



Sunday Services – Inspiring Learning and Spiritual Growth

We welcome you to our 10:30 am Sunday services. We gather both in-person at Sapperton Community Hall in New Westminster (318 Keary St.) and online using the Zoom platform. You can register for the Zoom link on our [website](http://www.beaconunitarian.org) homepage (on the righthand side of the page): [beaconunitarian.org](http://www.beaconunitarian.org). The services are 60–70 minutes long.

Our services vary from week to week to inspire people of various philosophies and theologies. So, whether you believe in a higher power, the spirit of life, or the power of humans to affect change, we have something for you to reflect on and learn. We hope the services inspire spiritual and intellectual growth. We have a gifted pianist accompany us in community singing in each service and our choir joins us twice a month. We also have time to socialize after the service—in person and online. We offer refreshments and conversation, as well as small group discussions on various topics.

We list [upcoming service descriptions](#) on our website and in the weekly news update, *Beacon This Week*.

Contact adminsupport@beaconunitarian.org to be put on our weekly emailing list. If you have any feedback on our services, we welcome that—please send it along to worship@beaconunitarian.org.

If you are a newcomer and would like us to follow up with you so you can get more information, you are invited to fill out the [Beacon Connecting Form](#) (on our website homepage). Also, Sunday service [general information](#) is found under the “Services” heading at the top of the website. Our services are designed for adults *and* we welcome all ages. There are child-friendly activities on a table at the back of the hall and materials can be taken back to where families are sitting if preferred. There is also a nursery area available for parents to use as needed during the service.

If you’d like to see [recent recordings](#) from our services, they are linked from our website’s homepage.

Come and be part of our caring and questing community.

We look forward to connecting to you and getting to know you!

—Rev. Meg Roberts

Church Lunch

Sunday March 31st

Please join us after the Sunday service for a special turkey dinner in the downstairs hall. Suggested donation is \$5 or as you are able. Last minute participants welcome. Anyone able and willing to bring side dishes, buns and butter, or desserts please contact Peggy Lunderville.

Circle Dinners/ Lunches

Saturday March 9th and Saturday April 20th

Circle dinners are hosted in the homes of church members. Contact Judy Villet or Joyce Gudaitis for more information and to participate.

Connecting,
Inspiring,
Transforming!

Musings by Meg

It was such a pleasure to join eight other Beaconites for a tour of the [Purpose Independent Secondary School](#) on Friday, February 23. This is Beacon's *Sharing the Plate* recipient for May 2023 – April 2024, focusing on funding for their lunch program. Merrilyn Cook, their school principal, gave a Sunday service presentation last September—some of you will remember that.

The school is housed in the old Army and Navy Store on Columbia Street in New Westminster. They use most of the main floor and the next level down for their school. What is so impressive about the school is how it is tailored to support the needs of young people who, for various reasons, can't succeed in the traditional school system. For some, it is due to mental health challenges, such as depression and anxiety. For others, it is special needs, including things like being on the autism spectrum. Having smaller classes and additional staff gives the students better support for achieving their goals. Their lunch



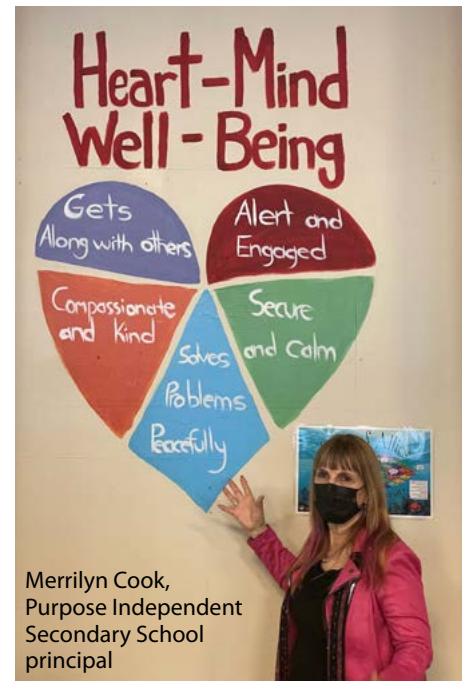
program offers delicious nourishing options (provided at cost of food and staff time from the Columbia Street Sandwich Company just down the street). It's so tasty they have students lining up and they've received no complaints (and for teenagers, that's saying something!).

