

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

The MidWeek Update

May 17, 2017

When So Much Matters—a message from Paul Beckel

Last summer Jennifer Smith, Tessie Mandeville and I brainstormed about a possible thematic thread that we could use to tie together children's and adult education, along with Sunday services throughout the coming year. If we've succeeded, then you already know that that our theme has been "*Relationship Matters: Within and Beyond these Walls.*"



As we brainstormed last summer, our country was experiencing the trauma of one shooting after another of black men by police officers. I imagine that the book, *Race Matters*, by Cornel West, was on my mind as the phrasing for our annual theme evolved. *Race Matters* was West's series of essays, as a black academic and social critic, published in 1993, shortly after the L.A. riots. Many from BUF were inspired by West in the summer of 2015 when he lectured at General Assembly in Portland.

Last week I read his memoir, and found several insightful ideas that will probably end up in a sermon one of these days. West is flamboyant, brilliant, and often hard to follow. One moment he is uncompromising and single-minded. The next moment he comes up with a sophisticated paradox encompassing multiple points of view.

Before I get to an example, I'm going to take a tangent into the conversation we had last Sunday morning in our listening session regarding the pending congregational resolution regarding the Black Lives Matter movement. Here are my own twisted paraphrases of a few comments that I found particularly meaningful:

- (1) "I've been working on racial understanding for decades. I don't know how far I've come but I'm still trying to make micro-improvements."
- (2) "The world is full of things that I can't fix. I'm glad that I can outsource some of my distress to BUF—where other people are working on things I care about—so I don't become overwhelmed."
- (3) "Are we getting backlash? Think about that term. What imagery and connotation comes to you when you think about back, and lash?"
- (4) "We strive to be a welcoming-congregation. And we do pretty well once people get here. But an *inviting*-congregation? We could do that better."

Here, now, is Cornel West, commenting on being an Ivy League professor arrested for protesting, or being pulled over for driving while Black:

“When arrested, threatened, or persecuted, I give myself permission to be full of righteous indignation and moral outrage but I try to never allow righteous indignation to degenerate into bitter revenge, or let moral outrage become hateful anger. My blues sensibility or tragic-comic disposition leads me to juxtapose the sheer absurdity of the situation with the utmost seriousness of the injustice. So I retain a painful smile on my face even as I respond to the undeniable hurt with intense ethical energy.”

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For future themes, which we’ve begun to talk about this spring in our Sunday Service brainstorming sessions, several ideas have been suggested. We seem to be gravitating toward “comforting the afflicted”...as opposed to this year’s trend toward “afflicting the comfortable.” Perhaps this back-and-forth is as essential as breathing-in and breathing-out.

This past year, appropriately, has been one of righteous indignation and intense ethical energy—an energy that may not be sustainable as our world crazes ahead. So as we look to the summer, and to the church year ahead, I invite you to breathe-in and breathe-out together (i.e. “to conspire), and reflect with me on living the paradox one breath at a time.

Peace,

Paul

Strong-Armed Chairs Now Available in the Sanctuary

The sanctuary now has seating areas intended to offer more flexible, supportive seating for people using wheelchairs, or walkers, and for those who need chairs with arms to sit or stand safely, as well as for their companions. The purpose of this project is to increase the physical accessibility of the BUF sanctuary, in recognition of our commitment to being an inclusive, welcoming congregation.

We welcome feedback about these new seating options. Please let your opinions known via BUF-News. Further changes could include purchasing more or better chairs. Thanks to Sky Hedman and Molly Monahan for the implementation of the idea of improved sanctuary seating options.



Coming of Age Retreat at Cedar Tree House, May 13-14th

This Sunday May 21st is the Coming of Age service. Coming of Age (CoA) is one of the cornerstones of Unitarian Universalist Religious Education. We pair 7th and 8th graders with an adult mentor and ask them to work together for 8 months (with guidance and group workshops) to be able to articulate what they personally believe, what they give their heart too. These youths blow me away. They are funny, articulate, and intelligent. But what I am most thankful for is our mentors. It is priceless to have an unrelated adult, who is a good role model and has good boundaries, for a youth to be able to connect with and talk to.

