

The Beacon

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

Volume 17 Issue 5 January 29, 2026



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This Week At Cedars

Sunday, February 1

10:00 am

The Island School

Embodying Resilience

Rev. Margo Rinehart, Minister

Nancy Phillip, Worship Associate

Through the work of grief guide Frances Weller, and the practices of Buddhist Pema Chodron, we will explore how to prevail in a life that is for more than ourselves.

Reverend Margo Rinehart serves Cedars by 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 this Service. Click [HERE](#) for details.

Sunday, February 1

Explore the Major Religions of the World

11:30 am - 1:00 pm (right after Service)

The Island School (bring a bag lunch)

Monday, February 2

Women's Covenant Group

7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Offsite

Thursday, February 5

Social Justice Committee

5:00 pm - 6:30 pm

Cedars Center

Friday, February 6

Web of Life Gathering

6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Bethany Lutheran Church

Saturday, February 7

Spiritual Odyssey Potluck

Please see below for more details and take a look at the Cedars calendar [HERE](#).

Upcoming Services

Sunday Service, February 8

10:00 am

The Island School

Let's Dream!: Brunch & Banter

Cedars Trustees

- Where is Cedars headed?
- What kind of community should we become?
- What would make us excited to invest in that future?



The Board of Trustees will be hosting a short and lively visioning session at our **Sunday service on February 8** to gather ideas about how Cedars can better serve families, young adults, and the wider community — and what we as a congregation would like to resource over the next year as we plan for our annual stewardship campaign later this spring. Join us and help imagine what's possible.

The service on February 8 will be in our Brunch & Banter format, so please bring something "brunchy" to share along with your ideas!

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

A Message from Reverend Margo

February's Theme: Embodying Resilience

In a time when radical changes are occurring in our inner and outer landscapes, we need to surrender ourselves to the ways in which we are bound to one another and the cosmos. With January's events in Minneapolis, we are weary from all we hear on the news and social media, and we experience a paradoxical state of anxiety and worry, and yet the belief in and hope for restoration. This is the time to embody resilience in our thoughts, emotions and actions. We must also reject the myth of resilience being an individualistic endeavor.



No one is resilient alone or in all times and situations. Rather resilience is a dynamic process in which we can take turns being resilient for one another. Author and activist, Soraya Chemaly, teaches us to lean into our greatest assets for resilience which are: interdependence, collective versatility, and shared care. She tells us to ignore the messages that glorify self-sufficiency and limitless positivity and instead lean into shared care and being resilience for one another. When one of us is feeling immobilized by anxiety or sadness, others can take up the cause for a time and then switch so that all have time for rest as well as action.

Last week's interfaith demonstrations in Minneapolis, where over 100 Unitarian Universalist (UU) clergy and hundreds of UU laypeople were present, protesters held the vision and hope for one another. Those of us participating in the February 12th Faith in Action Day in Olympia will be doing the same as we support legislation that upholds the inherent worth and dignity of every person and the democratic process that should represent all.

Resilience is not bouncing back from an experience or pushing through it. Rather it is allowing the experience to change us. What happens to us becomes a part of us. Resilient people do not 'bounce back' from hard life events, rather they find healthy ways of integrating those experiences into their being. That is why, as Chemaly reminds us, we must think about our resilience as related to community. Community is often where healing occurs. It is the container for transforming from pain and worry to the knowledge that this too will pass and we will manage in the day to day until change comes.- Rev. Margo Rinehart

To be resilient is to proclaim that our love and legacies of love shall endure and make changes in our lives, our families, communities, and our world. May we embody resilience each time we persevere. May our resilience create ripples of possibility for those who seek us. As beacons for sanctuary and liberation. - Rev. Rebekah Savage

News and Announcements

Social Action Committee Special Collection

Pink Haven Collective helps Trans Families in immediate danger pull up stakes and relocate quickly to Blue States. The Pink Haven Coalition is a joint project between frontline trans organizers, UU Service Committee, the Unitarian Universalist Association, other progressive faith groups, and mutual aid networks across the country. They fund and arrange relocation costs, including moving, housing, and other related expenses. Pink Transport has helped several Trans Families move to Washington State in the past year. **Tahoma Church in Tacoma (Rev Margo's other Church)** currently hosts 6 Trans Families who have recently relocated with the help of Pink Haven.