Besides seeing the physical spaces and hearing about the school courses, we also heard about their extra-curricular programs, such as:

- A film club where they create their own short films. They have an event where they show their final work, so we hope to join them for that!
- An active music program that also gives concerts during the year. An idea came up to invite them to come share some of their music at a Beacon Sunday service.
- An after-school group that is learning more about mechanics, including robotics and how to take apart and reassemble a motorcycle.
- Growing a community garden.
- How to hatch and grow salmon eggs, then re-introduce them into the waterways.

In the photos, you'll see their film classroom and one of their inspiring posters: *Be somebody that makes everybody feel like a somebody*. In the other photo, their principal, Merrilyn, is showing us their school conduct agreements. We could easily endorse these here at Beacon:

- Heart-Mind / Well-Being
- Gets Along with Others



- Compassionate and Kind
- Solves Problems Peacefully
- Secure and Calm
- Alert and Engaged

While sharing our bagged lunches (and refreshments provided by the school), we heard from the staff how their experiences working at the school has changed them. I explained a bit about who we are as Beacon Unitarians—our diversity of beliefs and common values. How our supporting them through *Sharing the Plate* is such a good match because of our shared values and our belief in supporting diverse ways of being humans. We got to share our appreciation for the important work they are doing—they are helping young people who are our future!

If you would like to make a donation to this wonderful school and their lunch program, give generously during Sunday offering or you can donate directly by cheque or by Interac e-transfer to treasurer@beaconunitarian.org. In the message area type that it is for "Beacon" then 1/2 goes to Beacon and 1/2 goes to our *Sharing the Plate* recipient. [Details are on our website.](#)

In the spirit, Rev. Meg Roberts

Congregational Conversations Update for March 2024

The 'Gradients of Agreement' process on Sunday, January 7th captured our congregation's thoughts on the choice of a 3-5 year focus on 'All Ages' or '50+'. The results indicate the clear preference of the congregation for the '50+' option.

The results also indicate that there is support for 'All Ages' in some form, perhaps the approaches mentioned in the '50+' proposal. Beacon has a strong tradition as a welcoming congregation and that will continue.

The Congregational Conversations (CC) Team acknowledges that there is considerable sadness in moving away from an explicit 'All Ages' approach. It is not just Beacon that is finding it so difficult to be an age-diverse community; Unitarians across the country are experiencing the same challenges.

The CC Team extends its heartfelt gratitude to both teams for their thoughtful, caring, and creative work. Thank you!

Now that the preference of the congregation is clear, we need specific action plans for moving forward with

the '50+' option. (By the way, we are looking for another term to describe our focus on 'younger older-adults', please let us know what your ideas are!) We are working on thoughtful, specific, inclusive proposals to implement the four themes which arose during the congregational conversations.

We are looking for another term to describe our focus on 'younger older-adults', please let us know what your ideas are!

Our four Action Planning Teams are half-way through their work, with reports (Action Plans) due by February 29th.

- Spirituality: Laura R, Marilyn M, Rose M, Franci L.
- Community: Cathy B, Joyce G, Joan M, Beth C, Lynne R.
- Music: Carol W, John H, Tyler E, Loyda A.

- Outreach: David K, Deepak S, Michael S.

The Action Teams have been asked to meet with Rev. Meg to benefit from her expertise & knowledge. They have also received summaries of the ideas generated by the congregational conversations.

After the service on March 3rd there will be an information meeting for the congregation, where the reports of the four teams will be presented. Then the Congregational Conversations Team will put together a comprehensive plan for the board (following consultation with the Action Planning Teams). The board will review the comprehensive plan at their March 14th meeting and make some decisions about actions to be taken immediately versus things to be delayed until the next Church year, etc.

