



“Voices of Our Hearts”

The Avalon Unitarian Fellowship Newsletter

- April 2007 -

Greetings!

- 1 - Upcoming services & events / Worship News
- 2 - member care / Salutation to the Dawn / CUC events / Thank you's
- 3 - Ever been asked who we are?
- 4 -Bi-law Session #1 / Terminator Seeds / Contact Info / Birthday Announcement
- 5 -CUC News / A Quiz

Services & Other Events This Month:

April 1st "Samarpan Meditation" with Bani Bal

We welcome back Bani to continue the dialogue on Samarpan meditation. A practice of manifesting positive qualities through meditation so that one can evolve on all levels.

April 3rd "Passover Seder"

Hosted by us with invited guests from different faith communities. Beginning at 5:30pm

April 6th "Soulful Sundown & Potluck" 6:30pm

April 8th Which UU Principles Are Realistic And Applicable To Life Today? Rev. Penny Allderdice will initiate discussion by noting choices made by Tomas Berger, Ursala Franklin, and Marilyn Harvey. She asks us to come ready to share additional examples, especially from our experience with our own families and people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

April 15th "Science, Technology and Social Responsibility" with Ray Will

In a highly technical world, how do the scientist and the engineer address the social implications of what they do? Should the pure scientist have limits on areas of investigation? Can social institutions learn from the scientific method? What part does 'social conscience' play in the role of the engineer?

April 22nd "Earth Day Awareness" with Diane

Ryan and Kate Morrison

April 29th "T.B.A."

Worship Committee News

"Soulful Sundown"

How would you like to take part in our services by occasionally doing the welcome, the opening or closing words...?

If you are interested in taking a more active role in service leadership please contact Tammy, Diane, or Terry.

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Soulful Sundown #3 is booked for April 6<sup>th</sup> at Gower Street United Church, in the lecture hall.

It is "Good Friday" so we will also hold a mini potluck starting at 6:30pm with the service from 7:30-9pm. Once again this is an alternate form of service meant to be a "radically inclusive, participatory, heart centred community experience that celebrates the mystery and wonder of being alive. An exploration of spirituality through music, dance, gentle movement, meditation, drumming, and chant."

Call/email Tammy or Sherril to share your thoughts and ideas and questions.

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The slight alteration in timing for Sunday services may be inconvenient for some. Please let us know if this is a problem for you.

A time for meditation has yet to be worked out. Coffee/hot water will be put on for those who want to arrive by **6:30pm** for a little time of socializing. Service starts at **7pm..**

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Please let Tammy (576 3646) know if you'd like to consider leading or co-leading a service. Your thoughts and ideas on how we gather are always welcome.

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~ ~ ~ Member Care ~ ~ ~



A few words from Yvonne... Member care to me means trying to be as available as possible to members of our

Unitarian community that have a need - be it the case of a card at a time of loss or a welcome card for a new baby.

We have members who on occasion require more practical help - a ride to a doctors appointment, or to the shops. These are needs that as we are able, we try to meet.

It might also mean making a phone call if someone hasn't been around lately - just to make sure they're okay.

Sometimes we get a request for household items and as a group we try to fulfill these requirements. Often it's only an ear to listen - which in fact is of profound help in many instances.

We are Yvonne 722 2749 / Jan 739 8750 / Terry 895 8333



SALUTATION TO THE DAWN - submitted by Diane Ryan

Look to this day!

For it is life, the very life of life.

In its brief course

Lie all the verities and realities of your existence:

The bliss of growth;

The glory of action;

The splendor of achievement;

For yesterday is but a dream,

And tomorrow is only a vision;

But today, well lived, makes every yesterday

a dream of happiness,

And every tomorrow a vision of hope.

Attributed to Kalidasa the great Sanskrit poet who scholars believe lived from the middle 4th to the early 5th century.

Unicamp?

Check it out... www.unicampofontarion.ca

~ ~ ~

This might be the very thing for you!!!

