



VOLUME 42, NUMBER 4
JULY/AUGUST 2024

Summertime!

Beacon Unitarian Church is now on summer hiatus but we offer four informal opportunities to gather before we restart our regular worship services on Sunday, Sept. 8th. In addition, the “Lunch Bunch,” meeting online every Tuesday from noon to 2 pm, will continue through the summer (more info on page 9). All are welcome to join our gatherings! Fill out the [Beacon Connecting Form](#) to receive more information. We look forward to connecting with you and getting to know you!

July & August Service Descriptions

**JUL
14**

4:00 pm

Connecting Life to Fiction

Coordinator: Marilyn Medén

with musicians Kate Smith and Bill Marshall

Location: John Hagen’s backyard,
1834 London Street, New Westminster.*

Fiction writer Louise Penny has the great gift of empathizing with the characters in her murder mysteries. We will explore how real life empathy, love, hope, and forgiveness are shown in a variety of her characters. Kate Smith and Bill Marshall will provide



**ripened
by the suns of their summers
apple faces, orchard people**

A summer haiku from the Okanagan from my poem “Faces”,
Woman’s Eye (Air 1974/5) ed Dorothy Livesay in the permanent
collection at the VPL (I was Fran Workman then). —Franci Louann

Inside Beacon

their lively and meaningful music.

The service will be at 4 pm on July 14th in the exuberance of John Hagen's backyard, 1834 London Street, New Westminster. It would be good to have a little social time after, so if you would like, you could bring a plate of appetizers to share, and please bring your own beverage.

Please contact Marilyn Medén if you wish more detail (contact details in the online Breeze directory).

**Inside if it's raining!*

AUG 18 10:30 AM **Summer Service in the Park**

Service Coordinators: Glenn Wootton and 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. Please

invite a friend or neighbour. There is a playground and spray park for anyone who would like to bring kids and/or grandkids. Look for the Beacon Banner.

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

Service Coordinator:

Peggy Lunderville

All ages and all levels of musical ability are welcome to join us for a morning of singing/playing at Peggy Lunderville's home (8892 Armstrong Avenue, Burnaby. Call or text Peggy at 604-812-5939 if more information is needed). 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.

Next regular Beacon Sunday service: September 8, 10:30 am, Sapperton Hall and on Zoom

SEP 8 **Pouring Our Energies Together: The Annual Water Ceremony**

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!)

Please join us for New West Pride 2024

Saturday, August 17, 3–8 pm • Downtown New Westminster on Columbia Street

Beacon Unitarian is once again participating in the New West Pride Festival. We are looking for 8–10 volunteers to hang out at the Beacon Booth and tell people about our Welcoming Congregation. There will be at least two people at our booth at all times. Shifts are one to two hours long, sometime between 2:30 and 8:30 pm—there is lots of flexibility and it's always lots of fun. Please email David Kristjanson for more information.



Musings by Meg

What are your plans this summer? Do you enjoy going out to the beach? Or curling up with a good book in a park or at home? Do you get more social, connecting with family and friends you may not see as often? Or do you finally have some time on your own to regroup and recharge? Do you dig your hands into the dirt and garden—enjoying the growth of flowers and/or vegetables on a balcony garden or a backyard or a pot in your window? Or do you just enjoy the labours of others in your neighbourhood?

Summer is a time when we may be taking time off our regular schedules. Although some of us are working during this time, others are retired, and some are taking classes. Often, there are changes in what we do each week.

I hope that this summer, you take time off from just focusing on “To-Do lists” and mindfully include some “To-Be experiences.” Summer brings the fruit of the seasonal cycle. Perhaps

you can pause and breathe—take in what is around you. Can you offer your gratitude for being alive, for the fruits of your life and the connections you have with others—two-leggeds, four-leggeds, or winged ones? Even with the challenges and uncertainty, life is a gift to be treasured.

If you have more challenges than are manageable, I hope you will reach out to our pastoral support team in July, or to me once I’m back in August (details below). We can create a “breathe space” together, to get a little space from what may be weighing you down. You are not alone.

This summer, I look forward to spending time visiting some of my favourite outdoor spots—on the beach, in the lake, and by the river—I love the water! I also value having a bit more time to visit galleries and read for pleasure—and eat ice cream! Who knows what may be around the corner. So, seize the day—and the warm summer evenings. I hope you’ll share stories of some of your summer

experiences with me when I get back from my own holidays. What brought you joy and what inspired awe in the beauty of this precious planet we are sustained by?

