

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowships
The Midweek Update
August 9, 2017

BUFsters respond to Local Farmworker Crisis with H2A Workers

H2A workers are brought in from other countries (typically Mexico in the case of farmworkers, poultry processing, etc.) on temporary visas. They have no worker rights, other than the federal laws about how they are to be treated & paid (not a lot). The companies that hire them are in charge of their visas. Many H2A workers are seriously overworked and not fed enough, and fed food that is not sufficiently nutritious. This is "normal." When these conditions are exacerbated by other factors, such as heat exhaustion, it is not unusual for workers to die. Several H2A workers die every year from overwork and heat exhaustion. Activists liken it to legal human trafficking, where workers are sometimes literally worked to death. The problems have not been so evident here, but recently, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of H2A workers in our region, so the issues are happening here now. Local allies want to prevent this.



What Happened This Week at Sarbanand Farms

Sarbanand Farms sells blueberries under the Munger/Naturipe label. H2A workers at Sarbanand Farms (all men) have been experiencing the "normal" conditions of serious overwork at the height of the berry picking season and not enough (and poor quality) food. They were not being offered sufficient breaks, and were told that if they missed three days of work, they would be terminated and sent back to Mexico. Because of this pressure, despite the heat and smoke (Sumas reached the "purple" air quality designation last week--dangerous for anyone, even healthy folks, to exert themselves outside), the workers kept working. Several workers collapsed. One worker went into a coma from heat exhaustion exacerbated by poor air quality and ended up at Harborview. This worker died Monday night.

Furthermore, Sarbanand Farms had previously not renewed the temporary visas of many (all?) of the workers when they were supposed to--so the workers, while still working for Sarbanand, had become undocumented.



How You Can Help Now

Check Community2Community for updates at
<https://www.facebook.com/Community2Community>

Prepared food, charcoal, and coolers (with ice/ice packs) are welcome, among other things listed. Also, garbage pick ups are a practical way to help.

Donate. Cash is needed to renew rental on the toilets, gas for worker transportation, some groceries, maintaining the portable hot spots they are using, and for some office supplies. Cash donations are problematic as the farmworkers don't have an official internal encampment structure at this point. As Community to Community is paying for these things out of pocket, please send donations to Community to Community. You can donate by PayPal at their site foodjustice.org or drop off or mail checks*** to Community to Development, 203 West Holly Street, Suite 317, Bellingham, WA 98225

BUF and C2C in Partnership

Five years ago BUF voted to establish a partnership relationship with Community to Community. Among the many supportive relationships that we have with local organizations, this one is unique. Our partnership was formed after years of cooperative work, significant deliberation and reflection upon our principles, an understanding of what specific forms of support BUF would provide...and then, after the initial years of partnership, an explicit re-affirmation of our shared commitments.

Specific forms of support that BUF has provided include meeting space, kitchen space, hosting of events for public education, financial and fundraising support, and simply being allies during these years of indignity, scapegoating, and threats of deportation.

Like the covenanted relationships that we have with one another at BUF, partnership with an external organization is complicated. At our doorstep today, however, lie the straightforward material needs of the people who harvest the fruits of Whatcom County. The accompanying article describes the threats to health and safety, legal status, and ability to make a living which our friends and partners face right now.

The support we offer, now, will have an immediate positive impact on those who have little to show for their labors. Our support, now, will be a tangible expression of our faith in human rights.

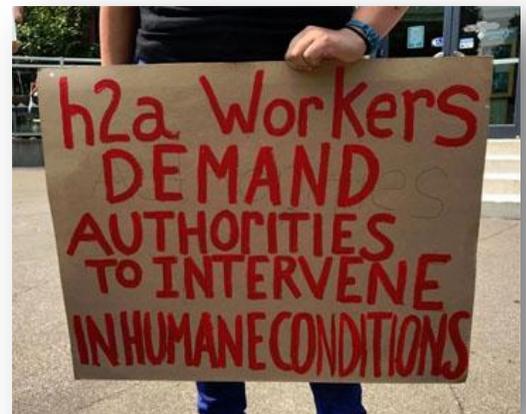
In Solidarity,
Rev. Paul Beckel

When workers began collapsing, 70 workers went into the company office to say they needed a shorter work day during the bad conditions, more breaks, more water and better food. They were all fired on the spot and given 30 minutes to collect their belongings and get off company property. They requested their paychecks so they would have some money to get home and the company said they would send their final paychecks to their home addresses in Mexico. These men were literally penniless when they were put on the street. They speak no English. This was Saturday morning August 5th.