CU*UL School - July 19-22, 2007

(Canadian Unitarian*Universalist Leadership School)

Where: McMaster University, Hamilton, ON

Consider attending if:

- you are a current or emerging leader in your congregation
- you want to become a better leader
- you are open to challenge and changes in outlook & practice
- you have the support of your congregation's Board

For more information:

<http://www.cuc.ca/programs/cuul.pdf>

(or) talk to someone on the board.

~ EASTERN REGIONAL FALL GATHERING ~

Eight months and counting! The Eastern RFG will take place Nov 2-4, and we are recruiting volunteers for the following:

Treasurer / Registrar / Billeting Coordinator / Children and Youth program assistants

We also need people to provide home hospitality, and have already received confirmation from some hosts. If you are able to billet participants, please let us know how many you can accommodate. You can get in touch with

Terry Rielly - terryrielly@nf.sympatico.ca or Vyda Ng - vydang@nl.rogers.com

to volunteer or request more information.

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a BIG thanks to the following for adding to the success of our "Coffee House for Love"...

Gower Street United Church

Food for Thought, Duckworth St.

Blackmarsh Rd. Dominion

Merrymeeting Rd. Sobey's

Coleman's Food Centre, Merrymeeting Rd.

from Mary Bennett, our C.U.C. Executive Director:

Ever been asked who we are? Read on...

What's Your Elevator Speech?

Visiting Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship in Thunder Bay, a member came up to me at coffee hour and asked me, "What's your elevator speech?"

I said, "Our roots go back to 16th century Christianity. We were Unitarians as opposed to Trinitarians. Currently some, but not all, Unitarians identify as Christians. Our hymnal is called Singing the Living Tradition and it includes songs and readings from many world religions as well as those from our Christian and Jewish heritage. It also has readings from secular poets."

And then I said, "What's yours?"

You may never have had someone ask you, "What's your elevator speech?" unless you've attended a workshop at your congregation where creating a short, memorable answer to the question, "What is Unitarian Universalism?" was an exercise in the session.

I have lots of short conversations with people, especially when I'm traveling on CUC work and feel compelled to mention the purpose of traveling is because I'm heading to a Unitarian conference or congregation. In my experience, the question is more often phrased as something like, "What's the difference between the Unitarian church and the United church?" or "What do Unitarians believe in?" And it's asked on airplanes more than in elevators.

I've actually never been asked a question like this in an elevator, but I know people who have. If you're at a CUC Annual Conference & Meeting and there are signs all over the place about Unitarianism, there's a good chance that if you're wearing your name tag, you may get asked.

It can be surprising, how hard it can be to answer, even for people who have attended for a long time. Many people find it helpful to give some forethought to a UU "elevator speech"--a brief description they can use when asked. The following is an excerpt from a workshop presented by Art Brewer, a member of Toronto First. Art facilitated a workshop for the Unitarian Church of Vancouver on "Welcoming and Engaging Members and Guests."

Here are some tips that Art shared with the group of 30 or so:

DO

- Make it short (maximum 30 seconds)
- Include a "hook"
- Write it and rewrite it
- Practice delivering it
- Project your passion, smile and maintain eye contact with the listener
- Develop different versions for different situations

DON'T

- Let it sound like "canned" text

- Ramble (maximum 30 seconds)
- Use terminology people won't understand (e.g., CUC, RE)
- Leave the listener mentally asking "So what?" or thinking "I have no idea what that meant"
- Rush your delivery
- Start it with the words "Well, we're not."

Following are three examples. Send me yours--I'd love to have a collection. And be assured that, yes, you can send me a revision after you change it. After all, we **are** the Living Tradition, right?