Just so you know when you can reach me, here are my summer plans:

- I’m on holidays in July.
- I’ll be back at work in the first part of August 1–15 (on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays).
- I’m on study leave from August 16–29.
- I’ll be back working August 30 (then off on the Labour Day long weekend, August 31–September 3).
- I’ll be back to regular work schedule as of Wednesday, September 4.

I look forward to reconnecting later in the summer or, if you’re away, then in September when we re-gather. I hope you have a wonderful summer—with time for rest, renewal and some fun!

In the spirit of life,

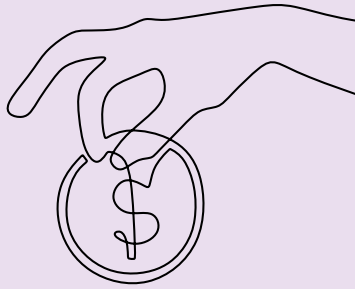
—Rev. Meg Roberts



New member ceremony on May 26, 2024.

Special Donations; what, why, when & how?

Special donations are donations targeted for a specific purpose. This is different from pledges, which are pooled together and then used to meet the needs



of our church according to the budget. The budget is developed by the committees and then approved by the board, ready for approval by the congregation in December.

The board has recently approved a new policy on special donations. Beacon is always grateful for donations, including special donations.

When a special donation is received, the board and the minister will review it against established criteria. This will allow the board to check whether the purpose is in keeping with Beacon's vision and mission; determine whether a targeted donation is the best way to achieve the specified purpose; and evaluate whether the special donation commits the church to an ongoing, unbudgeted expense? The board will also review the proposal to ensure there is no conflict of interest in accepting the special donation.

Whenever possible, the board requests that the donor approach the board PRIOR to making the special donation, so that the treasurer can review the situation. A collaborative approach is preferred.

The board reserves the option to decline a special donation if the board thinks that the donation could commit the church to an ongoing, unbudgeted expense, or if it is not in keeping with the vision and mission of the congregation. If the board decides to decline a donation, the treasurer (or designated representative) will communicate respectfully with the donor. The communication will express gratitude for the donor's generosity and explain the reason for declining. Whenever possible, the board will suggest alternate ways for the donor to support the organization (e.g. volunteering time, pledging, etc).

This new policy is posted on the Beacon website (www.beaconunitarians.org). Please let Teresa know about any questions or concerns by emailing president@beaconunitarian.org

Thank you!

—Teresa Morton

Summer Pastoral and Lay Chaplaincy Support

While Rev. Meg Roberts is away from Beacon work, 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, Judy Villett, and Beth Connelly at pastoralcare@beaconunitarian.org.
- If any Beacon members or friends needs a memorial ceremony or a wedding, or any of the many ceremonies that we can provide, please send a message to one of our lay chaplains, Janet Pivnick (janpivnick@gmail.com, 604-544-7907) or Laura Redmond (lauraredmond2@telus.net, 604-939-9310), and they will follow up with you.

Free air conditioners from BC Hydro

Help with summer heat (for low income and vulnerable customers)

With the summer months and warmer temperatures approaching, it is important for our vulnerable and older members to keep cool. Seniors are especially vulnerable to developing heat stroke in hot weather due to the aging body's decreased capacity to adapt to changes in body temperature.

Signs of heat exhaustion include: heavy sweating, followed by no sweating, cold clammy skin, nausea and vomiting, other symptoms of dehydration, such as faint pulse, muscle cramps, tiredness, dizziness, headaches, and fainting. Seek immediate medical help in the event of nausea and vomiting, worsening symptoms, symptoms lasting longer than an hour.

Actions you can take: Move to a cool place, loosen tight clothing, place a cool damp cloth on your body, drink water. Seek immediate medical help if symptoms worsen.

BC Hydro offers free portable air conditioners to low income and vulnerable customers. They will also install it once free of charge. To apply for a free air conditioner go to BCHydro.com/FreeAC

If you are concerned about being negatively impacted by hot weather or if **you need assistance** filling out the form or setting up an AC you already have, please contact the Pastoral Support Team at pastoralcare@beaconunitarian.org so that we can be in contact with you. (The Pastoral Support team is also looking for volunteers to assist us with this endeavour.)

Board Board Bitz - July and August 2024

It has been a while since I have been on the Beacon Board, and I am just getting caught up with what has been happening since last September. It is amazing how much has been accomplished. Many thanks to the board and an extra special thank you to outgoing Co-Presidents, **Regina Ogmundson** and **Susan Tarras**. You have all done a remarkable job.