Police were called about the workers hanging around on the street (perhaps to help them or perhaps to complain about them). After pressure came from police, the company hired a couple of buses that picked up the workers and took them to the Fairhaven Greyhound station--where they were going to be left (no money to buy bus tickets and no visas and no way to communicate--no way they could have gotten home on the bus). Community to Community (C2C), however, was aware of the situation by now, and activists met the buses and told the workers to refuse to get off the buses and demand to be taken back.

By now, C2C had contacted a local Mexican family of farmers, who agreed to let the workers to sleep on their property while the situation was addressed. This family hires H2A workers, has been aware for years of the abysmal treatment many of these workers receive locally, and have been very supportive of these workers. This family lives 1.6 miles from Sarbanand Farms. The bus drivers decided to leave all the workers at a Mexican grocery store in Everson. C2C and other activists picked them up and carpooled them to the friendly family's farm, where they began to establish an encampment.

The farmers then marched the 1.6 miles from the encampment to Sarbanand Farms and staged a demonstration (also on Saturday August 5th). When workers still at the farm saw the demonstration, several more left their jobs and joined them--so the population at the encampment has grown to 120. There are still about 500 workers at the farm. The police presence during this march and demonstration was large and unfriendly and clearly attempting to intimidate workers. Sheriff's deputies, and Lynden, Sumas and Everson police were all there. According to allies present, it was clear that these police were working in close collaboration with border patrol/ICE/homeland security.



However, when the media presence increased (this situation is getting national media attention now--lots of media on-site), the police backed off. Rosalinda Guillen (Director of Community to Community) was told that a permit was required for any future marches or demonstrations. Maru Mora of Latino Advocacy is the primary media contact for the situation, and Community to Community is acting as organizer and resource provider.

Rosalinda reports that the encampment is developing well. The farmers at the encampment have received a number of key donations/loans--tents, blankets, two generators, a refrigerator and two freezers. C2C rented toilets and has been providing transportation. C2C supporters transported all the workers in the encampment to Mt. Vernon to meet with Familias Unidas por la Justicia (FUJ)--the brand new local farmworker union. All these workers joined this union last night--though it is unclear what this might or might not mean in their futures, given their H2A worker histories. Legal aid has been on site at the encampment since Saturday (along with C2C staff). There likely will be a legal report tonight that will help dictate the next steps. In the meantime, the lawyers are busy taking declarations from all the workers.

For an excellent article covering the crisis, see Appendix I of this week's MWU or: BRACEROS ORGANIZE AFTER ONE WORKER DIES, By David Bacon in The American Prospect, 8/8/17

<https://davidbaconrealitycheck.blogspot.com/2017/08/braceros-strike-after-one-worker-dies.html>

<http://prospect.org/>

***Note: C2C, while a licensed State of WA nonprofit, is not a federal 501(c)3. If you would like a tax deduction for the donation, please make your check out to their fiscal sponsor, "Food First" (a large sister organization in Seattle <https://foodfirst.org/>) with C2C donation in the memo line but still mail the checks to the C2C office.

~Yours in peaceful justice, Kara Black (360-676-2300)

BUF Sunday Services in August: (more information in the August Calendar of Events section of this newsletter)

August 13th-10:30 am service with Guest Speaker Ted Williams, with music by Karen Fitzgerald. August 13 - "Transforming the Dark Night of the Globe." Building upon his training in astrophysics, computer science and systems counseling, and his personal experiences as an educator, activist, and Buddhist practitioner, Ted will explore ways in which we can engage the Dark Night of the Globe and transform the world through a Politics of Love.