Rob Dainow, Unitarian Church of Vancouver

"Unitarianism is a liberal religion that draws from many traditions and sources. Each person is free to believe what they want - we have an active pagan group in our church, some members are atheists, and we are a Welcoming Congregation (optional: which means, among other things, that we welcome people of all sexual and gender orientations). What we all agree on is a group of sources for spiritual knowledge and a set of present day principles that North American Unitarians have discussed and agreed to. Let me give you this card that shows these principles and sources. I hope you find it helpful."

Bob Woodham

"Unitarianism is a religion that split from traditional Christianity about 400 years ago on issues of intellectual freedom and human dignity. It attracted me because it was ahead of its time on important social issues. It challenges me because it is often ahead of my time on current issues. I support it because Unitarians make a difference in this world."

Art Brewer, First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto

"It's a liberal religion which started in 16th century Europe. By 'liberal' I mean that people are free to hold their own theological beliefs. So, there's no doctrine or creed. We even have some members who are atheists! But we share common values and principles. A lot of us are very active in social justice issues." (Then I give them a Principles and Sources card).

Post your "elevator speech" at:

<http://x.cuc.ca/wordpress/>

(Click "Comments" to add yours.)

This and many other workshops are available through the CUC - funded by your congregation's annual contributions - at no additional cost to your congregation. Call us at 1-888-568-5723/416-489-4121/604-264-0088 or send an email to info@cuc.ca or fill out the online request form at: <http://www.cuc.ca/programs/regions/index.htm>

Take care of yourselves and each other,

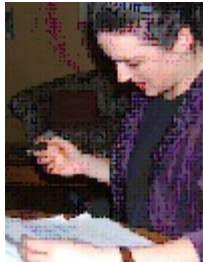
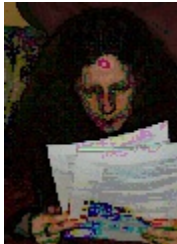
Mary Bennett, CANADIAN UNITARIAN COUNCIL



1st session of
our A.U.F.
by - I a w s
review



next session: March 27th, 7pm
Kate Morrison's, 18 Conway



and yes! We had fun!

A Request from Diane... I am encouraging all or members and friends of the Avalon Unitarian Fellowship to write the Prime Minister to ensure the ban on **terminator seeds** is kept intact. I have already written Stephen Harper a letter on behalf of the Board of the Avalon Unitarian Fellowship.

I am hoping that as individuals we will consider doing the same. Here is some information people can keep in mind when they write the P.M. Terminator technology genetically engineers plants to produce sterile seeds at harvest. Farmers in Canada and the world have always saved seed to use for the next years crops. There are 10 seed companies that control half the world's commercial seed market.

If this terminator seed technology is allowed to be used commercially corporations will likely incorporate sterility genes in to all their seeds. Therefore, farmers will have to buy seed all the time. It will be impossible for farmers to use the seeds from this years crops to plant for next year because it will be biologically impossible. It is imperative the the ban on terminator seeds stay intact. This country should not support terminator seed techology.

Address to the Prime Minister:

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper

Prime Minister of Canada

House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6

Stephen Harper's e-mail address is pm@pm.gc.ca

It cost nothing to write the Prime Minister. NO stamp is necessary.

Our Website:
www.avalonunitarian.ca

Phone: 709 437 1067

Mailing Address:
Suite 363, 38 Pearson Avenue
St. John's, NL A1A 3R1

President: Tammy MacLeod
576 3646 cel: 7467091
tmdances@hotmail.com

Lay Chaplains:

Louis Chiaramonte
895 2561 - louis@mun.ca

Sherril Gilbert
895 8333 - sherril_g@hotmail.com

Music Director: Terry Rielly
895 8333 - terryrielly@nf.sympatico.ca

Affiliated Community Minister:

Rev. Penny Allderdice
pallderd@mun.ca

Our Mission Statement

We gather together to form a caring & compassionate community whose members nurture each other's growth & support each other on life's journey.

We honour the inherent worth & dignity of every person

& welcome diversity in our midst.

We celebrate life, individual experience, openness to new ideas, wonder & creativity.