Another big thank you to **Carol Woodworth** who, after way too many years, is finally able to pass the torch on to our new treasurer, **Joyce Gudaitis**. Carol and Joyce will be working together to make the transition happen smoothly. Thank you both.

At the first meeting with our new board there was an important new policy created—**Special Donations**. This policy defines a special donation as a targeted donation having a specific purpose (to be distinguished from a pledge) and commits the board to reviewing the special donation to be sure it is a good fit for Beacon. The review will check for any conflict of interest concerns, and make sure that the donation doesn't commit Beacon to on-going, unbudgeted expenses. Whenever possible, the board requests donors to work with the board PRIOR to making the donation, so a collaborative approach can be used. Please see a more detailed outline of the policy from new Co-President, **Teresa Morton** on page 4.

At our AGM in April, besides voting in a new board, we also re-affirmed **Janet Pivnick** as Lay Chaplain for her fourth year, and affirmed newly minted Lay Chaplain, **Laura Redmond** for her first year. Lay Chaplains serve for six years. Thank you both for the important work you do.

On June 9th Beacon showed its amazing generosity by presenting **Purpose Independent Secondary**

School with \$4,600.00 for their lunch program. These funds were collected through our *Sharing the Plate* program, where half of our open collection is shared with a local charity. Our new *Sharing the Plate* recipient is **Century House Association Peer Support (CHAPS)**, who support and enhance the social well-being of older adults who are facing life transitions and challenges. **Beacon—you rock!**

This spring it was a great joy to have a visit from **Donna Hamilton**. Donna is a long time Beacon member who moved to New Brunswick in 2020 to be closer to her children and grandchildren. Even though her visit was short, Donna jumped right in and attended a music planning meeting and even participated in a service. It was great to see you, Donna.

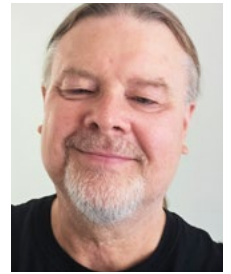
On a somewhat sadder note, Beacon member **Helen McVey** will be moving to Comox this summer. I say "sadder," but it is only sad for us. Helen has lived in the Comox area before and already has many friends there. She will be going back to the Comox Valley Unitarian Fellowship. Our loss, their gain. Helen, with her Ferrari, was

always the first to arrive on Sunday mornings, full of love and hugs. We will miss you, Helen.

Beacon will be taking a rest for two months, but that doesn't mean that there will be no Beacon at all. There will be three **summer services**—on July 14, August 18, and August 25th. Please watch for information in *Beacon This Week (BTW)* and on the Beacon website www.beaconunitarian.org. Beacon will again have a booth at **New West Pride** on Saturday, August 17th. Please email me at board@beaconunitarian.org, if you would like to hang out at our booth and tell people about our **Welcoming Congregation**. That's how I found this wonderful community.

Have a wonderful summer, keep in touch with one another, and we will see you back at Sapperton Hall on September 8th for our Annual Water Ceremony.

—David Kristjanson,
Board Member at Large



David Kristjanson
Board member at large



June 9: Merrilyn Cook receives cheque from our *Sharing the Plate* contributions from this last year.

Thanks for the Feedback – 2024 Pulse Survey Results

By Rev. Meg Roberts

Beacon has been trying out new ways of fostering community and connection this spring. A heartfelt thank you to the 28 Beaconites who gave feedback on how things have been going. Our Pulse Survey 2024 focused on the implementation of new ideas on Sunday mornings (pre-service, service, after service, and any associated accessibility issues). The new ideas came for the Beacon's Congregational Conversations over the last year and the action teams' plans that emerged from them.

We got the feedback in various ways: 20 filled out our Breeze form online; 5 attended our in-person discussion; 2 attended our online discussion (plus 3 who also filled out the online form); and we had 1 paper copy. If we use our Sunday attendance numbers (which are on average between 32 and 40 from April to June), 28 participants in the feedback process means around a 77% response rate – which is great!

Here's what the feedback is telling us:

What is working well?

- Services overall. This includes the in-service small group discussions.
- Sing-alongs and musical variety (even more variety is requested). Ming-Xuan's singing and playing is very much enjoyed. For next year's services, we've had interest already for: singing in a small group (8 people); playing music in a small group (5); singing solo (2); playing music solo (2); and singing for pleasure in someone's home (5).
- Being upstairs for coffee/tea/snacks after service (rather than downstairs).
- Having pre-service coffee/tea is appreciated and it's welcoming.
- Very satisfied with the monthly soup lunches – they're great for community building.
- After-service discussions also appreciated. In particular, the monthly

Envirobee is mentioned: interesting discussions, the quality of Teresa's facilitation, and the opportunity for Zoom and in-person participants to interact.