August 20th- 10:30 am service -A Free and Responsible Search for Truth and Meaning - **Anastacia and Oliver Lundholm**, with music by Don Reinke

August 27th- 10:30 am service -Songs of Hope with Bellingham singer/songwriter **Dana Lyons**

Join the Team: Sunday Forum Coordinators

Experienced volunteers Jan Cavitt and Murray Bennett wish to share leadership of Sunday Forum coordination. The Forum takes place at 9:15 a.m. Sundays, roughly September through June. Coordinators find guest speakers and help them to set up on Sunday morning. With three volunteers, this can mean just once every three weeks. For more info or to volunteer contact Jennifer Smith, Director of Lifelong Learning, jennifer@buf.org.

Save the Date For the BUF All-Church Retreat

The BUF All-Church Retreat is coming up October 6-8, at Camp Kirby on beautiful Samish Island. The theme will be "Young at Heart." It should be a fun and uplifting weekend for all ages! Stay tuned over the next few weeks for details on how to register!



A note from Esther Golde, BUF Name Tag and Button Maker:

Every year the name tag trays of BUF friends (happily) fill up, although (unhappily) many of those BUF friends do not return during the year. As the trays fill up, it is often difficult to find one's own nametag amongst the many. So in the summer, in order to find out who amongst the many are returning, all the name tags are removed and put in envelopes. Returning BUF friends are invited to find their name tags in the appropriate envelope, put them in plastic holders (found in baskets on the shelf), wear them, and then return them to the shelf ready for their next visit.

If you should see someone standing perplexed in front of the name tag holders, please take a minute to see if they need help and possibly make a new friend along the way.

NOTE: People who signed up for a name tag but never actually had one, should ask the greeters to look for it in the yellow recipe box in the Greeters' Cupboard.

Update on things going on at BUF during the summer season

Parking lot improvements and landscape work- Volunteer Work Party being planned for September Building & Grounds committee is working to organize a volunteer clean-up this September, focused on the parking lot and trimming, cleaning up and winterizing the landscaping. Keep an eye on this space for the Work Party schedule and volunteer sign-ups.

Church Music- This summer has been filled with organ music at BUF, as three musicians visit at different times during the week to practice playing the BUF organ for upcoming Sunday services. Allen Hickock, Don Reinke and Melanie Reick have all been rehearsing. We've enjoyed hearing the organ at these quiet summer days and know you will also enjoy it during Sunday services.

Hospitality Committee- By the 27th of August, BUF members will be able to make appointments for photography sessions which will be part of our Directory update this year. Appointments can be made online or you can receive volunteer assistance in picking an appointment date after Sunday services, beginning on Sunday, August 27. The photography session, an 8x10 photo and the Church Directory are provided at no charge to BUF members. We also have information from Lifetouch about photo packages than can be purchased, but there is absolutely no requirement to do so.

Fall School Registrations opening up for Natural Learning Center and Mei Hua Chinese Language School:

The Mei Hua Chinese School comes back to BUF on August 27th. Mei Hua offers two semesters of language classes on Sunday afternoons. Each session is 15 classes and they offer Beginner Level (ages 4-7) and Intermediate Level (ages 8-14). Contact info@meihuaschool.org

The Natural Learning Center is an alternative, child-led, educational environment with classes upstairs at BUF Monday-Friday during the school year. They are a community of learners, comprised of students ages 5 to 12 years, and adults who serve to support, engage, and nurture young minds. Contact or more info at www.naturallearningcenter.org

Gearing Up for the BUF Children's Program

Our religious education Children's Program begins for the year on September 17th. **However, starting this Sunday we will be bringing back children's focus at the beginning of the service. This Sunday, August 13th**, there will be a baby dedication and we would love for the children to be present to meet and participate in welcoming their new friend.

August 20th is the last Sunday before school starts in Bellingham. The children's Focus will have a **Blessing of the Backpacks**. All are invited to bring their backpacks, diaper bags, computer bags, briefcases or lunch boxes for a blessing to start the school year with a reminder that you have a whole community wishing you well. After the children's Focus, children and youth are welcome to remain with their parents for worship or go upstairs with Tuesday Magee to have some fun.

