



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 (beaconunitarian.org, righthand side of the page). 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 will be performing three times in May.

This spring we are experimenting with several new activities:

- Having **pre-service sing-alongs** from 10:20–10:30 am at some of our services. Watch for details on which Sundays on our website or get onto our mailing list for our once-a-week e-news updates.
- **Time to socialize before our service (starting at 10:15 am) and after the service**, in person and online. We offer refreshments and conversation.

- **After-service small group discussions on various topics.**

As we try out new things, *we welcome your feedback* and ideas for songs, discussion topics, and new parts to our services. We're creating a feedback form for participants to comment on their experiences both in-person and online—watch our weekly e-news for details. You can also reach our worship team anytime at worship@beaconunitarian.org.

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 are a newcomer and would like us to follow up with you and 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.

Soup Lunch

Sunday, May 12th

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

Church Picnic

Sunday, June 16th

Please see details on page 2.

If you'd like to see past recordings from our services, they are linked from our website's homepage. (We have a bit of a processing backlog we are working through and will have the most recent ones up very soon! If you would like to see a particular recording of a past service, please contact worship@beaconunitarian.org.)

Come and be part of our caring and questing community.

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

—Rev. Meg Roberts

Musings by Meg

In May and June, we set aside two days to celebrate parents: Mother's Day is on May 12 this year and Father's Day is on June 17. Some people grew up with one of each, some have two mothers and some have two fathers. Others identify as parents rather than being gendered in a binary way. Some children have more than two parents. Still other families are single-parent families, while others have a grandmother or grandfather as the caregiver. Some don't know who their parents are. There are many configurations of families and parenting in our world—I'm sure I've missed some in this short description. These kinds of holidays can become complex for some, and for others a source of joy and celebration. I think for many of us, it can be a combination of both, depending on the year.

For me, the main point of holidays like this is to consider the nature of our relationships with those who raised us or who we are raising. What is or was supportive, what isn't? What have we learned from these experiences? Can they guide us in how we value and treat the next generation,

whether they are our children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, or the young ones from our friends' families? I invite you to think about how you would answer these questions, given your own family experiences.

This year, these holidays could provide us with an opportunity for reflection. What do I know about how to be nurturing to myself and to others? How am I applying that knowledge? What can I do to celebrate those who nurtured me in my life, whether they are a relative or another person? And if there is past hurt that gets in the way of my doing that, what can I do to help with the healing? If I am grieving the loss of my parents, how do I take time to honour that? I am certainly here to listen and so are members of our pastoral support team.

Let this year be a year when these holidays are not just Hallmark events, but events of the heart, in ways that bring you, and those dear to you, deep connection and love.

In the spirit,

—Rev. Meg Roberts

Upcoming New Member Ceremony

Ever thought of becoming a member of Beacon? It is a way of saying, "Yes, I feel a connection to this community, want to commit to being part of it and will contribute my resources towards its future!" If you've attended a "Getting to Know U" session, been a former member of Beacon who has been away for a while (or a member of another UU congregation), or you can arrange to speak with the minister, you could be eligible. We are planning on having a New Member Ceremony in a Sunday service on either May 26 or June 2. We would need to know of your interest by May 12 to make the necessary arrangements. For more information, please contact Rev. Meg Roberts: minister@beaconunitarian.org or cell 778-870-9015.



**Beacon
Unitarian
Church**

Hold the Date for Beacon's End of the Year Picnic

After the service on June 16th, we look forward to holding our annual all-ages picnic. Bring food to share and a drink of your choice. We will provide hotdogs (meat

and vegetarian) and some fruit. If good weather is predicted for that day, we will meet in Sapperton Park playground (corner of Sherbrooke St. and East Columbia in New Westminster). If the weather is rainy, we have booked the lower level of Sapperton Hall and can gather there instead. It

is a wonderful way to finish off our Sunday services program for the year. Then we take a break from Sapperton services until September 8 (the Sunday after Labour Day). We hope you can join us!

**SAVE THE DATE:
Sunday, June 16th for a Beacon
Community picnic in the park.**



Board Bitz

Love Will Guide Us. Those are words from one of Beacon's hymns. Love, combined with respect for each other and a willingness to listen deeply and respectfully to each other and our different viewpoints, guided us through the congregational conversations last year. Some of the ideas developed through that process are now being tried. Coffee is upstairs after the service, there are sing-alongs before the service, and discussion groups are being held in the small room beside the stage after the services. Other ideas recommended by the Action Teams will be tried in the fall. It will be exciting to see what evolves in the coming months.