- Online participants are very satisfied with their experiences.
- For those Sundays with a pre-service sing-along, we found an online solution that allows for both visiting and singing: participants choose to enter a break-out room for the sing-along, while others can remain in the main Zoom room and visit (with Sapperton Hall muted online so they can hear each other).

What do we need to pay closer attention to?

- Prioritize getting hearing assistance devices for Sapperton Hall.
- Figure out how to improve sound quality when presenters are on Zoom. This includes when visual and sound don't synch up for a speaker (it's hard for those who rely on lip reading to help them understand the spoken word).

Didn't get to fill out the survey and have some feedback? (Or thought of something after you filled out the form?) We have an [online short feedback form](#) you can access anytime.

Feedback results are being shared with staff and leadership this summer so we can take your useful comments into account as we are planning for next fall's services and programs. We look forward to finding new and innovative ways to connect, inspire and transform together next year!



Food Bank collection during the summer months.

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.

Hope Matters: Addressing Our Eco-Grief, Sharing Our Eco-Joy, and Tooling Up for Action

A Program in 4 Sessions

Facilitated by Teresa Morton and Rev. Meg Roberts

Are you overwhelmed in the face of the climate crisis? Are you seeking a safer place to think about this existential threat and some support in deciding how you feel about it? We offer a series of four sessions where we will collectively grapple with how to engage with these challenges, build resilience and explore how hope is nurtured and incorporated into our daily lives. We will be drawing from

Are you seeking a safe place to process the existential threat of the climate crisis and some support in deciding how you feel about it?

Elin Kelsey's book *Hope Matters: Why Changing the Way We Think is Critical to Solving the Environmental Crisis*.

These four sessions will include:

- Understanding ecological grief through psychology and ritual
- Building strategies for processing our responses

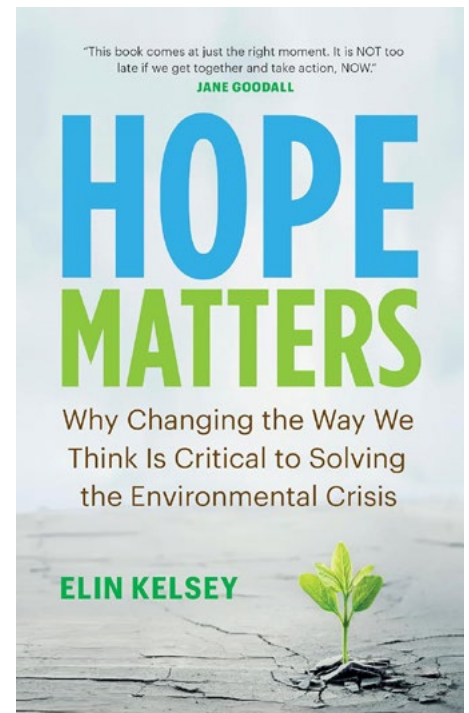
- Experiencing the power of accessing our ecological joy so we can deepen our connections with the natural world
- Sharing hopeful stories of positive environmental action

- Learning how to shift perspectives and cultivate ecological hope
- Providing resources and support for engaging in sustainability efforts

Each session incorporates sharing, learning and experiencing through ritual and cre-

ativity. Sessions will happen every two weeks to give an opportunity to apply what we are learning and bring back insights to share at the next session.

Interested? We need your feedback on when we offer these sessions: We're deciding on whether to hold the sessions on a weekday afternoon or a



Saturday session. Please indicate which option you would prefer BY AUGUST 1st by filling out this short online form.

If this form doesn't work, copy and paste to your browser: <https://beaconunitarian.breezechms.com/form/5656f9>

Or if more info is required, please contact: Teresa at president@beaconunitarian.org —Teresa Morton



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).

Celebrating Beacon's Choir

Sunday's service on May 26th was a lovely tribute to the choir, with four selections of music they sang this past year, a brief history of the choir from longtime Beacon member Donna Hamilton, and other memories from choir members Marylke Nieuwenhuis and Carol Woodworth. Thanks to our now retired archivist, Jane Shoemaker, for finding some photos of choir events from years gone by to show in the service.

As Donna said on May 26th, "Beacon is music," and that tradition will continue in other ways in the year ahead.