And Please Save the Date for Family Camp, October 6-8 at beautiful Camp Kirby, Samish Island, WA

Planning an Extensive Adult Education Program At BUF This Year

This year we are looking at providing an extensive Adult ed program including classes on Building your own theology, Evolutionary Psychology, Makers Space, and many more!

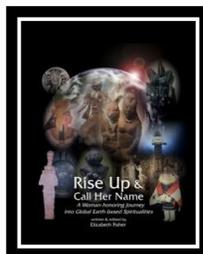
If you are interested in helping plan or facilitate I would like to invite you to come to the Adult Ed committee meeting Sunday, Aug 20th at noon,

If you have a class in mind that you would like to facilitate, I invite you to fill out this form to provide us with information: <https://goo.gl/forms/cEIIudBkmtYd637C2>

Blessing,
Jennifer Smith, BUF Director of Life Long Learning

Deadline for Registration to Rise Up and Call Her Name Class

Just a reminder that the registration for the upcoming Rise Up and Call Her Name class is August 31st. Register with Deb Cruz at dwcruz@comcast.net. See the "Upcoming events in September" for more details on the class.



Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship
FAMILY CAMP
October 6-8, 2017
Camp Kirby, Samish Island, WA

Young at Heart
MAIN WORKSHOP
PRESENTED BY
Dr. Linda "Sunny" Goggin, MD

BUF Calendar Highlights 8/9– 8/20

Wednesday, August 9
*Humanitas, 10am, Sanctuary

Thursday, August 10
*Flowering Cherry Mindfulness Meditation Group, 2pm-3:30pm Meditation/Quiet Room

Sunday, August 13
*Sunday Worship- with Guest Speaker Ted Williams and music by Karen Fitzgerald
*Coffee Hour, 11:30 am, Social Hall

Monday, August 14
*Life Exercise, 4:30 pm, Flex
*Black Lives Ministry, 6:00pm Conference Room

Wednesday, August 16
*Humanitas, 10am Sanctuary

Thursday, August 17
* Flowering Cherry Mindfulness Meditation Group, 2pm-3:30pm Meditation/Quiet Room
*Retreat Planning, 5:30pm, Classroom One
*BUF Book Group Potluck and Planning-7pm Off site.

Sunday, August 20
**Sunday Worship- with Guest Speakers Anastacia and Oliver Lundholm with music by Don Reinke. "A Free and Responsible Search for Truth and Meaning"
*Coffee Hour, 11:30 am, Social Hall
*Community Night Dinner Planning Meeting- Noon in Library

August Calendar of Events

Humanitas - Helping People In a Pinch, every Wednesday at 10am We are going to take a break and will not be publishing any more stories in the Mid-Week Update until September, even though our doors will be open as usual each Wednesday morning. If you would like further information on what we do at *Humanitas* or if you would like to donate, please contact elizweber@msn.com or check our corner of the kiosk in the Social Hall.

~ *The Humanitas Team*

The needs of the Lummi Food Bank do not take a summer vacation 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. Please consider adding a few items to your shopping list (groceries or personal items) that you can donate to their Food Bank by leaving in the food basket cart at the front entrance.

You can also make that struggle a little less burdensome with cash donations made out to the Lummi Food Bank (submit to the BUF office). There is also an EFT form in the Lummi food basket, should you wish to make a monthly electronic donation. Thank you for your continued support to help others.
~ Carol Dukes



Miracle of Mindfulness—Join Us Every Thursday at 2:00pm Meeting **every Thursday** and 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 August 10th and August 17th in the downstairs Meditation Room.** Chairs are provided; bring a cushion if you wish. For more information contact David Gillespie at davidgillespie72@gmail.com.

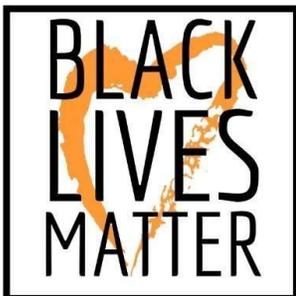
Sunday, August 13

10:30am Service Guest Speaker **Ted Williams, with music by Karen FitzGerald -**

“Transforming the Dark Night of the Globe.” Building upon his training in astrophysics, computer science and systems counseling, and his personal experiences as an educator, activist, and Buddhist practitioner, Ted will explore ways in which we can engage the Dark Night of the Globe and transform the world through a Politics of Love.

