

The Beacon

A weekly email newsletter from
Cedars Unitarian Universalist Church
Serving Bainbridge Island and Northern Kitsap County



CEDARS CHURCH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Volume 16 Issue 50 December 11, 2025

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This Week At Cedars

Sunday Service, December 14
10:00 am

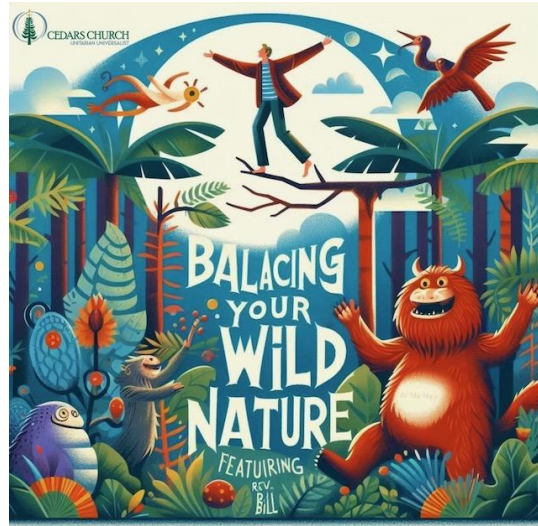
Balancing Your Wild Nature

Rev. Bill Comfort, Guest Minister
Nancy Philip, Worship Associate

In the book "Where the Wild Things Are" by Maurice Sendak, Max lets his primal nature loose upon the jungle of his imagination. We will explore the wild nature within each of us. How does your wild nature work for the benefit or detriment of your life?

Rev. Bill Comfort is a sort of retired UCC Pastor. He works part-time as an Inner Well-being and Spirituality Associate at Horizon House, a retirement community in Seattle. He has led UCC congregations all over the western United States. As part of a Doctor of Ministry program he developed an interactive preaching style which he has used at Cedars UU, in preaching at Horizon House and at a variety of churches around the Puget sound area.

Childcare will be offered for this Service. Click [HERE](#) for details.



Upcoming Services



Welcome All!

Come and celebrate the magic and mystery of this season with us

Winter Solstice Service

Winter Stillness & Emerging Light

December 21 at 4:00pm at The Island School
8553 NE Day Rd, Bainbridge Island

An early Christmas Eve service
**Carols, Merriment, and
a Message from the Angels**

December 24 at 5:00pm at The Island School
8553 NE Day Rd, Bainbridge Island

We hope you will join us this holiday season for these two very special services!

Winter Solstice Service, December 21 at 4:00 pm
Winter Stillness, Emerging Light

This evening we will be celebrating the winter solstice, the shortest day and the longest night of the year. It is a time of both mystery and expectancy, as the longest dark leads to the return of the sun. Join us in this ancient celebration that still brings restoration and hope into our lives today.

Christmas Eve Service, December 24 at 5:00 pm
Carols, Merriment, and a Message from the Angels

Join us for an early Christmas Eve service full of music, singing, and a reminder that the kindness we bestow assuages fear and creates hope.

Both of these services will be led by **Rev. Margo Rinehart** who serves Cedars through welcoming people from diverse theological and religious backgrounds and spiritual beliefs on their journeys to learn from one another, search for truth, and answer the call of love and justice.

Childcare will be offered for both of these services. Click [HERE](#) for details.

Also, please note Cedars will NOT be holding a Sunday service on December 8.

News and Announcements



Welcome, LT Yoson!

The Board of Trustees is pleased to announce that Cedars has a new Office Administrator, LT Yoson. Originally from Texas, LT launched a career in science before happily raising her children on Bainbridge Island. Motivated with work that aligns with her values, she enjoys living a balanced life that connects her to the community's vibrant arts and diversity programs. Presently, she spends weekends volunteering at her neighborhood winery, advocating for local art, and educating on the significance of preserving natural habitats.

LT is excited to join in helping with administrative duties for Cedars and is currently learning a whole lot about how our Cedars community works from Rev. Margo and our many dedicated volunteers! LT is a part-time employee currently working 14 hours per week and will be in the Cedars Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9am to 2pm. Please stop by the Cedars Center when you're out and about and say "Hello" to her!

"You Are the Holiday Miracle"

As December opens up before us, we welcome in the gift of reflection.

Yule reminds us that we all partake in the miracle of renewal.

Hanukkah, the festival of lights, commemorates a time of miracles when the faith of the Jewish people sustained them.

Christmas offers us to revisit the miracle of birth and the desire to find saviors to heal the scars of humanity.

Here, in our church, you are just as much a holiday miracle as the turning of the earth, as persistence and dedication to faith, as the creation of each new life.

You are a holiday miracle. This community is one of miracle-makers.