Last Saturday night we had a spiritual retreat at the Cedar Tree House with all the youth and mentors. It was amazing getting to know the adults and youth on a deeper level. The people that normally don't share had the space to talk. I was so moved by the depth of character our youth were able to articulate. I hope to see you in the pews this Sunday when they share their credos.

Our next Coming of Age class will begin in the fall 2018 for 8th and 9th grades—**Jennifer Smith, Director of Lifelong Learning.**

And a big thank you for the Kids Choir to the families and church members

Thanks so much for your attendance, support, and enthusiasm for kids choir this year. Amy and I had a lot of fun! I hope you were very proud on Sunday morning - I know I certainly was. They were awesome!!

Our choir season is officially over until the fall, so we won't be having weekly rehearsals. However, we'd love to hang out with the kids this summer! We've noticed some interest in playing/learning instruments lately, so we're planning on doing a few music sessions where we'll sing and play for fun. We'll bring the instruments, or if the kids have their own they'd like to bring, that works too.

Our first "jam session" will be Sunday June 18 (during the normal kids choir time, right after the service).

See you all soon, Annie & Amy

Please join us for community night dinner this Wednesday night (May 17th) at 6pm.

Cost is only \$5 each or \$12 for a family. It's a great opportunity to meet new people at church and enjoy an affordable meal together. The menu is

Pulled pork loin

Roasted Tofu

Roasted Vevies

Salad

cookies / fruit for dessert

Helpers can volunteer on signup genius at We always welcome more volunteers! Please sign up on signup genius: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080b4cada82ea64-community1>

Jeff Packer will be available during community night dinner to share about his work as an associate chaplain at St Joseph's Medical Center. And, to answer any questions concerning the proposal to be recognized by BUF as a lay community minister. Please attend and meet Jeff, if you are interested.

Humanitas - Helping People In a Pinch

Missy came for help to pay the rent on her storage unit. She had just qualified for housing with Agape after losing her home-- and staying at the Mission for a number of weeks. She has multiple physical problems including a colostomy, herniated discs in her back, and a torn meniscus. She was obviously in pain as she sat down. Because of her living situation, she no longer has her service dog. She had also been fighting for legal custody of her son, but lost the case, because of her health issues and living situation, to the boy's father who, she claimed through her tears, was abusive. We gave her a pledge for help on her storage unit as well as much needed referrals to other resources. She is also going to ask for help from the church she has been regularly attending.

We continue to be very grateful for your help through our 10-bucks-a-month club and other donations. We could not do BUF's work without you.

If you would like to join us, forms are located on the Kiosk in the social hall which includes other information about the Ministry. Please contact Elizabeth Weber, elizweber@msn.com for further information.

~ The Humanitas Team

Lummi Food Bank Needs Your Help



Lummi Food Bank is always in need of food donations. It is also in need of bags, especially paper bags for distributing the food donations received. We know that hunger is an ongoing struggle for many in our and in our neighbor's communities. Let's work together to make that struggle a little less burdensome by donating food, personal care items, or cash donations (submit to the BUF office).

Congregational Meeting- Sunday May 21st for Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

The invitation to the Congregational Meeting was emailed or mailed to BUP voting members on Friday, 5 May. The mailing included a letter from Board President Anastacia Lundholm, the proposed 2017-18 Budget, the Black Lives Matter resolution, a list of nominees to be voted on, and 3 sets of minutes to be approved at the meeting. The meeting is scheduled to at 12 noon, following the worship service. The full text of the resolution being considered at the Congregational Meeting.

