunderstood Reason Millions of Americans Stopped Going to Church." (The ideas apply to Canada as well). In it, is this fact: "Participation in a religious community generally correlates with better health outcomes and longer life, higher financial generosity, and more stable families—all of which are desperately needed... with rising rates of loneliness, mental illness, and alcohol and drug dependency." The challenge in many people's lives is that doing things beyond just the day-to-day requirements can feel a stretch—and people are already feeling stretched. What will it take for us to do things that are nurturing to our deepest selves while also creating a sustainable community?

Here are a few new things that I would like to offer this year, if others are interested in joining me:

- **Exploring how to make meaning in the times we are in.** See the article about a project I'm part of called *Meaning Making in Liminal Times*. There is an online multi-congregation adult religious exploration program you can sign up for, as well as six Sunday services we will be offering during the year at Beacon.
- **Creative Spirit.** I'd like to host a once-a-month gathering to create and then share what we have created. You can create in a medium you choose—drawing, writing, taking photographs, or some other form.

I think we are all creative, so you don't have to have a lot of experience with any particular

medium to participate. It is about using our creativity to explore our lives, including our spiritual lives. Depending on the weather, we may take a meditative walk in a park, or gather in an indoor space.

- **Worship Lab.** I think there are various ways that we can come together in worship that are outside the format we use on Sunday mornings. I'd like to gather once a month and try out some of these ideas using music, words, and ritual.

There are some other programs that may emerge this fall. For now, these are the ones I'm putting out there to see what interests you. Please contact me by September 10 if you might be interested in any of the above programs: minister@beaconunitarian.org. Once I know if there is enough interest to go ahead, I'll do the next stage of planning.

We are in times that require us to experiment, learn, adapt, and try again. There is both certainty and uncertainty in new adventures. There is certainty in that there is a community of people who are open to learning and growing. There is uncertainty in that we don't know what lies ahead. We can build off of what we have been learning these past few years—about what works, what to let go of, and what else we might want to try out. I look forward to the adventures this year will bring for us as a Beacon community!

In the spirit,



Rev. Meg Roberts

—Rev. Meg Roberts

Board Bitz

The events of this summer should have shaken the beliefs of even the most avid climate change denier. After a summer like no other, the rest of us are experiencing what some describe as the “saddest ‘I-told-you-so’ in human history.” Although the cooler weather and fall rains promise some relief, we realize once again that our “Blue Boat Home” is in terrible danger.

So too, coming out of the pandemic, we realized last year that Beacon was at its own crossroads. Our volunteer base was shrinking, not only in numbers but in energy and time available. Our total income from pledge drives and the number of donors were also dropping. Once our yearly deficits consumed what we had saved by not having services during the pandemic, we would be in a permanent deficit position, in financial terms, a structural deficit. With that in mind three of our board members stepped up to form a task group to find a way forward. This group (consisting of

Susan Tarras, Teresa Morton, and Peg Hinkley, with the assistance of Phil Campbell,) organized a series of Congregational Conversations, beginning with the question “what brings you joy at Beacon.” Many valuable insights and ideas emerged as we held our first set of four conversations this past spring. Results have been shared in our past newsletters and most recently in an email sent August 25th.

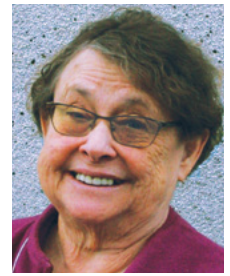
The Conversations will continue this fall. The first one, to be held on September 13 and 20, will focus on the question of whether Beacon will continue on the same path as in pre-Covid, with an aging demographic and declining revenue, or will pursue a new strategy, based on growth, also called the risk for change option. These Conversations, which the task group refers to as the Discernment or Evaluation Phase (following the Discovery Phase last spring) will likely continue throughout the fall.

During this second phase church committees won't need to submit a

budget in September, as we've done in the past. Instead, our various committees will be asked to develop one or two goals for the next church year to be presented at the Coordinating Council on September 6 or at the next board meeting. Budget development will probably not happen until early December, when we know the results of the October pledge drive. At that time the board will develop a budget for January to June 2024.

As we continue to affirm and embrace our eight principles and lean into our vision to connect, inspire, and transform through joy and justice, we understand the importance of preserving our beloved community, not just for our members and friends but for all the gifts we can share with the wider community.