Circle Dinners and Lunches have restarted and have been well attended. Two were held this spring. Donna Hamilton and Joan Morris were the organizers in pre-Covid days. Joyce Gudaitis and Judy Villett are organizers behind them now. Huge thanks to both of you! And thanks to the hosts for welcoming in Beacon members and friends. They are a wonderful way to keep community connections strong and gather with others in an enjoyable and relaxed setting.

The atmosphere is not quite so relaxed at Beacon's board meetings (but I like to think it is almost

as enjoyable)! Beacon has a new board going forward into the next year. Three members stepped off the board—Regina Ogmundson, Carol Woodworth and myself. Two new board members stepped in—David Kristjanson and Rob Warner. They join existing trustees Jane Day and Deepak Sahasrabudhe. Beacon's new co-presidents are Peg Hinkley and Teresa Morton. Joyce Gudaitis is Beacon's new treasurer. Thank you all for your commitment to ensuring Beacon stays strong and healthy. Beacon will be in good hands!

Celebration with music is one of the defining characteristics of Beacon. Music, in many forms, has always played a pivotal role in the congregational life of Beacon. Choir has been part of that during most of Beacon's existence. Our current choir model, however, with a paid choir director, is not sustainable. *How* we gather to sing together is at a crossroads. We will be working together to determine a path forwards. I trust that, as the song says, 'love will guide us' in finding the path that works for Beacon. A listening circle will take place May 5th after the service where Meg and CC team members can hear directly about choir members' experiences and feelings concerning this change.

In addition, there will be a music planning workshop for those in the congregation. This will start work on the new future of music at Beacon. I hope you will attend the workshop and see how, together, we can create and share music at Beacon. Ideas and energy are necessary in ensuring we can continue to gather and sing together.

Beacon is a strong community that benefits from the connections we have with each other. My connection as a board member is over, as my term on the board has come to an end. There was a lot of learning involved for me! Working with such a cohesive and thoughtful group of board members made that learning so much easier.

As we move into spring, with all its hope, sunshine and warmth, I am reminded of how really lucky I am to be a part of a wonderful caring community like Beacon. Let's all enjoy the renewal that this season brings.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Tarras, past co-president



Susan Tarras
Past co-president

Beacon Nametags

A major result of our Congregational Conversations this year was a desire to become an even more warm and welcoming group than we were before! One area where we could do better is our use of nametags. Some of us are still using our blue plastic tags with a rainbow banner, others are using makeshift tags and others (gasp) are forgetting to wear nametags at

all. Those who've been attending for a long time know each other's names, of course, but imagine how bewildering it is for visitors or new members who are still trying to figure out who's who in a sea of friendly faces.

To help solve this problem Laura Redmond has designed a Beacon branded 3 x 4 in card which will fit in a clear plastic badge holder with a lanyard attached. Laura can print a name tag for you on request and we

have some badge holders available.

Some of you may have some badge holders around from previous meetings or conferences (and we can always order more). There'll be samples and a sign up sheet at the greeters table. By using a nametag, not only will we be glad you came but everybody will know each others' names!



Congregational Conversations Update for April 2024

The congregation made an important decision in March—to focus on services for adults (and hopefully younger adults!) for the next 3–5 years. This focus does not exclude youth or children. Beacon has a strong tradition as a welcoming congregation and that will continue.

The Congregational Conversations 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.

And, Beaconites, it is time to say goodbye to the Congregational Conversations Team, and hello to the Beacon Implementation Team! The work of the CC Team ended at the April 21st annual general meeting and the Implementation Team will now begin

its work. The CC Team has focused on consultation with the congregation, and the Implementation Team will be focusing on, well, implementation! The board wants to make sure that the hard work of the congregation in generating solutions and recommendations is realized in concrete results.

The CC Team is immensely grateful for the contributions from the congregation; over half the congregants participated in one or more aspect of the CC process!

The recommendations of the Action Planning Teams were reviewed by a group of Beacon leaders and team members at a recent Sunday planning workshop. In just two hours we made decisions about the recommendations, identified action items, and did a minute-by-minute run through of everything that needs to happen for our ‘enhanced’ Sunday mornings!

You will have seen some Sunday morning innovations being tested already, such as sing-alongs prior to the service and hosting coffee upstairs—before AND after the service.

We will be making some changes now and some will need to wait until September. The board and Meg are eager to hear your thoughts on how these changes are working out, so watch for feedback forms and a suggestion box. You can also provide feedback to Meg or to any board member!