~ By Gwen Andrews

The Many Moods of the Christmas Season

"This too belongs," is a mantra taught by respected Buddhist teacher, Tara Brach. She means that all feelings have a place and should not be divided into "bad" to be repressed and "good" to be celebrated. I find her mantra especially helpful during the holiday season, for both joy and mourning belong.

My Thanksgiving was very different this year. After more than 30 years of gathering at my

aunt and uncle's condo to celebrate holidays and special occasion, my aunt and uncle died this past year and their condo was sold this past September. Also, due to moves and divorce, what was once a gathering of ten to twelve people, is now a gathering of seven. For the seven, we were excited to gather and yet profoundly missing the elders and in-laws and the sacred place where we always gathered. We still lit candles, ate wonderful hand-prepared foods and told stories. But sadness also spoke at our new table, and we made room for it to dine with us.

During this holiday season it is quite likely that you are someone you care about is feeling sadness or increased stress during December. Perhaps dealing with health decline or chronic pain, divorce, or the death of a loved one. The National Alliance on Mental Illness found that among those polled: 64% of people living with mental illness report that their conditions worsened around the holidays. And the American Psychological Association reports that 38% of people they polled reported increased stress levels during December. This is the time of year to make self-care an even higher priority, to reach out to others, and to know that your Cedars community cares about you.

If you are having a blue holiday season, here are some suggestions:

- Don't personalize it. It's not a defect in you. Millions of people are impacted the same way this time of year.
- Keep your expectations realistic, don't ask too much of yourself or others. Instead notice small kindnesses and contributions.
- Reject societal messages of a perfect holiday season.
- Talk with your Primary Care Provider.
- If you are lonely, be in community. Volunteer where you can have contact with people. Come to our late afternoon Solstice and Christmas Eve services.
- Share with your minister. My door is open for you every Tuesday morning from 9:30am until noon on December 9th, 16th, & 23rd. You might even run into others who are feeling the same way.
- If it is a family member or friend who is suffering, ask them how they are "really" doing. Explain that you genuinely want to know and are there to listen.
- Choose hope. Choose to believe that not all days will feel this way and that others in your community care about your welfare.

May we find comfort in naming these feelings of joy, longing, and sadness, and find some peace in being together. Remember, your very existence is a miracle to be celebrated.

- By Rev. Margo

Board News

At its November meeting, the Cedars Board of Trustees determined that the **Mid-Year Congregational Meeting** will be held on Sunday, **January 18, 2026** after the service in Webster Hall. Please hold the date. At the meeting, the Board and program committees will provide updates to the congregation.



December Special Collection:

Thank you for all your contributions of food for Helpline and Fishline. It's almost December so time for our annual holiday tradition! For our **December Special Collection** we are collecting donations of NEW socks, underwear and pajamas (all sizes) for women and children who are receiving shelter and support services through the YWCA Alive Shelter in Bremerton. We will also gladly accept VISA and Safeway gift cards.



Donations may be brought to Sunday services on December 7 and 14 OR call Patricia Erdmann to arrange for items to be picked up at your home. Although this schedule reduces the amount of time you have to shop for donations, it means that mothers will receive your gifts in time to use gift cards and have new clothes before Christmas Day.

Carol Ann Davidson will bring our donations to the YWCA Alive Shelter shortly after the December 14 collection. For more information, contact Carol Ann or Patricia.

Cedars T-Shirts Are Here!

We have Cedars T-shirts available for purchase! Each shirt is \$20 and made from organic cotton. Contact the office at Office@cedarsuuchurch.org to get yours!



Thank Our Representatives for Protecting Our Vote

Each week, there will be a different card at the back of the service for people to sign to thank our representatives for protecting our vote. Please sign. Our goal is to encourage our representatives who are on the front line of this issue. So far, we have sent cards to Senators **Cantwell** and **Murray** and Representatives **Nance** and **Simmons**. We recently included **John Cameron Peavy**, a campaign staff worker in Texas. In the coming weeks, we will also include **Senator Hanson**. For more information, please contact Sandy Spears.



CEDARS Presents: STOCKtheSHELVES!

We are welcoming monetary donations only (cash or checks) for **Fishline** during December. No food donations at this time. Monetary donations can be dropped off at Sunday Service OR at Cedars office on Tuesdays from 9 am to 2 pm.

Any questions? Ask Patricia Erdmann or Nancy Dowey.



UUA News and Information

To learn more about UUA values, news, and information, click on the image or [HERE](#). You'll also find a permanent image link at the bottom of each newsletter for easy access.