—Joyce Gudaitis



Joyce Gudaitis
Member at Large

You Belong Here: Putting Beacon on the Map

This church year, Beaconites will be jumping into a new adventure. To build on the work of the Congregational Conversations, we will be learning about who we are and where we live, so that we can make decisions about who we want to be and where we want to focus our energy for the next five years.

All Beaconites who are interested can be involved in “community mapping”, a project that involves the whole Beacon community gathering information and learning together about the community where we live. Since Beaconites' community spans a large area, from Burnaby to Maple

Ridge and beyond, you will have the opportunity to learn about and teach others about your neighbourhood.

Community mapping helps us to answer questions like:

1. Who are we serving?
2. Who are we not serving?
3. What are gathering places within those areas?
4. Who are potential partners for community outreach?
5. What are the needs of the communities that fall within Beacon's catchment?

The process is simple and will take us through a variety of stages over the next year. At the end of the year, we

should have a deeper understanding of our collective community and can make decisions about how we can use our unique talents and gifts to support our broader community.

On September 24, after the church service, the Family Ministry team will be holding an information meeting to talk about the goals and process of community mapping, and provide details about how each Beaconite who is interested can become involved. Please join us with your questions, your curiosities and your enthusiasm. Come and help put Beacon on the map!

— The Family Ministry Team

October is Pledge Drive Month

Beacon Unitarian is completely supported by the generous donations of our members and friends, and every year in October we pledge enough to take us through the following year. We do this in October so that our treasurer, Carol Woodworth, has enough time to prepare a budget for the start of the new year.

The question of how much to contribute can only be answered by you. It is always a balance between what your heart says to contribute and what your pocketbook says

you can afford. We pride ourselves in being a diverse community and this includes a diversity of economic circumstances. We trust that your pledge will be the right pledge for you. **YOU BELONG HERE, no matter what your financial situation is at this time, but we do ask that you give as generously as you are able.**

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Beacon is always striving to remain relevant in a constantly changing world, and once again we are entering an exciting time of self-reflection, examining how we can better serve you, us, our neighbours, and the world. Through our **Congregational Conversations** we are exploring how to create more **joy at Beacon** and how

to do it sustainably. A **Community Mapping** project over the next year will give us an opportunity to learn how we can use our unique talents and gifts to better support the

communities in which we live.

Please watch your email for the **2024 Pledge Drive Package**. It will arrive in early October. Only through your generous contributions will Beacon continue to Connect with Compassion & Respect; Inspire Learning & Spiritual Growth; and Transform through Joy & Justice in 2024.

*Connecting,
Inspiring,
Transforming!*

BEACON'S MISSION

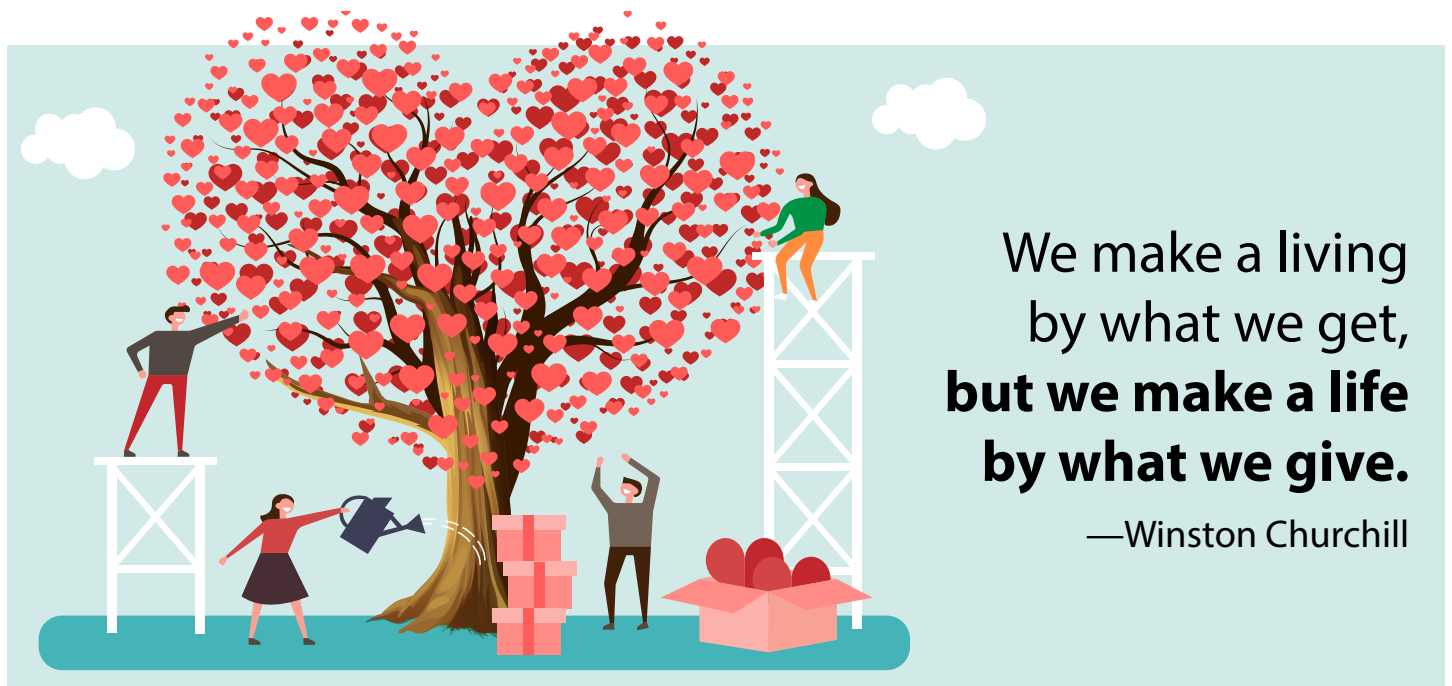
Our mission is to celebrate the worth and dignity of all people and to live in conscious relationship with the earth.

