

The Beacon

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



Volume 17 Issue 3 January 15, 2026

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This Week At Cedars

**Sunday Service,
January 18
10:00 am
The Island School**

**Martin Luther King and Thich Nhat Hanh:
Brothers in Beloved Community**

**Rev. Margo Rinehart, Minister
David Thomas, Worship Associate**



Thich Nhat Hanh and Martin Luther King, Jr. came from different cultures and religions and from countries at war with one another. Let us experience how they influenced one another through deep friendship and a shared commitment to justice and peace.

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.

Upcoming Services

**Sunday, January 25
10:00 am
The Island School**

Kandinsky, Seeing What Cannot Be Seen

**Rev. Bill Comfort, Minister
Gregory Cook, Worship Associate**



Reverend 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 that he has used at Cedars UU, 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.

A Message from Reverend Margo

Practicing Resistance

On January 19, we will be celebrating the life and work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., not only him but also the thousands of unnamed people who dedicated themselves to resisting racial hatred and corrupt power structures. Acknowledging those who fought with

peaceful actions to make unjust and inhumane conditions known, and for all voices to be heard. For those who put their bodies and lives on the line so that all could be free.

As Unitarian Universalists, we know that every person is worthy of love. We are frustrated that many of our politicians place power and money above all else while ignoring the value inherent in all people. The Unitarian Universalist Association and many members in our congregations have engaged in political actions. Reverend Andrew Weber says, "We do not pray for miracles because we are the miracles. We are the force of the divine in the world; we are the holy wind of change promoting more love and more justice." Instead of praying for miracles, we should pray that our words and actions take root and flight. May all our work be grounded in and strengthened by our congregational community and the relationships we build outside our walls.

We have another year of practicing resistance in front of us. Some of our actions include speaking the truth, caring about the plight of others, listening deeply to their stories, and amplifying what we hear by telling those stories in places where they can make an impact. In 2026, let our faith and our congregation be a place where we create belonging for everyone. ~ Rev. Margo



A Prayer for Practicing Resistance

Spirit of Connections and Love, bless the many ways we resist. Those who march and organize, those who cook, donate, and write. Those who tend to the weary, who pray, or hold vigil, those who say, "Rest now. I'll take this shift."

Let this wide circle honor every offering, visible or unseen. May we release the myths that define resistance in specific ways and, instead, remember the truth of shared power. May this be our prayer: to sustain one another's courage until quiet faith and public fire become one movement of love. ~ Michelle Collins

News and Announcements

NEW! Soul Matters Covenant Group at Cedars

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

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** (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](#).

New Artwork in the Cedars Center!

Cedars member, **Bryce Bennett**, has donated one of his oil paintings, titled "**Spectrum**" to Cedars. It is now hanging on the east wall of the main conference room at the Cedars Center.

Bryce wrote his inspiration on the back of the piece: "Colors are most beautiful when they work together in harmony."

Thank you, Bryce!



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.

Board News

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.



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.**

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.

Cultural Event

Weekends, January 9-18 7:00 - 10:00 pm Bainbridge High School Theater

Bryce Bennet invites you to journey **"Into the Woods"** this winter with Ovation! Performing Arts Northwest!



Tickets may be purchased by going [HERE](#) or to <https://www.ovationmtb.com/into-the-woods-2026-tickets>

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

Ongoing Programs

Cedars Men's Group

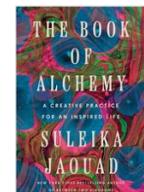
The Cedars Men's Group will meet in person at **3:00pm on February 10** at the **Cedars Center** to welcome any men who would like to consider joining. We meet once a month on the second Tuesday of each month.



Journaling Group

Inspired by Suleika Jaouad's *The Book of Alchemy*, we are interested in developing our writing practice by making journaling an everyday routine. Care to join us?

We next meet at the **Cedars Center** on **February 19** from **12:30 to 3:30 pm**.



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 **January 27**.

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: STOCKtheSHELVES!

Thanks to your generosity, we were able to send \$115 each to Helpline House and Fishline in December! Cedars UU Church has been a consistent part of both organizations' success in 2025.



Join Cedars UU Church in the fight against hunger in our community. Your donation can make a direct impact on local families in need. Each donation allows us to purchase food from Fishline and Helpline House, ensuring that your generosity reaches as many people as possible. Together, we can nourish our community—one donation at a time.



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!



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.



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

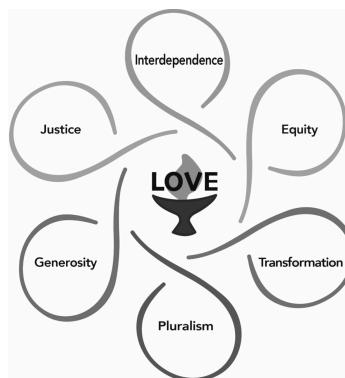
The deadline for submitting content for The Beacon is Mondays by the end of the day. If you would like to add an article, please send it to the Cedars office at office@cedarsuuchurch.org.

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*



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

Would you like to subscribe to The Beacon? Email: 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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