Whereas Unitarian Universalists, in keeping with long-standing UUA tradition, remain committed to principles of justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;

Whereas Unitarian Universalists continue to envision and work towards a world community practicing liberty and justice for all;

Whereas the 2015 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association passed an Action of Immediate Witness (www.uua.org/statements/support-black-lives-matter-movement) calling congregations to take deliberate action in support of the Black Lives Matter movement and in the fight for racial justice; and

Whereas our respect for the rights and dignity of every individual demands our standing in solidarity with victims of racial, ethnic, and religious hatred and bigotry, all by-products of U.S. white privilege and indifference to equal justice for ethnic minorities;

Resolved, that the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship:

1. Resolutely affirms our support of the UUA Action of Immediate Witness to support the "Movement for Black Lives Matter," both in words and deeds.
2. Commit to educating ourselves and our community that institutional racism extends beyond white privilege and oppressive cultural systems, and that the unresolved struggles for justice and equality for Black people in this country's past remain the cause of our struggles today.

3. Commits to partnering with local community organizations to leverage resources and harness the power of love to combat racism targeting Black people and oppression at all levels of our communities and their governments.

May Faire Gala and Auction – June 3rd

We're in the home stretch and looking for everyone to step up to the plate with your inspired service (or otherwise) auction offering! Some specifics:

1. The BUF auction has received dozens of fine, fab items for the auction and the catalogue is available for your perusal now. Go to www.togetherauction.com/buf and start planning your bidding strategies today.
2. BUY TICKETS TO THE GALA by **May 28** for \$25, after that it goes up to \$35 (\$5 for kids now, increases to \$10 after 5/28). Tickets available up through date of Gala, but it is helpful to have correct numbers for the team who is making sure we prepare the right amount of food.
3. Wine Wall waiting...Drop off a bottle of wine at the BUF office anytime between now and **June 1**. We'll add that to the May Faire Auction wine wall and Gala attendees will purchase their mystery bottle and drink a toast to you.

Interested in volunteering?

Link to MayFaire Signup Genius

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c094aada62aa4f49-its>

Auction Paddle Call- Nominations to be considered at May 25th Board Meeting

The BUF Board of Trustees is still taking suggestions for 'paddle call' items at the upcoming May Faire Auction. This year, paddle call suggestions are focused on BUF projects or improvements that are outside our budgeted plans. Usually the projects are in the \$3,000-\$5,000 range. Ideas, with a short description of the project and why it would be important to the congregation, can be emailed to Board President Anastacia Lundholm (anastaciam@hotmail.com) or dropped off in the church office by May 22nd. **Paddle Call** is a means of raising money, for a special purpose, in a short time, during a live auction. The attendees raise their numbered paddle (the handheld poster) to indicate their giving at a particular \$\$ level when the amount is "called out" by the auctioneer.



Sock Drive for Homeless People May 7-21—Ends this Sunday

There is a box in the narthex for donations of NEW socks to donate to homeless people in Bellingham. Thank you for supporting our youth service outreach project.

2016-2017 Pledge reports from Church Windows will be sent out on Friday, May 19th. The reports will be sent via email and will update members on their pledge balance. Reports will be updated through April, so any payments made in May will not show up. Please call the office if something looks amiss.

Love working with Audio/Visual? We are still looking for volunteers to help with BUF's Audio/Visual needs. No experience is required as we will happily train and allow you to shadow until you are comfortable. Currently there are only two individuals who do all of our Sunday services and any extra event needs. This is not sustainable and we are already running into situations where we won't have a dedicated volunteer at a Sunday service or event that is using the BUF facilities. So if you are interested in learning about the Audio and Visual systems, have applicable experience or just want to help out the BUF community contact Jesse Pickard or our new Administrator Kathy. Thank You!!