For inspiration, we draw on the world's great scientists, artists, humanists and theologians, as well as on our personal experiences.

So we are inspired to create greater equality, greater justice and greater hope for our world.



**Beacon
Unitarian
Church**



**We make a living
by what we get,
but we make a life
by what we give.**

—Winston Churchill

Congregational Conversations (CCs): September Update

This fall we move to the **Discernment or Evaluation Phase**, where we develop an action plan that is sustainable, brings joy at Beacon and supports a vibrant, thriving congregation!

We can develop a new way of being together that addresses the budget crunch and our scarce human resources.

We invite everyone to participate in the Discernment or Evaluation Phase this fall. This is important work of the congregation, and it is important to hear from as many Beaconites as possible!

In our upcoming September conversations, we will ask how the Beacon **surplus funds** should be used.

Should Beacon continue with our

pre-COVID model and use the surplus funds to compensate for funding deficits for 2 or 3 years? This would

Should Beacon use the surplus funds to try some new approaches to how we do things? Different ways to do church which address some of our financial crunch points and our volunteer burnout. We call this the 'New approaches' option.

delay some of the hard decisions. We call this the 'Winding down gracefully' option.

OR... should Beacon use the surplus funds to try some new approaches to how we do things? Different ways to do church which address some of our financial crunch points and our volunteer burnout. We call this the 'New approaches' option.

Please sign up for one of the two September sessions: Sept. 13th (in-person) or Sept. 20th (Zoom) and make your views known!

Please connect with a member of the Congregational Conversations team if you have questions, want more information on the data gathered in our spring sessions, or need help to sign up for our September sessions.

With heartfelt gratitude,

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

Drawdown Ecochallenge coming in October 2023!

The Peoples Ecochallenge is partnering with Drawdown to run a month-long challenge in October

If you've not joined an Ecochallenge, you're in for a treat! The challenges are an opportunity to learn, act, and celebrate our collective efforts. Our team has previously ranked second in all of Canada, so great things are possible!

This year the action areas include Electricity, Industry, Food/Agriculture/Land Use, Coastal/Ocean/Engineered Sinks, Health & Education, Buildings, Transportation and Land Sinks. Examples of possible actions are to contact fossil fuel companies about

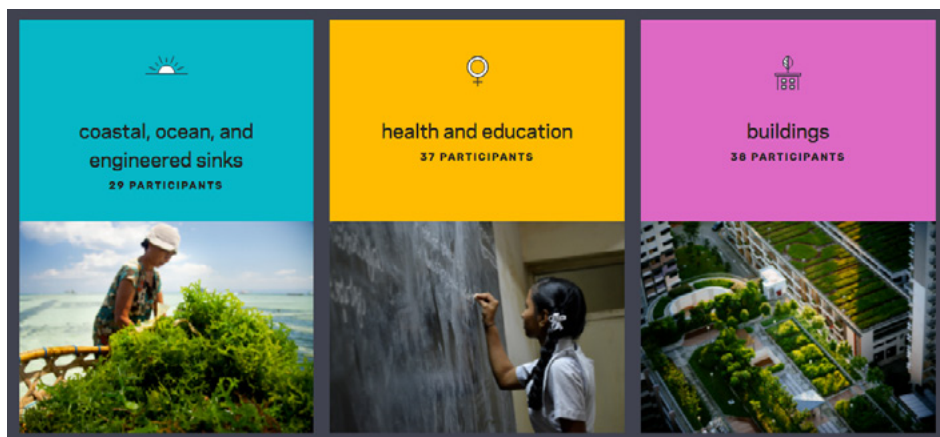
their methane leak management, to learn about 'green gentrification', or to eliminate from our diet foods that contribute to deforestation.