Coffee Hour at 11:30 am

HARNESSING THE POWER OF LOVE TO CREATE CHANGE- August 14th at 6pm



[Black Lives Matter Ministry Team](#) meeting will be held on Monday, August 14th at 6:00 PM. The BUF Black Lives Matter Ministry Action Team seeks to nurture the social, spiritual and personal development of congregation members in the exploration of how racism and privilege impact our congregation, our community, and our nation. In particular, we acknowledge the targeted violence which impacts black people disproportionately. We are committed to harnessing the power of love to dismantle racism and white supremacy across our communities and to creating spaces inclusive of people of all races, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds. We meet consistently, every second and

fourth Monday of the month at 6pm in the Conference Room.

BUF's Book Club Potluck for Planning Thursday, Aug 17th at 7pm Thursday, August 17th will be a potluck gathering for choosing our next year's titles, mostly drawn from the Bellingham Library's list of kits, though this isn't a requirement. Please decide on two favorite choices, one a fiction book and one a non-fiction, and bring them to the meeting. They should be books you've read. Be prepared to promote your choices, and we will vote at the end on the books we'd like to include. A list of the library's kits can be found



at <http://www.eventkeeper.com/kitkeeper/index.cfm?curOrg=BELLING>

Where: Lauralee Carbone's home - 2212 40th St., Bellingham 98229

Questions to Jan Cavitt, jadacad@gmail.com

Visit our blog to stay updated: <http://bufbookgroup.blogspot.com/>

Sunday, August 20

Service at 10:30 am. A Free and Responsible Search for Truth and Meaning - Anastacia and Oliver Lundholm, with music by Don Reinke



Social Justice Collection Recipient for the Month of August: Brigid Collins

The mission of Brigid Collins is to end child abuse by building strong families and protecting children. We do this via comprehensive children's advocacy centers, and parenting education and support. Learn more about us at: <http://www.brigidcollins.org>.

At Brigid Collins, we believe that protecting children from sexual abuse is an adult's job. However, we have discovered that most adults do not adequately protect children, not because they don't think that it's important, but because they don't know how. We would use this collection to help support our "Stewards of Children," Child Sexual Abuse Prevention program. This is a 2-hour training that aims to prevent child sexual abuse by arming adults with skills to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse, as well as motivate them to courageous action. For every \$10 that we raise for this program, one more member of the Whatcom and Skagit communities will be given the skills to prevent child sexual abuse and protect vulnerable children.

Statistics indicate that

1 in 10 children

will be sexually abused before the age of 18.

In more than 90% of abuse cases,

the abuser was someone who was close to the child.

These numbers are epidemic.



BrigidCollins

FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

Nurturing children, ending abuse

Sunday, August 27 Songs of Hope - Dana Lyons

Service at 10:30 am: Bellingham singer/songwriter Dana Lyons (<https://cowswithguns.com>) will share songs for all ages on reverence for the