Events and Activities

Wednesday May 17th

10:00 AM Humanitas

12:00 PM Writer's Group

4:30 PM May Faire Planning

6:00 PM Community Night Dinner,

Thursday May 18th

10:00 AM Chalice Circle - Alice Litton

2:00 PM Flowering Cherry Sangha Mindfulness Meditation Group

Following the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh, the Flowering Cherry Sangha Mindfulness Meditation Group takes part in meditation, study, discussion, and chanting. Join us at **2:00 pm on May 4th** in the

Meditation Room downstairs. Chairs are provided; bring a cushion if you wish. For more information contact David Gillespie at davidgillespie72@gmail.com or Lynn Barton at contactingbarton@gmail.com.

“Mindfulness is like that—it is the miracle which can call back in a flash our dispersed mind and restore it to wholeness so that we can live each minute of life.” ~ Thich Nhat Hanh

Thursday May 18th Book Club Discussion

Join us this Thursday, May 18th, at 7:00pm for a conversation about an astonishing book by Timothy Egan, *The Big Burn*. We will meet at Claire Lending's and Murray Bennett's house, 3195 Cliffside Drive, Bellingham. If you have questions, please get in touch with Jan Cavitt, jadacad@gmail.com.

Egan narrates the 1910 struggles of the newly formed, overmatched forest rangers against an implacable fire with unstoppable dramatic force. Equally dramatic is the larger story he tells of outsized president Teddy Roosevelt and his chief forester, Gifford Pinchot, who pioneered the notion of 'conservation.' Roosevelt and Pinchot did nothing less than create the idea of public land as our national treasure, owned by and preserved for every citizen.

Friday May 19th

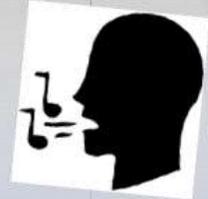
Last call until next fall to attend/partake in the *Coffee House Acoustic Open Mic*, happening 7-9:30pm Friday, May 19th at Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship, 1207 Ellsworth St., in our fair city of Bellingham. Ages 12 and up welcome. Kick back and listen—or sing; play guitar; fiddle; hammer dulcimer; keyboards; drumming and more, or tell us a story or joke! Whatever you do, consider gearing your special brand of entertainment to fit the evening's theme of “Friendship”. Sign-up time to participate is 6:45pm (10 minutes max). An electric piano is available for you to entertain your heart away! Don't miss it; you'll be glad you came.

Coffee House Acoustic open mic

BELLINGHAM UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP



Friday, May 19th
7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
1207 Ellsworth Street.



The theme for the evening is
"FRIENDSHIP".

Acoustic musicians, singers, writers, storytellers, jokesters, and performers are invited to present for 10 minutes each. Material related to the theme is optional, yet encouraged. Sign in to perform at 6:45 p.m.

Shasta Pettijohn, musician, songwriter and coordinator for this event will serve as M.C. Contact her at starsong816@gmail.com for more information.

Saturday May 20th

Dungeons and Dragons

BUF members recently formed a Dungeons and Dragons role-playing game opportunity. At 10:00 AM on **May 20^h** in the Library, join us in this fantasy game, as we guide our heroes through quests for treasure, battles with deadly foes, daring rescues, courtly intrigue, and much more. Adventure updates are posted to <http://blog.bitratchet.com>. Email jed@bitratchet.com with questions.

Sunday May 21st

Sunday Forum: Solar and Wind Power Update

Join us at 9:15 on May 21, as BUFster and engineer and inventor, Joyce Cooper, will share a slide presentation on the current status of solar electric power and wind



turbines at the Sunday Forum of Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship on Sunday, May 21, 2017 at 9:15 a.m. Cooper's presentation will cover technology, cost data and the state of deployment in the U.S.A. and Canada as well as innovations and advancements in these fields including Cooper's own invention, the SunSmart generator. For more information on this presentation, please contact Joyce Cooper at (650) 430-6243 or joyceck10@gmail.com. 10:30 AM Coming of Age Worship Service

10:30 AM Worship

11:30 AM Coffee Break Before Congregational Meeting

12:00 Congregational Meeting in the Sanctuary

12:00-3:00pm Coming of Age Celebration

4:30 PM YRUU (High School Youth)

Monday May 22

The Natural Balance in All Things . . .