As part of our commitment to fair & democratic processes, we value participation & consensus when dealing with each other & with society.

We promote social justice, & respect the environment

& our kinship with all life.

Everyone is welcome to join in an ongoing search for truth

& meaning in our spiritual home

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YAY!!! and the birthday girl this month is:

Elizabeth on the 28th! Happy Birthday!

News From The CUC Board - Spring, 2007

The CUC Board met February 2-4 at the Unitarian Church of Hamilton, Ontario.

The CUC Board approved an expanded staffing model to meet increased demands for service - there is now a CUC-West office located in the Unitarian Church of Vancouver, staffed by Janice Lincoln, Administrative Coordinator-West. Kirstie Peden, Administrative Coordinator-East, and Phil Strapp, Financial Administrator, manage the CUC-East office in Toronto.

The Administrative Coordinators will provide increased support to the Directors of Regional Services (Linda Thomson and a to-be-hired DRS West) and our Director of Lifespan Learning (Sylvia Bass West) - bolstering our regional service delivery capability.

To improve and streamline communications, the CUC has a part-time Communications Director to co-ordinate and enhance internal and external communications. Bruce Schwartzentruber, will, along with other duties, be the editor of the Canadian Unitarian magazine.

Our Treasurer, Jean Armstrong, delivered on her promise and reported that we are on track with our budget and our goal of achieving a balanced budget this year.

The Board was elated when it received the report that EVERY CONGREGATION delivered on its Annual Program Contribution pledge for 2006! Look for a column about this in the Spring Canadian Unitarian; view it on-line at www.cuc.ca/canu/spring.

This fall/winter, Canadian congregations have been holding workshops on the Go-4-It! and Statement of Principles Initiatives. There'll be presentations at the ACM in Vancouver on both of these.

The Unitarian Universalist Association ("UUA") continues to provide services to Canadian congregations in the areas of Ministerial Settlement and Youth & Young Adult Programs. CUC President, Vyda Ng, and Executive Director, Mary Bennett, met with representatives of the UUA to ensure that Canadian concerns continue to be reflected in these UUA services as they evolve over time.

Plans are well under way and programs are in place for our "Diversity in Community" Annual

Conference and Meeting to be held in Vancouver from May 18-22. This is anticipated to be the biggest ACM ever! Come and connect with UUs from across the country - early bird registration deadline is April 1st. For information on accommodations, concurrent sessions, keynote speaker, children & youth programming, and more, look on-line at www.cuc.ca, or in your March congregational mailing.

Respectfully submitted,

Vyda Ng, President

Canadian Unitarian Council / Conseil Unitarien Du Canada
www.cuc.ca / vyda@cuc.ca

THE WORLD'S EASIEST QUIZ?

- 1) How long did the Hundred Years War last?
- 2) Which country makes Panama hats?
- 3) From which animal do we get catgut?
- 4) In which month do Russians celebrate the October Revolution?
- 5) What is a camel's hair brush made of?
- 6) The Canary Islands in the Pacific are named after what animal?
- 7) What was King George VI's first name?
- 8) What colour is a purple finch?
- 9) What country do Chinese gooseberries come from?
- 10) How long did the Thirty Years War last?

ANSWERS

- 1) 116 years, from 1337 to 1453.
- 2) Ecuador.
- 3) From sheep and horses.
- 4) November. The Russian calendar was 13 days behind ours.
- 5) Squirrel fur.
- 6) The Latin name was Insularia Canaria - Island of the Dogs.
- 7) Albert. When he came to the throne in 1936 he respected the wish of Queen Victoria that no future king should ever be called Albert.
- 8) Distinctively crimson.
- 9) New Zealand.
- 10) Thirty years, of course. From 1618 to 1648

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Deadline for submissions and ideas for May Newsletter: April 20th

Send to: terryrielly@nf.sympatico.ca

Have a **GREAT** month everyone!!