We took up a collection last year to support The Transforming Hearts Collective and split the donation with Pink Haven. Those funds went to their national headquarters for disbursement. Since then, the WAJUJUSTICE director, Nancy Reid, who facilitates Pink Haven in Washington State, has asked for more donations that will directly benefit families locally. They are in urgent need of funds to cover housing and household setup costs, which members of the host churches often provide. By giving generously today, we will help 6 families who have recently relocated to Tacoma and contribute to their settling into a safer home in our blue state.

For more information, email socialaction@cedarsuuchurch.org or contact **Nancy Phillip**.

NEW! Soul Matters Covenant Group at Cedars

Facilitated by Reverend Margo
Presented on Zoom
Date to be determined HERE



Covenant Groups offer the experience of discovery, solace, hope, and deep sharing through UU spiritual exploration and reflection in the supportive company of others.

The Soul Matters curriculum invites us to experience a theme each month. **Practicing Resistance** will be the theme for February. **Embodying Resilience** will be the next. As spiritual analysis without spiritual practice often leaves us unchanged, the exercises in each month's packet invite us to reflect on how the theme shows up in our daily lives.

Each person in the group will receive a monthly packet. Participants are invited to Select one of the 5-7 exercises and one of the dozen questions that speak about their life.

In our Zoom meetings, each session will include:

- Check-in
- Spiritual Exercises Reflection
- "You Question" Reflection
- Closing Words.

If you want to know more about the group before you sign up, contact **Reverend Margo** at minister@cedarsuuchurch.org.

For the first few sessions, the group will meet on Zoom once a month on Monday or Tuesday evenings. To determine what works best for their schedules, interested participants can choose from the available time slots at the link [HERE](#). As the days get longer, the group might elect to meet in person.

Educational Opportunity

Explore the Major Religions of the World

A Five-Session Course for Curious Minds

Sundays, Feb 1, Feb 15, Mar 1, Mar 15, Mar 29
11:30 am–1:00 pm (right after Service)
The Island School (bring a bag lunch)



Join presenters **Alan Miller** and **David Thomas** as we explore five of the world's great religious traditions through both history and lived experience. Alan is a retired professor of comparative religion, and David is a retired epidemiologist who has traveled the world and experienced many cultures and religious traditions. Together we'll look at:

- Judaism
- Christianity
- Islam
- Hinduism
- Buddhism

Each session focuses on one tradition and blends:

- ◆ Short readings (about 10 pages)
- ◆ Helpful historical and textual insights (Alan)
- ◆ Observations from world travel (David)
- ◆ Conversation and Q&A

Whether you're seeking a deeper understanding of global faiths, curious about how religion shapes culture, or enjoy learning in community, this course offers a thoughtful and engaging doorway in. All are welcome — no prior knowledge required!

Please feel free to sign up by clicking [HERE](#).

Spiritual Odyssey Potluck

Perspectives on Living Abroad: Lessons from Morocco

Saturday, February 7
Noon - 2:00 pm
Cedars Center



Please come to our next Spiritual Odyssey Potluck, when Cedars members **Keri Schmit** and **Rick Blythe** will join us from Marrakesh, Morocco, where Keri is teaching middle school language arts and social studies at the American School of Marrakesh, and Rick is working remotely. Morocco is located in the Maghreb region of Northwest Africa, bridging Africa and Europe.

Please bring a dish to share and your curiosity about life in Morocco. We'll have our meal from noon to 1:00 pm, and the Zoom session with Rick and Keri will start at 1:00 pm.

Space is limited at the Cedars Center, so please sign up by clicking [HERE](#).

Please contact **Johanna Munson** (johanna.munson7@gmail.com) to indicate your interest in presenting your own spiritual odyssey.

Social Action Committee Service Highlight: Transforming Hearts Collective

Nancy Philip and **Naomi Gary** participated in a 6-part Transforming Hearts class, explaining in depth what members of the Trans Communities face in Trump's America. The moving testimonials from several members of this community and Trans class participants really drove home just how unsafe Trans Families and individuals feel in this moment.



If you would like more information, please send an email to socialaction@cedarsuuchurch.org or contact **Nancy Phillip** or **Naomi Gary** at the Info Table on Sundays.