Join us at 4:30 pm on May 22nd for Life Exercise, a program of gentle movement drawn from Chinese Tai Chi and Japanese health exercises. All levels of fitness are welcome. For more information, contact Lee Seaman, (360) 676-8543, lseaman@seamanmedical.com.



Tuesday May 23rd

Lunch with Paul!

Meet and eat with our minister Rev. Paul Beckel! On May 23rd at 12:00 pm, bring your own lunch for an informal conversation about whatever topics come up. An opportunity for us to get to know one another better!



Wednesday May 24th

10:00 AM Humanitas

12:00 PM Writer's Group

4:30 PM May Faire Planning

COMMUNITY NIGHT DINNER (6:00 pm)

To be announced.

We always welcome more volunteers! Please sign up on
signup genius:

[http://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080b4cada82ea64-
community1](http://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080b4cada82ea64-community1)

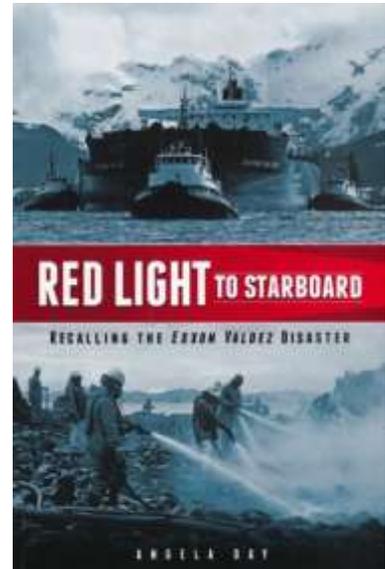


Thursday, May 25th Red Light to Starboard: Recalling the *Exxon Valdez* Disaster.

Join us on **May 25th** from 6:30-8:30pm for a book reading, presentation, and Q&A with author Angela Day.

Angela Day, PhD, will offer a book reading, presentation, and Q&A session on her book, *Red Light to Starboard: Recalling the Exxon Valdez Disaster*. This book documents a tragic event that stunned the world, discusses the disaster's environmental impacts, and recounts the regional and natural history of Prince William Sound. Day's book won the Western Writers of America 2015 Spur Award in the Best Western Contemporary Nonfiction category, and was a finalist in the annual Forward Reviews' INDIEFAB Book of the Year Awards.

Angela Day lives in nearby Snohomish, Washington, and is married to Bobby Day, a long-time fisherman from Prince William Sound. The book centers on his story and that of his family, whose history is deeply rooted in the region. Nearly 100 years ago, the Day family settled on the edge of Valdez Bay where they carved out a small town, salmon cannery, and sawmill from remains of an old army fort. Based on a wealth of family history and first-hand experiences, the book offer a deeply personal account of the oil spill's impacts on individual lives and local communities.



This topic is keenly relevant to our community. “I hope to provide some insights about what the past can teach us about the future,” said Angela Day. “Whatcom County residents are faced with a potentially large increase in crude oil tanker traffic in the Salish Sea due to the proposed expansion of the Kinder Morgan Mountain pipeline project,” she continued.

The Kinder Morgan project, terminating in Vancouver, will nearly triple capacity along an existing line from Edmonton, Alberta, to Burnaby, B.C., from about 300,000 barrels per day to about 890,000 barrels per day. “I especially look forward to having a discussion about lessons learned and how they apply to the risks in the Salish Sea today,” Day said.

The presentation is co-sponsored by RE Sources for Sustainable Communities and the North Cascades Audubon Society. “We are really excited to host Angela’s presentation here in Bellingham,” said Lee First, North Sound Baykeeper with RE Sources for Sustainable Communities.