At the Envirobee after the service on October 8th, I will show people how to sign up for the Ecochallenge, share my chosen actions and answer questions about the Drawdown Challenge. I hope to see you there!

Happy Challenging!

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

Some Action Areas:



Use this link to join our team: metrovanunis

https://drawdown.ecochallenge.org/participants/join?referral_code=2dc1a6f1-c81e-4aeb-b7fc-cc106b829dad&team_id=metrovanunis

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.

On Sept 24th Luc Beaudoin will introduce the topic “How can we be, or resist being, transformed by experience, a minister’s service, an advertisement, a book, a podcast and culture?” Are we mostly inert or mostly malleable? Let us compare and contrast L.A. Paul’s philosophical approach to transformation with Luc P. Beaudoin’s integrative cognitive science approach and with your approach. Visit <https://cogzest.com/humanism/transformation-experiences/> for more information.

On October 29th Marilyn Meden will help us to take Will Storr’s *The Status Game* a little further, by way of Gabor Maté’s *The Myth of Normal*. Status, says Storr, is our life. Status meaning competition in very many

ways, placing others on many hierarchies of value, labelling them as good at this and bad at that. Gabor wakes us up to recognition that we are diverse, to be looked at as whole people, not one of us fitting some arbitrary definition of normal—‘status’ not defining the person. Can we do this?

If you would like to receive regular emails from the Humanist Group, please contact Marilyn Medén at humanist@beaconunitarian.org.

Book Club (Online) At this time we are still up in the air regarding fall dates and book selections. However, our first meeting is on Thurs. Sept. 24 at 7 pm. See page 7 for more information. For Zoom meeting details and all enquiries, please contact John Hagen bookclub@beaconunitarian.org.

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: The Beacon music committee is in the process of recruiting a choir director for the coming year. Typically, our choir sings two Sundays a month. We sing a variety of music, including inspiring, contemporary songs from around the world. Please refer to the weekly e-bulletin, *Beacon This Week*, for details about upcoming choir practice or contact choirdirector@beaconunitarian.org for more info. We welcome your voice. No audition necessary.

‘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.

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*.



September Film

Sept. 15: *Mr. Holland’s Opus* with Rick Dreyfus, introduced by Janene White

October Films

Oct. 6: *Tár* a 2022 film with Cate Blanchet, introduced by Pauline Atwood

Oct. 20: *Amadeus* a 1984 film, introduced by Marilyn Medén

Meaning Making in Liminal Times

A Sustained Conversation on Six Questions for Our Time

What are the questions that will help us flourish as individuals, families, and communities? Beacon is joining six cross-Canada conversations hosted by six different Canadian UU ministers, each inviting you to consider a question for this time.

Each minister is offering one Sunday service and one adult religious education conversation per month, October to April (excluding December). The preachers will be Arran Morton, Brian Kiely, Debra Faulk, Karen Fraser Gitlitz, Meg Roberts, and Samaya Oakley. Beacon has signed up for this worship package that includes six recorded sermons for our worship team to create a Sunday service around, on the second Sunday of each month.

On the Saturday after that service, there will be an online adult religious exploration program. Each conversation will be facilitated by the preacher of that month's service. If you are interested in joining that once-a-month discussion with other Unitarian Universalists from across the country, you can sign up individually for the program. Individual registration for the 6-session religious education program will be based on a sliding scale from \$35 to \$140 (e.g., \$6 to \$24 per session). If cost is prohibitive,



please contact Rev. Meg Roberts (as we have the minister's discretionary funds to help those who otherwise might not be able to participate).

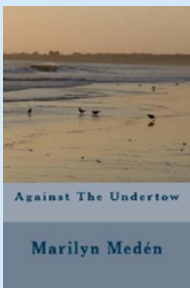
The adult religious education program includes:

- A link to the sermon recording, available for the year.
- A monthly handout with resources for further exploration.
- Participation in the two-hour Saturday conversation with the preacher. Each session will be unique in format, to suit the topic.
- Participation in a "Discord" channel for conversations between participants (Discord is a text and voice messaging app).