Board News

Mid-Year Congregational Meeting Held



On Sunday, January 18, after the Sunday service, the Cedars Board of Trustees held our annual Mid-Year Congregational meeting, where updates on the many ongoing programs in our congregation were provided.

If you were not able to attend the meeting, you can listen to a recording of it by clicking [HERE](#).

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.



Community Events

Interfaith Advocacy Day 2026

February 12, 2026, in Olympia

Please join the **Faith Action Network (FAN)** to bring the voices of compassion and justice to our elected leaders. Learn more about the issues and legislation on FAN's 2026 Legislative Agenda. Meet with advocates from your district to prepare for your legislative visits.



Thanks to the generosity of our donors, there is no cost to participate in FAN's Interfaith Advocacy Day this year. More information about this event can be found using this link: [Faith Action Network](#).

There are only 250 available spots to meet with your legislator or their legislative assistant, and they may fill up early. **Registration is available [HERE](#) and closes on Thursday, January 29**. To get up to speed on the policies advocating for on February 12, workshops will take place in the two weeks before Interfaith Advocacy Day.

FAN staff and our Legislative District Leads will set up an appointment for you and others from your district. Lunch will be provided. The **Cedars Social Action Committee (SAC)** is promoting this event, and several of us plan to go!

Please look for **Naomi Gary** at the Info Table on Sundays for more information, or email SAC at socialaction@cedarsuuchurch.org.

Honoring Air: Protecting the Breath of Life

**Friday February 6
6:30 pm to 8:30pm
Bethany Lutheran Church
7968 Finch Road NE, Bainbridge Island**



Gather in community with the **Bainbridge Island North Kitsap Interfaith Climate Circle** to explore our relationship with air, the sacredness of air, and to identify the actions we can take to restore air's purity.

For more information, send an email to climatecirclebinkfc@gmail.com or contact **Mike Cox** at toxman57@gmail.com

Who We Are: History of the Suquamish Tribe

Saturday February 21
1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Suquamish Museum
6861 South Street NE, Suquamish

Free lecture with Tribal Elder and Storyteller **Barbara Lawrence**.

Seating is limited with **registration required** at
(360)394-7105 or by email at
museum@suquamish.nsn.us

More information can be found [HERE](#).



Ongoing Programs

Cedars Men's Group

The Cedars Men's Group will meet in person at **3:00pm on February 10** at the **Cedars Center** to welcome any men who would like to consider joining. We meet once a month on the second Tuesday of each month.



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 on 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 **February 24**.

For more information, please get in touch with 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 join the team. Your time and energy will make a meaningful difference.



For more information, please get in touch with 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](#).

Thank Our Representatives for Protecting Our Vote

Each week, a different card will be 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**.

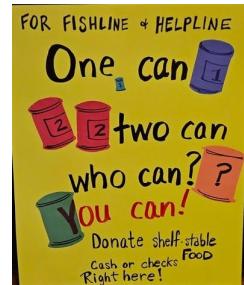


CEDARS Presents: YOU CAN!

YOU CAN! Donate shelf-stable food, cash, or checks to Fishline and Helpline House every Sunday. Our local food banks continue to serve more and more people.

Here's a summary of Fishline's 2025 food activities:

- More than 1 million pounds of food were given away through our free food market.
- Market visitors received an estimated 44% of their weekly meals from Fishline.



Please get in touch with **Nancy Dowey** or **Patricia Erdmann** with any questions.

Cedars T-Shirts Are Here!

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



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

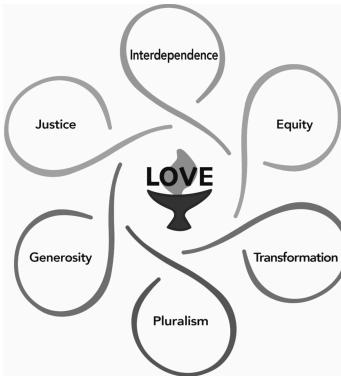
The deadline for submitting content for The Beacon is Mondays by the end of the day. If you would like to add an article, please send it to the Cedars office at office@cedarsuuchurch.org.

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 [HERE](#) and by going to the Cedars website at www.cedarsuuchurch.org under News.

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

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[Cedars UU Church \(website\)](#)



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