RE Sources for Sustainable Communities works to promote sustainable communities and protect the health of northwestern Washington’s people and ecosystems through application of science, education, advocacy and action. North Cascades Audubon Society has represented the interests and importance of wildlife, habitat and the environment in Whatcom County since 1970.

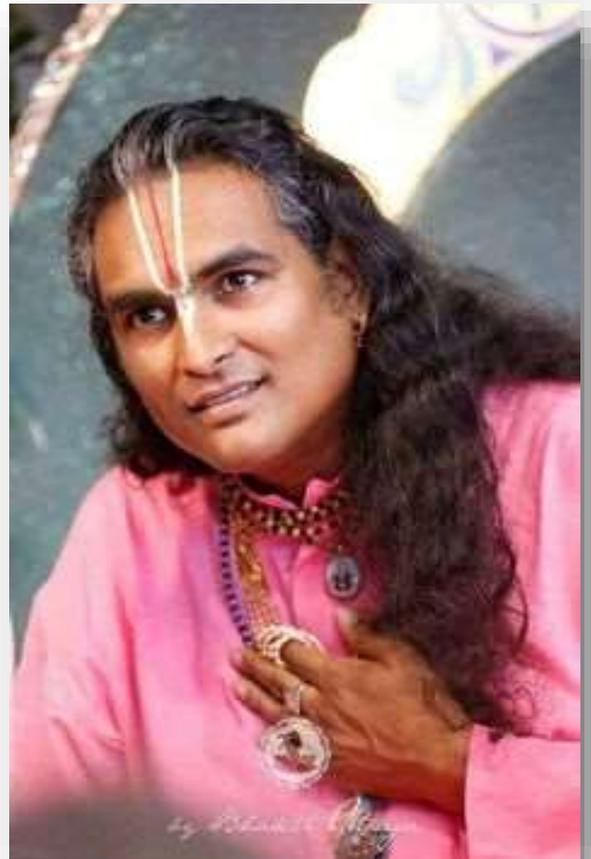
For more information, please contact Lee First, North Sound Baykeeper, leef@resources.org

Saturday, May 27th

Satsang Spiritual Discourse and Darshan with Paramahansa Vishwanada

Darshan with Paramahansa Vishwananda gives Darshan (the blessing of seeing and being seen by the Divine) & Satsang throughout the year internationally. This special event on May 27th with the Satsang Spiritual Discourse at 2:00 pm and the blessing at 5:00 pm includes devotional music, inspirational stories and, of course, the extraordinary Darshan blessing given by Paramahansa Vishwananda to each person who attends. Event is open to all. Donations gratefully accepted.

The word Darshan is derived from the Sanskrit root 'drsh', which means 'sight' or 'having a glimpse of' the Divine. To receive a personal blessing (Darshan) from a Realised Master is one of the greatest gifts given to mankind. The Love you feel during Darshan is not something from the outside, it is your own Divinity revealing itself to you. Paramahansa Vishwananda's aim is to awaken the inner Light and Love of your soul. This gives the opportunity to realise we all have the same love inside of us, to intensify that love and become one with it, then to share it with everyone around us.



Paramahansa Sri Swami Vishwananda is an enlightened spiritual master and founder of Bhakti Marga, the path of devotion. His life and work are dedicated to inspiring all people to love beyond the boundaries of culture, religion, gender and age, and to open their hearts to recognise and accept the eternal Divine Love that permeates us all. He offers wisdom and tools to awaken the innate ability to experience this love in our daily lives. He is a living example of the transformational power of Divine Love.

May 28 Sunday Forum at BUF - Fostering a Student Culture that Values Diversity

You are invited to join Dr. Eileen Coughlin of WWU at Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship on Sunday, May 28, 2015 at 9:15 a.m. in a conversation about the challenges of encouraging an open student culture that values multiple forms of difference. Dr. Coughlin will offer examples of ways in which universities are responding to these challenges in the Fellowship's Sunday Forum.