We thanked choir director Faith Veikle for all her work this year renewing the choir and creating community and joy at their practices and the services when they sang. Also, we honoured Ming-Xuan Chung, who supported the choir with masterful piano accompaniment.

Although a regular weekly choir isn't in the plans for the fall (in keeping with Beacon's present financial circumstances), there are plans developing to provide various opportunities to sing together—in small groups and larger ones. As Donna said on May 26th, "Beacon is music," and that tradition will continue in other ways in the year ahead.

We're glad Ming-Xuan continues as our Sunday services pianist in the fall, and we hope to find other ways to reconnect with Faith Veikle in creative and sustainable ways to make music together in the coming year. We will keep you advised as plans develop.

These photos are from that Sunday (including one featuring John Hagen).



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 but we will be taking a break over the summer. We look forward to meeting again on September 29th. 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 will meet on Friday, June 28th, but in person, and at 5 pm in John Hagen's backyard* (1834 London Street, New Westminster). We will each share a book we have liked. After we have

shared, we will have a potluck supper. Everyone is welcome. The book club will not be meeting in the summer. The next meeting will be on September 27th on Zoom at 7 pm. See below for more information. For enquiries, please contact John Hagen bookclub@beaconunitarian.org.
**inside if it is raining!*

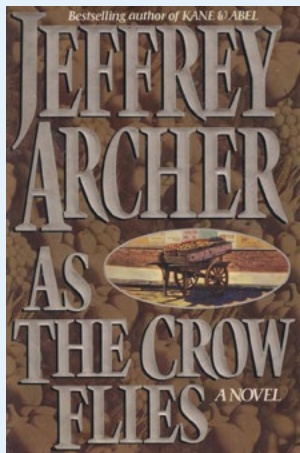
Film Club (Online and in person) meets online the first and third Fridays of the month at 7 pm. Meetings will resume in the fall.

Beacon Book Club (online)

Friday, June 28, 5 pm

The book club will meet on Friday, June 28th, but in person, and at 5 pm in John Hagen's backyard* (1834 London Street New Westminster). We will each share a book we have liked. After we have shared, we will have a potluck supper. Everyone is welcome. The book club will not be meeting in the summer.
**inside if it's raining!*

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)



Carol Woodworth hosted a tea party to welcome visiting Beacon member Donna Hamilton.



Donna holds up a caring quilt made from fabric that she donated to Beacon before moving to New Brunswick.

Beaconites Enjoying Sapperton's Annual 90th Birthday Celebration

Sapperton Old Age Pensioners Association (SOAPA) holds a yearly luncheon for those in their nineties. It was held on Wednesday, June 4, and our Beacon member John Hagen was one of the ones honoured that day. I was glad to be invited to offer the meal blessing. Also attending were Beaconites Peggy Lunderville and David Kristjanson (who both serve on the SOAPA board). It was a beautiful event with lots of good conversation and music. This quote on the wall decoration seen in the photo set the tone for the event: "You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough."

All Beacon members are welcome to join SOAPA for \$10.00 per year (please email soapseniors@gmail.com for details on age requirements and payment options). Membership with SOAPA helps support this wonderful organization that has partnered so well with Beacon these many years.

—Rev. Meg Roberts



Virtual Adventure at the CUC Co-Lab: Experiences of Transformation

Mark your calendars for an exhilarating event from Nov. 1–3, 2024, as Unitarians, Universalists, UU congregations, and communities come together for the CUC Co-Lab: Experiences of Transformation. This virtual gathering promises a unique opportunity to connect, enjoy, and engage in profound conversations.

Mission and Goals: The mission of the CUC Co-Lab is to foster authentic connections, ignite inspiration, and explore significant questions about change, transformation, and renewal in alignment with our shared values. Participants will engage in focused discussions, captivating storytelling, and innovative events designed to cultivate hope and renewal. We'll use:

- Focused Chats: Engage in meaningful conversations about change and transformation.
- Captivating Storytelling: Hear inspiring stories that reflect our values and experiences.

- Innovative Events: Participate in unique activities that promote connection and inspiration.

Join Us: Whether you're a seasoned member of the CUC community or new to the scene, everyone is invited to join this journey of shaping a brighter future together. Don't miss this chance to reignite your inner spark and co-create our direction for the future.

Pod-ding Together: Interested in gathering in-person with others in your congregation or region for the event? We will send you suggestions for how to gather for the weekend. Select that option when you register. (For those who have already registered, email congregationalife@cuc.ca to request the information).

Registration: Click the link below to register and be the first to receive emerging details about the event.

[Register Now!](#)



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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.