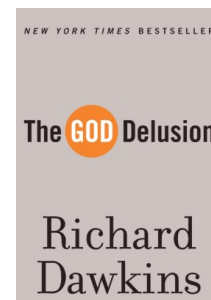
Ongoing Programs

Cedars Book Club

Our next book to be discussed via Zoom, on **Wednesday, January 14, at 1:30 pm**, will be **The God Delusion** Paperback – by Richard Dawkins (Author)

A preeminent scientist -- and the world's most prominent atheist -- asserts the irrationality of belief in God and the grievous harm religion has inflicted on society, from the Crusades to 9/11.

You can find more information [HERE](#). Please contact Herb Hethcote with any questions.



Super Suppers Volunteers: Super Appreciated!

We have a great team serving Super Suppers each month to an appreciative group of Islanders. For many years, we have teamed up with Kol Shalom to provide this much needed service, the last Tuesday of the month, at Eagle Harbor Congregational Church in Winslow. However, we need more volunteers!!

* to bring side dishes and help with set-up, serving, and cleanup

* or help warm up the premade main dish set up, and serve.

We provide side dishes or prepare the main dishes on alternating months.

You can sign up [HERE](#) for one or more slots, whatever works for you, and your help will be **SUPER APPRECIATED!** Our next opportunity is January 27.

For more information, contact **Mike Cox** at socialaction@cedarsuuchurch.org



Suquamish Community Kitchen

Every other month, Cedars takes the lead in preparing and serving a free, nourishing meal for anyone in our community through the Suquamish Community Kitchen. These meals require many helping hands to cook, serve, and clean up. Each role plays a vital part in making the evening run smoothly.

We invite you to sign up [HERE](#) to be a part of the team. Your time and energy will make a meaningful difference.

For more information, contact **Rod Kempkes** at president@cedarsuuchurch.org.



Cedars Childcare on Sunday Mornings is Back!

Good news! We offer childcare for families with young children during our Sunday services! If you know a family that hasn't been able to attend on Sundays because of a lack of childcare, please tell them about this. We look forward to welcoming some new faces that otherwise wouldn't be able to be with us on Sunday mornings! For details about how childcare is provided, click [HERE](#).

Cedars on Social Media

Did you know that Cedars now has a podcast? We are posting our Sunday Services on **Spotify** [HERE](#), on the **Apple Podcast** app [HERE](#), on Amazon Music [HERE](#), and on **iHeartRadio** [HERE](#) for easier access to our audio recordings. Our podcast is called “**Sunday Mornings at Cedars.**”



We are also now on **Instagram**! Find us [HERE](#).

And as usual, find us on our Church **Facebook** page [HERE](#) and our **Community Facebook** page [HERE](#).

Be sure to “Like” us and “Follow” us on each one!

You can also still find audio recordings of our Services on our website [HERE](#).

Beacon Article Deadline

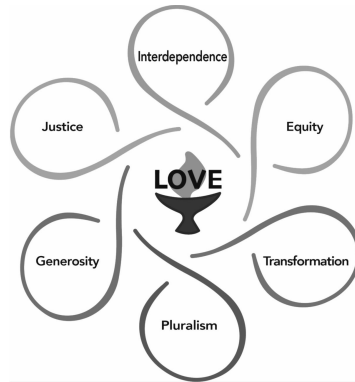
The deadline for submitting content for The Beacon is Mondays by the end of the day. If you would like to add an article, please send it to the Cedars office at

Cedars Facebook Conversations

If you're on Facebook, there is a Facebook group called Cedars UU Church Community Conversations for members and friends to share events, fun stories, etc. Let's keep the coffee hour going all week long! Join the group [HERE](#).



**Cedars UU Church is a
Welcoming Congregation
and Green Sanctuary**



Our Congregational Mission

*Worship with open hearts
Nurture a learning spirit
Serve justice with
compassion
Love without judgment*



Print the Beacon Newsletter

The Beacon is available to download and print each week. Go to www.cedarsuuchurch.org. The newest issue is available on the Cedars website under News after 12:00 p.m. on Fridays.

Member Directory

Members and Friends can easily search our online Church Directory for contact information. The link is located under the Connection tab of the Cedars website and [HERE](#).

Worship Services

Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
The Island School
8553 NE Day Road
Bainbridge Island

Cedars Minister

Rev. Margo Rinehart, Cedars Minister

Tuesday 9:30 am - 3:00 pm
284 Madrona Way, NE #128
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110
(206) 780-0373
Minister@cedarsuuchurch.org

Cedars Office

Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 am - 2:00 pm in office hours
284 Madrona Way, NE #128
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110
(206) 780-0373
Office@cedarsuuchurch.org

Do you have an article, event, or announcement?
Send it to Office@cedarsuuchurch.org for inclusion in our Thursday newsletter (3 days in advance). See our [submission guidelines](#).

Cedars UU Church (website)



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