Thank you for your support!

—The CC Team: Susan Tarras,
Peg Hinkley, Teresa Morton,
Guest Phil Campbell

Request for Lay Chaplains

RSVP by March 5th

The Beacon Lay Chaplaincy Committee invites you to contact them if you are curious about or interested in being a Lay Chaplain.

Please call Lay Chaplaincy Chair Sue Sparlin (778-319-7827) by March 5th. We will be interviewing potential Lay Chaplains on March 6th and on March 9th at 10:00 am.



**Beacon
Unitarian
Church**



Spring, from a Sanctuary Window at Vancouver Unitarian

By Franci Louann, May 4, 2003

above the bamboo
surprising pink
taller rhododendron

Photo by Rob Atkins

Thank you to Jane Shoemaker, Beacon's archivist

After many years of service to Beacon, our beloved memory keeper, Jane Shoemaker, if stepping down from her role as archivist, A self described "avid photographer" Jane was there with her camera photographing Beacon events such as circle dinners, birthday parties, musical performances, pageants and many other events for many years. Although Jane has been less active attending events in recent years, she has included photos taken by others into Beacon's photographic records, Thus her extensive collection of Beacon memories dates from 1983 to the present and is available digitally.

Jane has not just restricted her work to photographs – she also archived numerous documents from every stage of Beacon's life. They range from Action Plans that were developed over the

years to plans for summer camp, fundraising, guidelines for discussion and much more. At one time Beacon had a Partner Church in Transylvania, and Jane was one of a group who visited that church. Afterwards she retained a collection of correspondence between herself and the minister of the church.

According to Jane, there are 52 documents entitled "All in the Family," dating back to 1996. They are chatty newsletters that describe many of the day to day events in the life of Beaconites from the most memorable to the endearing to the mundane.

The archives contain poems by Reverend Ev Morris and Francie LouAnn, as well as stories about Denis Probst, Ivy Hubbard, Jean Donaldson

and many other treasured Beaconites including Sandy Burpee, who in 2021 received the prestigious honour of

"Freedom of the City," in honour of his many superb contributions do the City of Coquitlam.

Especially intriguing, there are two sermons in the archives written by Phillip Hewitt and Anne McLeod.

Jane's work has provided an amazing opportunity to look back at Beacon and the many members who shaped our past. However we need someone to pick up the torch and continue recording the events and stories that bind us together. You don't need a fancy camera or a powerful computer to take on the job (although a roomy hard drive could be an asset). If you are interested in becoming Beacon's next memory-keeper/archivist contact a member of our board. We need you!

—Joyce Gudaitis,
Board member at large



Jane Shoemaker

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Join us at WorshipLab!

One Wednesday evening a month, join Rev. Meg Roberts and the Worship Team for an evening of experimenting with ways to offer worship. Using music, words, and ritual, we'll explore different formats from what we usually use on Sunday mornings.

In the coming 2 months, we will meet on Wednesdays, **March 13 and April 10, 7:00-9:00 pm**. We meet in the common room of an apartment building in New Westminster, near the Columbia Street Skytrain station. If you would like to join us – either because you have ideas to share or just want to be part of the group experiencing the worship – please RSVP to Meg by the Sunday prior (March 10 and April 7) so we can send you directions on how to meet up with us: minister@beaconunitarian.org or phone Meg at 778-870-9015 (cellphone)

Scent-Free Environment Survey

On behalf of the Beacon Board, I am doing a survey to understand how scented products affect people at Beacon. **Please fill out this short [survey](#) by March 15 so we can get a sense of how Beaconites feel about being scent-aware or scent-free.** If you can't access the survey from the link above, please contact Rachael and have her send you the link directly: adminsupport@beaconunitarian.org.

For more information about the health impacts of scented products and what a scent-free policy might include, see this [information](#) at the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety.

It helps to have a group to develop any policy and to hear about your experiences and preferences. If you are interested in being involved in creating a policy at Beacon, please contact Rev. Meg Roberts: minister@beaconunitarian.org. Thank you!

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.