Individual registration opens September 15 and closes October 8, 2023. During that time, to register for this adult program, contact Rev. Karen Gitlitz karen@ucsaskatoon.org. This program is sponsored by the Unitarian Congregation of Saskatoon.

Beacon Book Club (online)

Thursday, Sept. 28, 7–9 pm



Against the Undertow: a novel by Marilyn Medén c. 2013, 298 pages
Presenter: Augusta 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.

Soup Lunches

Sunday, Sep. 10th & Sunday, Oct. 8th

Soup lunches take place after the Sunday service in the downstairs hall. Please join us. Suggested donation \$5 or as you are able.

Anyone able and willing to bring soup, buns and butter, veggie plate, fruit plate, or dessert please contact Peggy Lunderville.



Our Larger Community

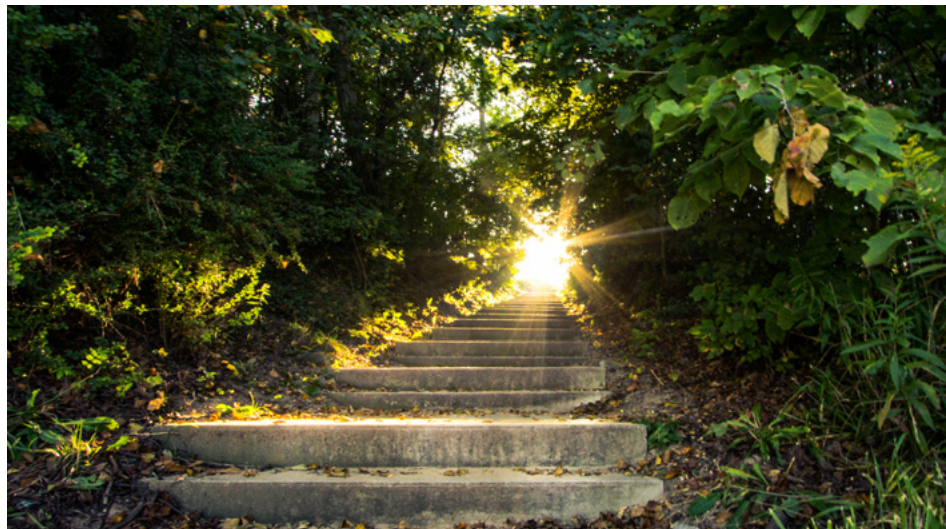
BEGINNINGS / THE WAY

for Warren Dean Fulton, who said...
eight minutes for this prompt

in the beginning were the words
just a few words, even then
short poems her forte –
simple, teenage angst
meaning of life, value of life
even ending of life

half of them ten lines or fewer
some chosen by the editor, the friend
who read two hundred and fifty –
workshopped, in effect, all those
poems
choosing forty-five
for a possible chapbook

others chosen by an artist, a new poet
who came later with her offering—
count them all now, trust them all—



look at the others, wait for the aha
feeling about some left behind,
include those

the tunnel is shorter than I thought
eight minutes are longer than I
thought

short is good
shortliness is next to godliness
this is the way, and in the end
there shall be a chapbook...

Franci Louann, April 11, 2010



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: Tues. Sept. 19, 5 pm and Fri. Oct. 13, 11 am.



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Coquitlam, BC V3J 0A3

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778-870-9015

Lay Chaplain:
Janet Pivnick,
604-880-7907
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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: 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.

Labyrinth

A Pilgrim Journey

One-day workshop

Saturday, September 16

9 a.m. coffee

9:30 - 2:30 workshop



SANCTUARY ON 6TH
behold belong believe.

To register email kimiko_k@telus.net

Bring a light lunch, journal and pen. Dress comfortably.

Suggested donation \$25 - \$55

"The only thing you find on the labyrinth is yourself" ~ Kelly Jenner, workshop host

Sanctuary on 6th - 529 Queens Avenue, New Westminster

Sanctuary on 6th

529 Queens Ave. New Westminster



SANCTUARY ON 6TH
beheld. belong. believe.

1st Annual

Family Potluck BBQ



Sunday, September 10th, 2023, 4pm -7pm

- ✓ Pot-Luck Fellowship
- ✓ Community Musicians
- ✓ Games & Activities