Dr. Coughlin is Senior Vice President and Vice President of Enrollment and Student Services at WWU. The complexities of bias and discrimination impact the development of students' personal identities and go on to affect the larger society.

The Wednesday Community Night Dinner at 6 pm on May 31.

The YRUU high schoolers invite you all to the event, which will raise money for their group activities. Put this on your calendar and stay tuned for more information about the menu!

COMING IN JUNE

BUF's May Faire Gala and Auction - Saturday, June 3rd

Sunday Forum, June 4th Nutrition's Role in Pain Relief

Join nutritional therapist, Linda Fels, at Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship (BUF) on Sunday, June 4, at 9:15 a.m. for a discussion on how to proactively work with your body to decrease pain.

Chronic pain affects over 50 million Americans, resulting in lower health status, missed income and greater suffering. Many do not realize that what they ingest at every meal can increase or lessen pain. This goes beyond pain in the digestive system to headaches, joint, nerve and muscle pain. Optimal nutritional status can assist the body in responding better to medical treatments.

Linda Fels is a nutritional therapist in private practice in Bellingham who specializes in digestive issues and brain health. She is a certified Nutritional Therapy Practitioner (NTP), Restorative Wellness Practitioner (RWP) and a certified GAPS Practitioner. Linda's vision is a world of people so healthy that everyone can pursue their own dreams with the energy, means and sharp minds they are meant to have. She focuses on education, support and the joy of eating. Food is the fuel and the main building block for our bodies. What we take in by eating, breathing, touching and experiencing affects us physically, mentally and emotionally.

Wednesday, June 7th The final Community Dinner of the season

Saturday, June 10th Gypsy Jazz Concert Series:

Sunday, June 11th at Noon Adult Education Committee Are you interested in having a say in adult education at BUF? Do you have an idea for a class or workshop

you would like to facilitate? please come to the kick off meeting of the Adult Ed. Committee to plan for spring/fall activities at BUF! Sunday, **JUNE 11** at noon. Contact Jennifer@BUF.org for more info.

COMING IN JULY

Creative Arts Eliot Camp 2017 for UUs and their Friends and Family:

Did you know that there is an arts-related summer camp run by The Eliot Institute for UUs of all ages in our area (Washington, Oregon, British Columbia, Alaska, and Western Idaho) and their friends and family? Creative Arts Eliot 2017 will take place at the beautiful Seabeck Conference Center on Hood Canal in Seabeck, Washington from Saturday, August 12 through Wednesday, August 16, 2017, and will offer opportunities for UUs and friends and relatives to enjoy many wonderful aspects of a multi-generational "camp" experience while also pursuing an interest in one of seven artistic or creative endeavors. Talented presenters will inspire and delight during a five-day camp full of creativity and fun with morning workshops in Photography, Writing, Beginning Ukulele, Intro to Puppetry, Colorful Creations, Painting & Collage, and Storytelling. Campers choose one activity to focus on in the mornings, and spend the rest of their time enjoying board and card games, music and singing, walking/hiking through the woods, beach/waterfront activities, UU community, evening programs, and numerous other planned events including Firelight and an "Extravaganza" on the last day to celebrate everyone's creativity. There is still room so join us this summer at Creative Arts Eliot 2017! For more information, please contact the Eliot Administrator at Eliotregistrar@gmail.com or visit our website at www.eliotinstitute.org.

AND REALLY LOOKING AHEAD—Save October 6-8 for Retreat

The BUF All-Church Retreat is back!

Save the date – October 6-8, 2017. Join BUFsters of all ages for a weekend of fun, relaxation, and community-building, at Camp Kirby on beautiful Samish Island.

We will enjoy thought-provoking workshops, strolls on the beach, delicious meals, excellent company, fun and games for all ages, an always-entertaining "talent" show, and some serious driftwood fort building. Workshop theme and other details TBA. If you have questions in the meantime, contact Roz at mama@mamafoo.net.