March 31: Instinct. What is instinct? Does it manifest itself differently in humans than in other animals? How is it different from reflexes? What can we learn from studies of instinct? These are some of the questions that Gunnar Jonsson will introduce at our meeting on March 31st.

April 28: AI? I have almost finished the book *Scary Smart* by Mo Gawdat. I don't think I've ever really pushed people to read a book, but I do this one! I know it's available in the New

West library. I bought a copy and I'm glad I did: lots of underlining. This is a call for someone to present at least some of this book. It's easy to read, though sometimes the subject matter requires time to ponder.

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

Book Club (Online) The book club meets at 7 pm on the **fourth Friday of each month**. 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 page 7 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: We are a four-part choir and looking for more singers! Come to one of our choir practices—Thursday nights, 7:30-9 pm at Miller Park Community School on Egmont in Coquitlam—and find out how good it feels to sing with a group. Typically, our choir performs one or two Sundays a month. We sing a variety of music, including inspiring, contemporary songs from around the world. 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.



Beacon
Unitarian
Church

'Getting to Know U'

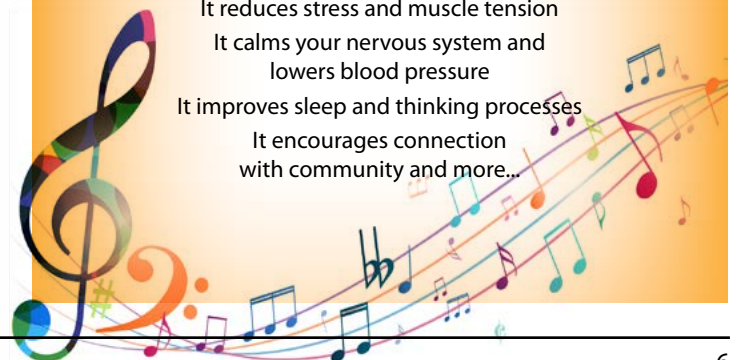
If you've been to a few of our services and want to know more about us please join us for our next gathering this spring (date to be determined). A light lunch is included. Meet with other Beaconites to learn about Unitarianism, our programs, and various ways to be part of this community. We look forward to getting to know you, and you us. Please contact the Connecting Committee chair, Sue Sparlin, at connecting@beaconunitarian.org so we can let you know about the next upcoming date.

Beacon's four-part choir is looking for more singers!

The songs we sing will uplift you, make you smile and leave you feeling wonderful.

SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF SINGING:

- It's fun and it makes you feel happy
- It helps you feel more connected to yourself and the life force that moves through you
- It energizes, uplifts and enlivens you
- It increases self confidence and self-esteem
- It's a natural anti-depressant
- It reduces stress and muscle tension
- It calms your nervous system and lowers blood pressure
- It improves sleep and thinking processes
- It encourages connection with community and more...



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. In addition to our Zoom meetings, we will plan 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 Meden: film-club@beaconunitarian.org. The Zoom link is in Thursday’s *Beacon This Week*.



March Films

Mar 1: *The Whale*, introduced by Pauline Atwood

Mar 15: *The Lego Movie* (2014), Youtube and Netflix, introduced by Michael Scales

Mar 29: *Anatomy of a Fall*, Youtube, introduced by Lindsay Udem

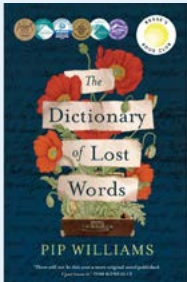
April Films

Apr 5: *Away From Her*, Netflix, introduced by Donna Webb

Apr 19: *Catch Me If You Can*, Netflix, introduced by Marilyn Meden

Beacon Book Club (online)

Friday, March 22, 7–9 pm



The Dictionary of Lost Words by Pip Williams introduced by Joyanne Landers

Esme is born into a world of words. Motherless and irrepressibly curious, she spends her childhood in the Scriptorium, an Oxford garden shed in which her father and a team of dedicated lexicographers are collecting words for the very first Oxford English Dictionary. Young Esme’s place is beneath the sorting table, unseen and unheard. One day a slip of paper containing the word bondmaid flutters beneath the table. She rescues the slip and, learning that the word means “slave girl,” begins to collect other words that have been discarded or neglected by the dictionary men.