The Implementation Team is composed of Meg (ex officio), Peg H., Phil C., Deepak S. and Teresa M., plus one rotating 3-month position.

—Teresa Morton



Teresa Morton

Environment Updates!

Climate Sharing Circle

Join Unitarians from Metro Vancouver at a monthly book-sharing event! The focus is on reading and sharing our thoughts, feelings, and experiences about the climate crisis—support in times of uncertainty! The group meets on the first Saturday of the month so please join us May 4th when we discuss the book *Generation Dread* by Britt Wray. Wray talks about our young people and how they are experiencing the climate crisis. Don't worry about having to read the book, join us anyway! climate-sharing-circle@googlegroups.com. The book selected for June 1st is *Not the End of the World* by Hannah Ritchie.

Our Fragile Moment: How Lessons from Earth's Past Can Help Us Survive the Climate Crisis

Michael Mann, American climatologist and author of *Our Fragile Moment*, was recently interviewed on the climate podcast ‘Outrage & Optimism’ and talked about the urgency of the climate crisis and our agency to act. He is passionate about utilizing our window of opportunity and that it is not too late to make a difference! Listen to the podcast here; <https://www.outrageandoptimism.org/episodes/the-thorny-issue-of-15c>.

Envirobee, a monthly environment discussion

The next two Envirobee's are scheduled for May 19th and June 9th. We

will begin a few minutes after the service ends, and we will include Zoom participants as well as those in person. For May 19 we will have one of our Beaconites as a guest—Bill Marshall will talk about the foundation of the Green Party and its role in Canada.

Monthly Optimism Roundup

The Earthshot Prize Organization supports climate innovation globally with annual grants to scale up five different projects addressing climate change. The scope and courage of these innovators is breathtaking!

The Earthshot Prize also curates a monthly report of optimistic news: <https://earthshotprize.org/news/monthly-optimism-roundup-for-march-2024/>.

—Teresa Morton

Celebration of Life for John Doerksen

Saturday, May 11, 2:00 pm

In the Garden at the Doerksen home
11631 – 98 Avenue, Surrey

[\(Google Map\)](#)

All are welcome to attend the Celebration of Life for John Doerksen. Join John's wife Satya, family, friends and neighbours to remember and celebrate John's life. There will be music and stories. An offering of finger-food is appreciated but not necessary. Car-pooling is suggested.

Please arrive around 2:00 pm, the program starts at 2:30 pm. If you can't make that, please drop by anytime between 3–5 pm. Rev. Meg Roberts will be leading the program.

Obituary

After a prolonged illness, John passed away peacefully at home surrounded by love. He is survived by his wife Satya, his two children Wesley and Andrea, Wesley's wife Ingrid and their sons, Lucas and Colin; Satya's two sons, Fred and Carlos, and their children, Anthony, Alex, Satya, Camilla, and

Fred junior and great-grandson, Javier.

John was born in Manitoba and spent his early years on a farm. He worked for a while in Thunder Bay and married Kay Paetkau. Soon they packed up and went to BC where they had two children. John worked as an accountant at Weiser Lock, but soon realized it didn't pay enough. So he switched to Borden Chemicals where he became a chemical technician making glue. Eventually, John and Kay were divorced.

In 1984 he met the love of his life, Satya Brown, a family physician, with whom he spent the rest of his time, accompanying her in many amazing adventures. The two families melded together as one. John and Satya loved music and loved to dance. They followed the 'music trail' to many towns and places. The story goes that John married Satya because she had a piano and Satya married John because he knew how to waltz.

John spent many hours a day making things which are part of his legacy.

John was loved by every one who met him. He greeted everyone with



John Doerksen
Nov. 24 1937–Nov. 11, 2023

a large smile and had time for gentle conversation with each person he encountered: neighbors, shop owners, anyone on the street, and members of any groups that frequented the house. So many people described him as sweet, caring, lively and inventive . . . and funny?

We are so grateful for having known John and for having been a part of his life. He was indeed the presence of love.



Dave Thomson
Nov. 7 1935–Apr. 25, 2023

Celebration of Life for Dave Thomson

Wednesday, August 21, 2:00 pm

Sapperton Community Hall
318 Keary Street, New Westminster

Please join Dave's family and friends to remember and celebrate Dave's life. Refreshments will be served after the service.