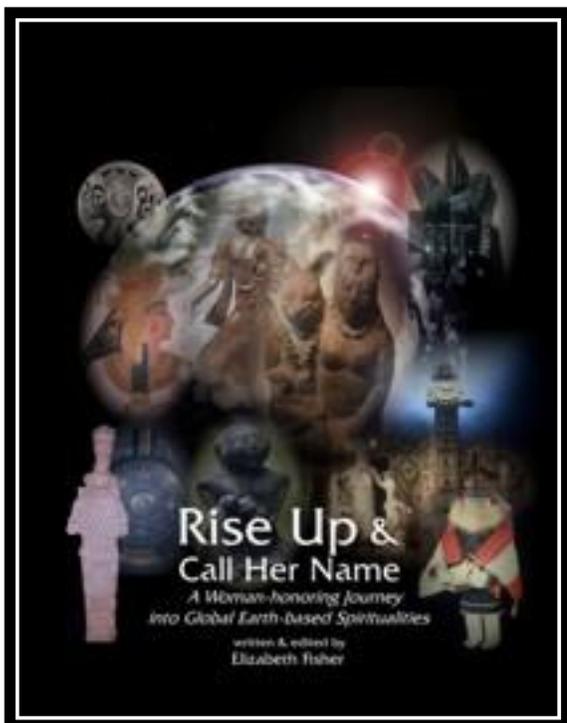


natural world . . . and hope to be found in our vision of the interdependence of all beings. Dana is no stranger to BUF. Having performed at BUF for various events such as Earth Day, he has also worked with BUF to support Lummi Nation in the Totem Pole Journeys and even having gone to the UU General Assembly with BUF, Commit2Respond and Lummi Nation in June of 2015 as part of BUF's GA Workshops and the GA Public Witness event

(<http://www.uua.org/ga/past/2015/business/witness>). *“Every performance is a celebration of life on earth, fueled by Dana’s infectious music, sharp wit, keen observation and warm heart. Prepare to laugh, sing and renew your appreciation for the earth we all call home.”*- Claudia Kienholz, Seattle Folklore Society.

☐ COMING IN SEPTEMBER ☐

Rise Up and Call Her Name



On Tuesdays evenings from September 12th through December 12th, 6:30 -9:30 pm, BUFster Deb Cruz will be facilitating this amazing woman-honoring journey into global Earth-based spiritualities. “Rise Up” was developed by UU Liz Fisher (<http://www.riseupandcallhername.com>) and is a self-contained 13-session course that weaves together spiritual stories worldwide that honor female divinities. Contact Deb Cruz at dwcruz@comcast.net. Those of the male persuasion are encouraged to participate! I will be asking for a materials fee of \$25.00, but no one will be turned away because of a lack of funds. REGISTRATION is required in order to ensure sufficient materials are available for all participants.

A gestalt of attributes integral to varied cultures, Rise Up presents a textured spiritual inquiry often missing from exclusively male imaged, monotheistic belief systems. Techniques for capturing and sharing discoveries on this journey are introduced as crucial tools for traveling.

Sacred narratives, both historical and contemporary, create the

value context for societies. Stories from spiritual traditions that honor the female divine and teach Her ethical lessons are the focus of this innovative curriculum. Tales of Her diverse shapes, colors, sounds and movement prove to be powerful devices for reclaiming and actualizing human potential.

Ecological awareness is prominent on this journey. Cycles, interconnection and biodiversity are given form and substance through stories that portray both the power and process of Nature, advocating reverence for Her.

Circles of participants or individuals traveling solo undertake personally relevant activities. Through visual images, chants, creative rituals, movement and hands-on art projects, a fresh perspective on qualities such as fearlessness, compassion, nurturing and the unfolding of personal spirituality arise. Also, knowing there are traditions that value the female but in no way deprecate the male can provide inspiration and sustenance to both women and men. And its lots of fun!

Healing, both personal and cultural, is often a benefit of this journey. Stimulated by the knowledge of the female divine these stories and activities unfold, we frequently discover life-affirming, but often underdeveloped, aspects of our own unique personalities.

☐ COMING IN OCTOBER ☐

INTERWEAVE BUFs GLBTQ Group

INTERWEAVE joined the #PresentPerfect event, a nationwide pride invite via Facebook for interested souls to come visit a faith place.

The idea is that on Thursday October 19, all that are willing and able will post a specific link from InterfaithPRIDE.org to Facebook, this will create a lot of friends. #PresentPerfect will then create an invite to the people in our area to invite them to BUF on October 22.

VISIT INTERFAITHPRIDE.ORG FOR MORE INFO.

Membership to INTERWEAVE is free and open to all community GLBTQ people. To be added to the email interweave listserve, send your name and email to Cathy.campbell@siriusbilling.com

INTERWEAVE is a member driven group. If you want an event to happen, we can help you plan carry it out.

We need leads to plan and carry out Movie nights, forums, workshops, social activities. Please let me know if you are interested.



~ Interweave Advisory committee Carrie, Carl, Alison, Marian, Mark, Cathy