Set during the height of the women’s suffrage movement and with the Great War looming, *The Dictionary of Lost Words* reveals a lost narrative, hidden between the lines of a history written by men. Inspired by actual events, author Pip Williams has delved into the archives of the Oxford English Dictionary to tell this highly original story. *The Dictionary of Lost Words* is a delightful, lyrical, and deeply thought-provoking celebration of words and the power of language to shape the world. (Source: Amazon.ca)

Friday, April 26, 7–9 pm



Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver

Set in the mountains of southern Appalachia, *Demon Copperhead* is the story of a boy born to a teenaged single mother in a single-wide trailer, with no assets beyond his dead father’s good looks and copper-colored hair, a caustic wit, and a fierce talent for survival.

Relayed in his own unsparing voice, Demon braves the modern perils of foster care, child labor, derelict schools, athletic success, addiction, disastrous loves, and crushing losses. Through all of it, he reckons with his own invisibility in a popular culture where even the superheroes have abandoned rural people in favor of cities.

Many generations ago, Charles Dickens wrote *David Copperfield* from his experience as a survivor of institutional poverty and its damages to children in his society. Those problems have yet to be solved in ours. Dickens is not a prerequisite for readers of this novel, but he provided its inspiration. In transposing a Victorian epic novel to the contemporary American South, Barbara Kingsolver enlists Dickens’ anger and compassion, and above all, his faith in the transformative powers of a good story. *Demon Copperhead* speaks for a new generation of lost boys, and all those born into beautiful, cursed places they can’t imagine leaving behind. (Source: Amazon.ca)

Workshop Series on Placemaking

Beacon is the sponsoring congregation for ministerial student, Janet Pivnick. Join her for this workshop series as part of her field placement.

What is placemaking?

Have you ever spent time in a place that kept drawing you back, where just being in the place felt good or right? Placemaking is a process that helps us to create gathering spaces that reflect who we are, what we value and how we want to feel and be together in the space. David Orr says that “landscape shares mindscape”. Our spaces *matter*. They influence how we engage. So let’s create places that are welcoming and that allow us to be present with our whole hearts.

What will you be doing?

Learning about:

- The placemaking process;
- The Sanctuary on 6th space – its history, the surrounding

community, the future vision;

- Other placemaking projects to inspire imagination.

You will be participating by:

- Reflecting on your values;
- Sharing stories of special places in your life;
- Creatively imagining ways to embody community values in a physical space;
- Co-planning, sharing expertise, co-building;
- Developing new skills.

Who will be participating?

We will be a group of people who have felt drawn to Sanctuary on 6th as a place to gather for spiritual sustenance and for deepening connections with ourselves and others. There will be

diversity in beliefs, needs and interests.

We will co-create a space that draws on those differences, that honours the history and vision for this place and that nurtures community.

Join Us:

When: Sunday, March 10, 17, 24 & April 7, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Where: Sanctuary on 6th, 6th St and Queen’s Ave., New Westminster Sanctuary Suite, enter through 6th Street south door

Facilitator: Janet Pivnick is an educator, environmentalist and theology student who has had a long-time interest in placemaking. For more information or to register: janet@sanctuaryon6th.ca

Registration Fee: By donation



Food Bank collection is taken on the first Sunday of the month at Beacon.

In addition, donations can be mailed directly to Share Family and Community Services at 104 - 3020 Lincoln Ave., Coquitlam BC, V3B 6B4 or by using this new link: [Beacon Unitarian – Virtual Food Drive | Food Banks BC](#). Thank you for supporting your neighbours with your donations.



[Gathered Here](#) is a monthly online check-in for Unitarian young adults. Join other UU 18–35 year-olds from across Canada 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. Mar. 12, 5 pm and Fri. Apr. 12, 11 am.



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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.