As one of Beacon's charter members, Dave ran the sound system for many years (one of many ways he offered help to those he cared about). Sadly, due to his health, he had not been able to attend Beacon in these

last years. Despite that, he remained a committed supporter of this congregation and was in contact with various members. He will be missed.

Dave's obituary can be found at: <https://vancouver.sunandprovince.remembering.ca/obituary/john-thomson-1089110599>

Sympathy may be expressed by donations to Beacon Unitarian Church or the Alzheimer Society of Canada (www.alzheimer.ca).

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 26, 7:30 pm: “How does ChatGPT work and is AI a menace to society?” Tristan Engst, a third year Ph.D. student in machine learning/computer science at SFU will give a brief presentation, followed by a general discussion. Source material includes a podcast (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVm2IoUUxdo>) and a New Yorker article (<https://www.newyorker.com/science/>

[annals-of-artificial-intelligence/what-kind-of-mind-does-chatgpt-have](https://www.newyorker.com/science/annals-of-artificial-intelligence/what-kind-of-mind-does-chatgpt-have)) both by Cal Newport. Further material can be found at <https://rumble.com/v4q7hcq-the-end-of-humanity-as-planned-by-the-global-leaders.html> and <https://thehighwire.com/watch>
Sunday June 30, 7:30 pm: Earl Morris will lead the discussion, topic TBD.

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

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.

JUNE THOUGHTS ON HAIKU

By Franci Louann

haiku
read them aloud
read them twice

Speak of *now*—
suggest a season?
last line is *wow!*

in English haiku—
fewer than seventeen
syllables is better

haiku
don't get
titles



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.

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.

The last meeting for this program year will be on Wednesday, May 8, 7–9 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 (May 5) so we can send you directions on how to meet up with us: minister@beaconunitarian.org or phone Meg at 778-870-9015 (cellphone)

Also, come out to the May 12 Sunday service when WorshipLab members will be sharing a ritual they developed in the lab – it will be a perfect way to celebrate the summer!



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 Medén: film-club@beaconunitarian.org. The Zoom link is in Thursday’s email, *Beacon This Week*.



May Films

May 3: *Elvis*, introduced by Marilyn Medén (YouTube, Netflix)

May 17: *Rustin*, introduced by John Hagen (YouTube, Netflix)

May 31: *Einstein and the Atom Bomb*, introduced by Rhea Kikkert (Netflix)

June Films

June 7: *Dead Poet’s Society*, introduced by Janene (YouTube)

June 21: *May December*, introduced by Pauline (Netflix)

Beacon Book Club (online)

Friday, May 24, 7–9 pm



Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver introduced by John Hagen.

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.

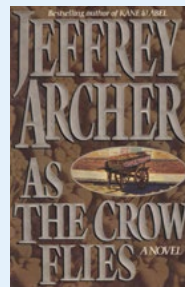
Relayed in his own unsparing voice, *Demon* braves the modern perils of foster care, child labor, derelict schools, athletic success, addiction, disastrous loves, and crushing losses. Through all of it, he reckons with his own invisibility in a popular culture where even the superheroes have abandoned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

Friday, June 28, 4 pm

On June 28th at 4 pm the Book Club will meet for a potluck in John Hagen’s garden to share introductions to books they have enjoyed.

Friday, September 27, 7–9 pm



As The Crow Flies by Jeffrey Archer introduced by Augusta Hamilton.

Archer engagingly presents the rags-to-riches story of Charlie Trumper, a man who learns to buy and sell by working at his grandfather’s vegetable cart in the early 1900s. He and his devoted wife Rebecca quickly become known for fair but cunning

business practices as they purchase shops and determinedly develop a department store encompassing most of a London block. The Trumper cut a predictable path through the early years, comfortable and optimistic despite an enemy’s attempts to foil them; later, legal wranglings, tragedy and questions of patrimony threaten the Trumper empire, while the reader, privy to solutions thanks to dramatic irony, roots in earnest for the good guys. His prose simple and direct, Archer spins a compelling yarn with well-drawn characters, suspenseful pacing and interesting background detail of England’s social classes. (Source: Publishers Weekly)

Happy 41st Birthday Beacon!



Ann M., a charter member of Beacon, blows out the candles on Beacon's 41st birthday cake on Sunday, February 4th. Grateful thanks to the cake makers and celebration organizers, Peggy Lunderville, Judy Villett, and Joyce Gudaitis.



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: Tuesday, June 11, 5:00 pm PT.



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Treasurer: Joyce Gudaitis;

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Production: Laura Redmond
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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.